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Parchos

Fairfield

ETON SCHOOL DAYS,

OR

RECOLLECTIONS OF AN ETONIAN.

BY

BRACEBRIDGE HEMYNG,

AUTHOR OF "BUTLER BURKE AT ETON," "CALLED TO THE BAR," "SEASON AT BRIGHTON," "MAN OF THE PERIOD," ETC.

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ETON SCHOOL DAYS.

CHAPTER I.

GOING BACK TO SCHOOL.

"Now, come along; you have no time to lose!" exclaimed an elderly gentleman, addressing two boys of the respective ages of twelve and fifteen, who, if one might form an opinion from seeing a quantity of luggage piled up in the hall, were going back to school.

Reginald Purefoy, the eldest of the two, was the cousin of the younger, Philip Butler Burke, who was about to accompany his cousin to Eton for the first time.

Mrs. Butler Burke, being of the sensible order of women, did not make a fuss over her boy, although as he had never before left home she might reasonably expect to miss him a good deal; but giving him a couple of sovereigns, she said she hoped he would never get flogged, and, kissing him, let him go.

His sister Letitia, two years older than himself,

had some difficulty in preventing herself from making a lachrymose demonstration, but she bravely controlled her feelings, and gave her brother the pair of worsted-worked cat's-head slippers she had been making for him any time during the preceding three months, with a good grace.

"What time does that train of yours start?" inquired Mr. Butler Burke.

"The train?" replied Purefoy, to whom the question had been addressed. "Oh! at half-past eleven from the Great Western. We like it better than Waterloo."

"Well, you must look after Philip, Reginald," said Mr. Butler Burke.

"If Philip is only as well behaved, as gentlemanly and good as Reginald is," exclaimed Mrs. Burke, "I shall be more than satisfied."

A flush of pleasure reddened Purefoy's cheek as he promised to look after his cousin to the best of his ability.

"Past ten, my boys!" cried Philip's father, looking at his watch; "it's time to be off. I'll go and get the luggage stowed away in the cab." And he bustled off good-naturedly to superintend the embarkation.

Purefoy had been on a visit to the Burkes, by whom he was highly esteemed, for he was the cleverest as well as the most religious boy in his tutor's house, and these qualifications, although not much thought

of by the possessor's companions, are always a recommendation in maternal and paternal eyes. It followed that Purefoy was a great favourite. His father was a barrister in good practice, with a seat in the House of Commons. Mr. Butler Burke was an eminent physician in May Fair, and the conversation I have detailed above took place at Mr. Burke's house.

In a short time Mr. Butler Burke returned, saying that all was in readiness.

"Good-bye, mater; good-bye, Letty," said Philip.

"Mind you write often," said his mother.

"I think you will like the slippers," said his sister.

"Good-bye, dear Mrs. Burke," said Purefoy: "many thanks for your kindness."

"Good-bye, Phil," said Mr. Butler Burke. "Here's a supply of the needful."

"Good-bye, good-bye," said everybody; and then, with a melancholy crack of an aged whip, the Jehu made his Rosinante trot off in the direction of the G. W. R.

Although Reginald Purefoy was rather more religious than most of the boys in his tutor's house, he was not disliked. He would play at foot-ball, and could bat a little; but he had not much time for cricket, as he was reading very hard. He was slightly built, which made his Grecian features, surmounted with dark hair parted in the middle, not unlike one

of Murillo's Matres Dolorosæ, especially as they were generally overshadowed with a slight tinge of melancholy, more the result of study than of his natural disposition. He was captain of his division, and was in Lower Fifth. He had a shelf by the side of his bureau filled with prizes. When he took a double out of lower Greek into fourth form he had an edition of Shakspeare given him in eight volumes. He had carried off Prince Albert's prize both for French and German, which by the way was not such a very difficult achievement, as a very small percentage went in for them, and those more from home constraint than inclination. Still it was a feather in his cap, which cap with its numerous trophies was acquiring a plume of some density. He had also been "sent up for good" and "for play" a great many times, and it was hinted that he intended to try for the "Newcastle."

"Did your governor 'pouch' you," asked Purefoy, as they were going towards the Station

"Yes," replied Butler Burke, "and so did the mater."

"He's a brick," said Purefoy: "he socked me something."

"Yes, I daresay; you are a great favourite."

"Do you think so?" replied Purefoy. "Oh! here we are, I think; our jarvey has pulled up."

Getting out of their cab, they saw their luggage taken in to the station and placed with a lot more on the platform.

Purefoy walked up and down, talking to and shaking hands with a number of boys who had already arrived, some of whom were drinking beer at the bar, and some tossing off a nip of neat brandy, some imbibing something no less potent but diluted with water. Purefoy and Butler Burke contented themselves with a pot of beer, both pulling out of the same pewter.

"Here, you fellow! give us some of that beer," rudely exclaimed a boy, coming up to Butler Burke, when he stood still facing him.

"It is not mine exactly," replied Burke, rather taken aback: "if it was you might have some."

"Oh! I don't want your beer; don't alarm yourself," he answered.

But as he passed by Burke to go into the bar, he gave the pewter Burke held in his hand a jerk, which sent the contents flying into his face and all over him, much to the amusement of himself and some others standing by.

Butler Burke took out his handkerchief and wiped himself as dry as he could; and while he was so engaged, Purefoy, who had been talking to a friend, turned round. Seeing the bespattered condition his cousin was in, he said,

"What's the row, Butts?" (Butts was a friendly diminutive of Butler.)

"Why, some fellow knocked all the beer over me, because when he asked me for some I did not like to give it him without asking you; and besides, I did not see the fun of giving our beer to a fellow I don't know, and I'm sure don't want to know after this."

"Which fellow was it?" inquired Purefoy.

"That one there," replied Burke, indicating a boy who had just taken a small cutty pipe, rather dirty than otherwise, out of his pocket, and was regarding it affectionately. He was handsome-looking, about thirteen; but there was a bad expression about his face. He dressed rather loudly; he had a blue frock-coat on, a pair of shepherd's-plaid trousers of a very large check, and an Eton blue tie confined by a fine cameo ring. He was considered by his tutor one of the idlest and worst boys in the school.

"Oh! that's Chorley," said Purefoy; "I don't like him at all. I don't think I would say anything to him, for I would rather he was an enemy than a friend of yours."

"Can you lick him, Purefoy?" asked Butler Burke, rather anxiously, as if he would like to see a little summary castigation inflicted.

"Well, you know I am a reading-man, and I don't go in for that sort of thing."

Butler Burke looked disappointed, and it is just probable that he felt a slight amount of contempt for his clever, but slightly effeminate cousin.

"If I can't lick him though, I can fag him."

Here was a veritable triumph of mind over matter.

"And if he bullies you any more," added Purefoy, "he shall pay a few more visits to Webber's and Layton's than he will exactly like."

The guard who had charge of the train now made his appearance; he was known to some of the boys who immediately flocked round him, and a chorus of voices asked him what he would have. The guard replied generally to his numerous patrons, "Cold brandy, if *you* please, gents." But it was notable that this public functionary glanced furtively around him on entering the bar, in order to see whether his movements were being watched by any having authority over him.

Shortly the time for starting arrived, and the guard, whose name was popularly supposed to be Sloggers, invited some of the boys to travel in his break van. There was a great crowd at the station, as may easily be supposed, for in many instances the boys' friends had come to see them off, and during the confusion it was difficult to notice that half-a-dozen boys got into the van instead of into a first-class

carriage, which was their proper domain. Chorley was amongst the number who accepted Sloggers's invitation, and when Butler Burke perceived it, he exclaimed to Purefoy, "Can we go in the van? I should like it awfully."

"We can try, if you like," replied Purefoy; "but I don't know if those fellows will let us."

As Burke expressed a wish to try his luck, they made the venture.

"What do you want in here?" cried Chorley, as he saw them open the door. "Cut it. You will only get us into a row. Do you hear? Cut it, or I'll lick you till you can't stand."

Just as Burke and Purefoy were hesitating as to what they should do, Sloggers appeared, and said, "Now gents, in with you!" And lending them a helping hand, they soon found themselves in the guard's van. The engine whistled. The train moved. Sloggers himself jumped in and unlocked his breaks, and it was too late for Chorley or anybody else to take exception at Butler Burke and his cousin's appearance amongst them.

After the train had fairly started, every one, with the exception of Butler Burke and Purefoy, began to smoke, and very quickly afterwards some had sudden recourse to pocket-flasks, the contents of which averted the ill-effects of their rash proceedings.

Sloggers had not always been a guard; he had some years ago driven a coach, but when the railroads ran the coaches off the road, he, along with many others, adapted himself to circumstances, and became a guard in the service of the Great Western Railway Company. Sloggers was one of the good old sort; he had never taken kindly to his new mode of life, and as he was now a man of between fifty and sixty, he may be excused for travelling back to the past and revelling in the incidents of his former days.

I have observed that guards, as a rule, are a thoughtful and taciturn race. When they do condescend to speak, they utter their sentences in an oracular manner; and I was once acquainted with a guard who could compress a depth of meaning and significance into the single words "onkimmon, sir, onkimmon."

Sloggers was famous for being able to tell two stories: he was never known either to increase or decrease his stock. He called them "this wise and t'other wise."

They were reminiscences of his old coaching days.

Chorley, wishing to be amused, asked Sloggers to tell them a story.

"Tell us a story, Sloggers," he said; "you must have had a lot of adventures."

"Mebbe I have, sir. But there's two times as I've had a narrow escape."

And Sloggers gravely shook his head, as if the recollections he had called up made him dubious as to whether his head was even now as firmly set on his shoulders as it ought to be.

"The first time, sir, it was in 'this wise;' the second time it was in 'another wise.' Now, sir, which 'wise' 'll yer 'ave?"

"Well, Sloggers, suppose we have 'this wise,'" replied Chorley.

"'This wise,' sir. Werry good, sir; werry good," said Sloggers.

As Chorley had a seat near the guard, his conversation was directed principally to him.

"You aint got arra bit o' baccy, sir, I *don't* suppose?" asked Sloggers.

As we have said, Purefoy did not smoke, nor had Burke as yet learnt that somewhat fashionable vice. But Chorley exclaimed,

"Want some smoke, eh? Here you are." And he handed a small pouch constructed of sealskin to the guard, who filled his pipe, and passed it back again with many protestations of lasting gratitude.

"I may say," began Sloggers, "that I've been throwed a many times, p'raps up'ards of a score, but

these two as I've'ad the honour of mentioning" (here he made an inclination of the head to nobody in particular), "are the stunninest and the cleanest of the 'ole kit.' I was young then, though there's a proverb sir,—I's cruel fond o' proverbs—as says, 'experience don't break no bones,' and that 'ere proverb's true, sir, for it don't, as I'm a living witness."

After this truly gratifying announcement, Sloggers turned to his patrons, and smiled blandly upon them.

"Well, as I was saying, gents, or, rather, as I wasn't saying, but as I was going to be saying, I used to flutter the ribands of the London Croydon and South Coast coach; and it might 'ave been a matter of some five-and-thirty 'ear ago, as at ten o'clock p.m., which means past morning, and consikvently evening, I started from the 'Coach and Oysters,' Bishopsgate Street, to drive the 'Midsummer Comet' night coach down to Croydon, which was our first stage. We 'adn't got much beyond Tootin'—as we were going a good over an' above ten mile an hour—summut like an 'orn sounded behind, and in coorse I prickt up my ears, and so did the 'osses, and we both of us kept them pointed as if we was ready to shy at a moment's notice. Well an' good. In a bit we 'eard it agin, and soon arterads a clatterin' o' 'oofs; not like morshall 'osses' 'oofs, but

more resembling, I should say, the clatterin' o' Hell Steeds 'oofs. Natural enough, I was onkimmon scared, and laid on the whipcord, which made the team tear over the Macdamyereyes."

This was too much even for Purefoy's gravity to withstand, and, although he could not help laughing, he said, "Macadamized, Sloggers; you mean McAdam."

"He'd just come in, sir, I remember well, 'cos I drank 'is 'elth, thinking him a good friend to the 'osses."

"But not the wheelwrights, eh, Sloggers?"

"Beggin' your pardon, sir, wheelwrights weren't of no account whatsomever; no more account than the Emperor of Ejyp. It wor 'osses as he had in view; I said 'osses, and I stands by 'osses."

Sloggers pulled away a bit viciously at his pipe, as if in high dudgeon at being interrupted and discredited, muttering every now and then, "I said 'osses, and I stands by 'osses."

Purefoy was about to acquiesce with Sloggers in his idea of McAdam's invention, when Chorley, who was getting angry, cried—

"Oh! shut up, Purefoy; we don't want any of your scientific bosh. Go on, Sloggers."

"Well," said Sloggers, a little mollified by the soothing influence of the weed, "the 'Midsummer Comet' went along as fast as a locomotive."

"Thirty miles an hour!" interrupted Purefoy. "Don't you think you are drawing it a little too strong, Sloggers?"

"Hold your row, will you?" again cried Chorley.

"Why?" asked Purefoy. "What I said is nothing *inter Christianos non nominandum.*"

"If it isn't, it is *nihil ad rem.* Go ahead, Sloggers!"

"This ere thing behind," continued Sloggers, "kep' coming up wi' us, 'and over 'and, and no mistake, an' the 'orn it kep' a blowin' as if it wor the last day, and all the cherrybims and sich was a blowin' their young cheeks fit to bust. I was powerful frit. I turned, and I tuk one look, which made me cut up the cattle till they tore along like anything, and their flanks became covered wi' patches of foam that soon grew into sheets of white. It wor a coach, wi' a spectre-like thing on the box, with a head like a bear, and the forehead was surmounted with antlers as big as a stag royal's. The 'osses were black, coal black, and their eyes and nostrils flashed fire and smoke. The coach was encircled with a light as bright as day, which made the hedges and that look awful fearful. I saw it would run me down, if so be as I didn't make room for it; so I drew a little on one side, and it was well I did, for the next moment it dashed by like lightning. I could see no one inside, and no one outside but this bear-faced fiend with antlers."

Purefoy could not help thinking that Sloggers's story was as "barefaced" as the fiend.

"On the panel of the door was written in letters of fire 'The Devil's Own,' and just as I'd read that the inside of the coach seemed to be alive with snakes, a 'issing, like. Oh! they didn't 'iss, no 'ow. Then the wind of the coach, or the 'issin', or summut, sent us clean into the ditch, tilting me on to a 'eap o' stones by the road-side. When I looked up, I found my bones wasn't bruk, but the 'Devil's Own' had disappeared. I picked myself up, and a box-seat hoff-side passenger, you know, sir, come, and he says,

"'You drunken villin.'"

"Now, sir, I wasn't drunk, though I might have had 'arf a dozen glasses o' gin, neat; but I wasn't by any manner o' means within a mile of being drunk; so I felt riled, I did, riled onkimmon, and I ups with my fist, and lets drive at him; but some'ow I couldn't do no good that night. Well, I hoffered to fit him for a fi-pun-note, but he gives me a crack on the heye, and I fell as easy as a bit o' wood. And here's Ealing." As he said this he put the breaks down, and the story was at an end.

Butler Burke was much pleased with the excitement and novelty of travelling in the van. He thought he should like Eton, and everybody, except Chorley, the boy who had spilt the beer over him.

And indeed Chorley was not exactly the sort of boy for one fresh from home to take a fancy to. He swore, and drank, and made bets, and did several things very repugnant to a young and innocent mind.

"We shall get to Eton early in the day," said Purefoy to his cousin, "and that is very jolly, for I shall be able to show you over College. Every one, you know, has a room to himself, with a bed and a bureau in it; but the bed shuts up in the daytime, and looks like a chest of drawers. We dine all together, and have supper; but we have breakfast and tea in our own rooms. They give us a quarter of a pound of tea and a pound of sugar every week, and we can buy what we like besides. Fellows always take back a lot of things with them. I've got a ham, and a couple of chickens, and a tongue, and lots of jam and sardines and anchovies, you know. We only get a roll and a pat of butter; and after your maters' breakfasts, Butts, that is rather a poor look-out."

"I like that," said Butler Burke; "it is so independent and jolly."

"I think, as your pater told me to look after you, and as we are friends, and all that," exclaimed Purefoy, "we had better mess together."

"Yes, I vote we do."

"You can swim, can't you? because this is summer half," continued Purefoy; "and if you are fond of

boating swimming will be of great use to you, because no one is allowed to go on the river before he has 'passed' a sort of swimming examination, you know," explained Purefoy.

"Yes, I can swim," replied Burke.

"So much the better for you. Every fellow at Eton is either a Wet-Bob or a Dry-Bob; that is, they either go in for boating or for cricket."

"Well, I shall be a Wet-Bob; I hate cricket, and I am sure I shall like boating."

"Boating is more swell than dry-bobbing. It is jolly enough to be in the Eleven, yet I almost think I would rather be Captain of the Boats."

"Or Captain of the School," replied Butler Burke, with a smile, for he knew his cousin's ambition.

When they arrived at the Windsor station, they got into a fly, and after a quick drive through the town they entered the College, famous for its "antique spires and watery glades," and they were soon deposited at the house of the Rev. Walter Wynne, at that time head master of Fourth Form. Mr. Wynne's house was what is called a "swell house," not because there were a great number of lords, or baronets, or dukes, or "cadets" of noble families in it, but because he had in his house the Captain of the Boats, two fellows in the "Prince of Wales," one in the "Thetis," three in the "Dreadnought," and the coxswain of the

"Victory"—a combination not often to be met with; and in addition to that he had two boys in the football eleven, and two in the cricket eleven, with several who played well in lower club. Purefoy was expected to do the "sapping," and carry off the "Newcastle;" which belief was further indulged in, because a boy had left last half who had been "medallist," and it was thought the house was a lucky one.

When the boys arrived, their tutor, who happened to be going out, met them at the door. Mr. Wynne was very popular with his own boys.

His house was at the top of the road which leads down to the gas-works, and what is called "John Hawtrey's Field." Mr. Wynne was of an average height, well made, but not stout. His hair was dark, and his complexion had an olive tint, while the expression of his face was stern, if not melancholy, and he could not have been more than two or three-and-thirty.

CHAPTER II.

THE PLAYING FIELDS.

"Ah! how do you do, Burke?" exclaimed Mr. Wynne, when he perceived that young gentleman with his cousin.

A letter from Mr. Burke had prepared Mr. Wynne for Philip's advent, and seeing a new face under the guidance of Purefoy, he knew at once who it was.

Butler Burke stammered a response, and Mr. Wynne said, "I could not wish you a better acquaintance than Purefoy; and if you are only like him I am sure we shall be very good friends."

Purefoy seemed pleased at this eulogy. Indeed, he always felt gratified when his tutor praised him, because he knew that the praise was genuine.

"I think you had better run out a little," said Mr. Wynne, "and show your cousin the Playing Fields, or any other place you like to take him to; that is to say, if he is not tired."

Burke assured his tutor that he was not at all tired; but Purefoy said to him, "Would you mind

going with somebody else, old boy? Don't think me unkind, but I want particularly to have another look at my holiday task."

"I don't mind, I am sure," replied Burke; "I will go another time. I am not in such a hurry as all that."

"I wont keep you in, though," said Purefoy; "I will get some fellow I know to go with you. Oh! here's a fellow who will just do. He is a little rough in his manner, but a very good sort in his way."

"I don't care who it is; I would rather have you; but if you are busy I will go with any one you like to introduce me to."

"I say, Chudleigh," cried Purefoy, addressing a boy who had just left the house.

"I am not going to fag for any fellow to-day, so I tell you plainly," answered Chudleigh, apprehensive of some journey up town.

"I don't want to fag you," said Purefoy; "I only want you to look after my cousin, Butler Burke; he is a new fellow, and he wants some one to go about with. I wish you would be a brick, and take him with you."

"Why don't you take him yourself?"

"Well, I would, only I want to sap. I don't know my holiday task as well as I ought, and I want to have another squint at it."

"All right, I'll take him; only I shall crib 'private' from you next week if I do."

"That will be nothing extraordinary," replied Purefoy; "you are always cribbing something, either an old copy of verses, or Sunday questions, or——"

"Oh, yes, I dare say!" cried Chudleigh, "you are just like an old woman; you go on jawing, and never know when to stop. Come on, you fellow!"

This last command was addressed to Butler Burke, who passively followed his conductor, who was a little older than himself, of a lively disposition, quick at repartee, full of spirits, and much impressed with his own dignity and importance.

"Have you ever been to school before?" he asked.

"No; I have never left home for any length of time in my life."

"All the better for you then; my tutor hates fellows who have been to private schools," said Chudleigh.

"Does he? Why? Doesn't he like them?" asked Burke, innocently.

"How should I know? you'd better ask him."

Butler Burke looked rather cut up at the reply.

"I suppose he doesn't like them because they are such beastly holes in comparison with Eton," continued Chudleigh; "everything is so different here."

"Were you at a private school?"

"What does that matter to you? You will get

into no end of rows, I can tell you, if you go asking questions in that way," replied Chudleigh, angrily.

"I'm very sorry, I'm sure," apologized Burke; "I didn't mean to offend you."

"Well, don't do it again, that's all," returned his companion, a little mollified by his new friend's submission.

They walked some distance after this in comparative silence, Chudleigh only breaking the monotony by saying,

"This is the wall, you know, where Spankey, and Levi, and Bryan, and the soc-fellows come." Or, "This is Cullifat's Lodge. Cullifat, you know, is the fellow who makes the birches. He has about a waggon-load of twigs every half, and every fellow who is flogged has to pay five shillings for a new birch, which is put down in the bill." Or, "Here we are in Weston's Yard. That's the head-master's house on the left—Old Plug, the fellows call him. That building on the right is Tuggery, where the Tug-Muttons live; you'll hate the Tugs like anything: all the Oppidans hate the Tugs. I do. Sometimes after a match, like Collegers and Oppidans, we break all their windows. But the great lark is the winter, when snow-balling comes in. Don't we give it them then! All the big fellows come down into the Playing Fields, and fag Lower boys

to make them snow-balls, and then the Tugs get it. But here we are in Sixpenny."

The Playing Fields is a broad expanse of meadow-land, flanked by the Thames on the right, and by the Slough Road on the left. A sheet of water called Fellow's Pond divides it. This is crossed by a bridge which gives admittance into what is called Upper and Lower Club, in the former of which the school and other matches are played, and the ground is considered sacred to the Upper and Lower Elevens.

Sixpenny is a corner to the left as you enter the Playing Fields, and here all the fights take place, with the exception of a few which are waged under Fifteen Arch Bridge; but Sixpenny is the recognised place for mills. Here, too, the Sixpenny Eleven play to the right higher up on the other side of the path. Near Poet's Walk is a piece of ground exclusively the property of boating men, called aquatics, and adjoining that is the place where anybody who comes first may pitch his wickets and play.

There were a few boys playing in Sixpenny, and some more looking on and talking to one another. They greeted Chudleigh as an old acquaintance, but looked anxiously at Burke.

Amongst them Butler Burke perceived Chorley the boy who had knocked the beer over him in the morning at the Station, and he did not feel

much at his ease when Chorley approached him and demanded in a rough voice,

"What's your name, you new fellow?"

Butler Burke, remembering the insult of the morning, and feeling angry at being spoken to in so abrupt a manner, made no answer.

"Can't you speak?" said Chudleigh. "You must tell him."

"Must I?" asked Burke.

"Of course, didn't I say so."

"Butler Burke," he answered.

"Where do you board?" continued the interrogator.

"He boards at Wynne's," said Chudleigh, as Burke hesitated.

"Who's your tutor?" asked Chorley.

"Why, Wynne, of course," cried Chudleigh. "Wynne's isn't a Dame's, you fool."

"Can't you let him answer for himself?" said Chorley.

Chorley threw down his bat, and coming closer to Butler Burke, said loudly, "Now, who's your tutor?"

"Tell him to fish and find out," said Chudleigh, who didn't choose to be interfered with.

"He'd better!" cried Chorley.

Butler Burke said nothing during this altercation, but looked rather alarmed.

"So I am to fish and find out, am I?" exclaimed Chorley, with an air of astonishment. "When I ask a new fellow his name, the scug tells me to fish."

"If it is an occupation you like; you may please yourself," said Chudleigh, quietly.

"Shut up!" shouted Chorley, who was a little taller than Chudleigh, and thought he could thrash him; "shut up, or, by Jove! I'll give you a licking."

"Or get one yourself," retorted Chudleigh, with a smile.

Butler Burke felt intensely annoyed that Chudleigh should be involved in a quarrel on his account, and was just about to tell Chorley who his tutor was, when Chorley said again in an authoritative tone,

"Now, who's your tutor?"

Chudleigh was going to speak, and did say something about finding out, when Chorley cried, "Hold your row, will you?" and repeated his question to Butler Burke.

Chudleigh was determined that Burke should not answer the question; he would rather have milled Chorley, so he said,

"I have made up my mind that he shan't be bullied by you, or any other fellow who chooses to make a fool of himself, so if you want to know particularly, as I told you before, you had better find out."

Chorley grew red in the face with rage, and crying,

"Look out for yourself, then," went up to Chudleigh and hit him a blow in the face, which the latter prepared to return, after putting himself in an attitude of defence, which he had been unable to do before, owing to the suddenness of the attack.

When Butler Burke saw the course events were taking, he sprang forward with the bound of an antelope, and hastily seized a cricket-stump, armed with which, he approached the combatants, and with some violence struck Chorley on the head. After staggering a moment, Chorley fell like a log upon the grass, and lay pale, and cold, and motionless.

"Cowardly little beggar!" exclaimed half-a-dozen voices, running up to the scene of action, all expressing sympathy and commiseration with Chorley, not because they liked him, for he was hated, but because they considered him injured in a barbarous and unmanly way.

A moment's reflection showed Butler Burke that he had been both precipitate and headstrong, but he consoled himself with the thought that at least he had done what he had for the sake of Chudleigh, who had so generously protected him. At all events, he was not instigated by wounded pride, or any unworthy motive.

Chudleigh knelt down almost affectionately by the side of Chorley, the skin of whose left temple was slightly abraded.

Butler Burke approached the spot, but he was roughly pushed away by the surrounding boys. Espying a gap between two fellows who had opened for the purpose of allowing a free current of air to penetrate to the sufferer, who, like a corpse, was extended before them, Burke darted through, and seized Chudleigh's hand, which was coldly withdrawn.

Turning to a boy near him, Chudleigh exclaimed, "Run to Cullifat's, and ask for a shutter."

"You might have the decency to keep away from a man after killing him," said some one, addressing Butler Burke, who made no answer to a remark he but imperfectly heard; and he was surprised when he felt himself powerfully grasped by the shoulders, and with the assistance of a vigorous kick, forcibly expelled from the ring which had been formed round the sufferer.

In a few minutes the shutter arrived from the Lodge; Chorley was carefully placed upon it, and the dismal procession mournfully returned to College.

Butler Burke followed slowly in the rear.

CHAPTER III.

"THE STOOL OF REPENTANCE."

When Chorley reached his tutor's house, the doctor was sent for, and on his arrival he found him lying down on the bed, perfectly sensible, but a little faint and shaken, and it was with a feeling of great relief that Butler Burke heard that the patient was in no kind of danger. Promising to send some cooling medicine, the doctor took his departure.

It may easily be imagined that Butler Burke did not make himself very popular by what he had done that afternoon. For to knock a fellow down with a cricket-stump when he is not looking is, at best, a cowardly act, and so every one regarded it.

No one could regret the occurrence more than Burke himself did; but unfortunately his repentance came too late to avert the catastrophe. When Chorley was carried home, Butler Burke hung about the passage until the doctor went away, and then he asked the boy's maid whether there was any danger, and on being assured by her that there was

not, he was almost beside himself with delight. As he stood in the passage, some of the boys who passed by him gave him an occasional kick, or a blow on the arm, calling him a dirty little coward; but, annoying as these petty persecutions were, he felt he could bear them all, and much more, now that there was every chance of Chorley's getting better.

He had acted on impulse in striking Chorley, and when he saw what fatal results might have ensued, he shuddered, and blamed his hasty passionate temper more than ever.

"I wonder," he thought, "if I can do anything for Chorley. Perhaps he would like some fruit, or some ice. There must be places in College where they sell such things; I daresay, if I went about I should find some. It is, of course, no use to ask Chudleigh to go with me, because I know he would not, after what I did to Chorley, and yet I did it for him; but never mind, I will go out and get something. Anything is better than standing about here to be chaffed and bullied.

Accordingly he descended the stairs, and going along a passage, passing Pupil-room on his way, he found himself in his tutor's yard, along which he had to pass before he could get into the road.

There happened to be a few boys hanging about talking to one another. One had a fives-ball in his

hand, and as he saw Burke timidly trying to pass by without being noticed, he cried—

"Here, you fellow! What's your name?"

"Butler Burke," he replied.

"Burke! Oh! you're the man who cut Chorley over, are you?"

Burke made no answer, but seemed more anxious than ever to get away; and making a flank movement, gained the road, and commenced running as hard as he could.

"Stole away!" shouted the boy with the fives-ball. "I'll have a shot at him, though."

Raising his arm a little above his shoulder, he took aim for an instant at Burke's retreating figure, and let fly. The ball flew with unerring velocity, and hit Burke with considerable violence on the back just below the shoulder blade.

Butler Burke uttered a cry, for the pain the blow caused him was intense.

"You'll do it again, will you?" "How do *you* like it?" and similar exclamations, sounded in his ears.

But suppressing his tears with an effort, he ran on until he reached the wall nearly opposite the gateway leading into School-yard.

Here he ran up against Purefoy.

"Where have you been?" asked his cousin. "I

have been looking everywhere for you. What is all this row about Chorley?"

"I am very sorry, I'm sure," replied Burke. "I had no idea the consequences would be what they have turned out; when I hit Chorley, I didn't mean to hurt him as much as I did. I only wanted to protect Chudleigh, because Chudleigh had been a brick to me. He would not let Chorley bully me, and the fact is, I acted without thinking."

"You cut Chorley over the head with a stump, though, didn't you?" said Purefoy, looking rather displeased, and not altogether satisfied with Burke's explanation.

"Yes, I did; but you know, he was going to pitch into Chudleigh."

"That is no reason why you should have done what you did," replied Purefoy. "But the thing is over now, and you must stand the chaff and the annoyance it will bring upon you as well as you can."

"I do think it rather hard for you to side against me," murmured Butler Burke; "I expected that you would take my part, for, after all, I have done nothing so very bad. Chorley is getting on all right."

"I don't care for that. It might have been much worse; and you should have had more command over your temper, Butts," said Purefoy. "But the thing is

over now, and I don't want to say anything more about it. I have told you I cannot approve of what you have done, but after having given you my opinion, I forget it all, and we are as good friends as ever."

"Thanks," replied Burke. "I feel easier when you talk to me in that way, for it would be awfully beastly to come to a new place, and make a lot of enemies by a stupid act, and at the same time lose one's only friend."

"I shall always be your friend, Butts, whatever happens; but let us talk of something else. Where were you going when I met you?"

"I was going to buy some grapes and things for—for—well, hang it, for Chorley," answered Butler Burke, rather timidly.

"The idea does you credit," said Purefoy. "There is nothing to be ashamed of in buying things for him. If he refused to take them, I think you would still be doing right in offering them to him."

"I don't know where to go, though, to get them. You forget I am new to the school."

"So you are; I did almost forget it. You want some grapes, don't you, and some ices? I think it is almost too early in summer half to get ices, but you may get some grapes. It is no use going to Brown's. They don't keep them. Webber's may have some, if not, you will have to go up to Knox's."

"Tarts, cakes, and buns to-day, sir? the learned Purefoy, sir?" exclaimed a voice at his elbow.

Butler Burke turned round to see who had so unceremoniously interrupted their conversation. The speaker was a man of about sixty years of age, stout and rather tall, with a somewhat florid complexion, clad in a coat which was of a hybrid nature, a cross, in fact, between a great and a frock-coat. This was buttoned up to his chin. An insinuating smile sat upon his mouth, and he seemed, take him altogether, to be a standing triumph over apoplexy.

A tin case filled with cakes and savoury sweetmeats of all kinds stood by his side.

"Tarts, cakes, and buns to-day, sir?" again saluted Purefoy's ears.

"Not to-day, Spankey. I have only just left home, and your muck might not exactly agree with me," said Purefoy.

"Some very fine almond-cakes, sir. Try a bun with some raspberry-jam, sir," replied Spankey, with the same unctuous smile.

"Are you going to tick this half, Spankey?"

"No, sir; no. The head master doesn't allow it."

"Ticking some fellows is like feeding an elephant on sponge-cakes, isn't it, Spankey? You never know when you have done."

"Mr. Chorley, sir, he owes me five-and-twenty

shillings. Has Mr. Chorley come back yet, sir?" said Spankey.

"You must find that out for yourself, Spankey; I'm not n amateur detective. Come along, Butts."

So saying, Purefoy linked his arm in Burke's, and they walked towards Barnes Pool. As they went, they heard Spankey's oily voice, saying, "Any tarts, cakes, or buns to-day, sir?"

"Who is that?" asked Butler Burke of his cousin.

"Who? Spankey. Oh! he is great fun. I buy things of him sometimes; he is the most respectable soc-man going. You must cultivate Spankey. He has got 'Burke's Landed Gentry,' two or three 'Peerages,' 'Hardwicke's County Families,' and everything through which he can find out who and what fellows are. He asked me one day if I belonged to the Warwickshire Purefoys, and when I told him that they were another branch, he wouldn't tick me any more."

"Would you advise me to have a tick with him?" asked Burke.

"Well, Spankey is as decent a fellow to tick with as you will find; but I don't approve of ticking; it is running into debt, and it teaches one extravagant habits. I never tick anywhere now, and I don't mean to anymore; but if you *must* tick, you may as well

do it with him as with any one else. But here we are at Webber's."

Unfortunately they could get no grapes there, and they went on to Knox's. As they were going along, they passed a respectable-looking confectioner's, but Purefoy went past without stopping.

"Why not go in there, Purefoy?" asked Burke.

"There! I wouldn't go in there for anything. That's Long's. It is a beastly tug's hole."

"A tug's hole? What's that?"

"Why, that's where the collegers go; we met two or three just now; those fellows with gowns on. You would get chaffed if any of my tutor's fellows saw you there."

At Knox's they succeeded in getting some grapes, with which they returned to College. Just as they got near the bridge, a boy came by quickly and exclaimed, "Cave! Woodford!" directly afterwards darting into a shop.

"We must shirk," cried Purefoy; "there's a master coming. That fellow who told us has gone into tap; it is too far off now, we must go into Devereux's. Come on!"

Closely followed by Butler Burke, Purefoy entered a hosier's shop, and there remained until the master had gone by; then emerging from their harbour of refuge, the boys went through College to their tutor's.

"You have not seen your room yet, have you?" asked Purefoy.

"Yes; I just looked into it. It is next to Chorley's."

"Oh! that one; it used to be Prettyman's last half. It isn't half a bad room. Will you take the grapes to Chorley, or shall I?"

"I wish you would; you needn't say who sent you; I would rather he did not know who they came from, because he might refuse to have them. Can't you say you brought them from home with you, and you thought he would like some?" replied Burke.

"I can, certainly," said Purefoy, looking Butler Burke steadily in the face, "but I don't think I shall."

"Why not?" demanded Burke, not a little astonished at his friend's answer.

"Why not? can't you guess? Well, I will soon tell you. In the first place, it would be telling what in plain language people call a lie, and I never do that under any circumstances; and secondly——"

"I did not want you to do anything wrong, upon my word, Purefoy," cried Burke, rather passionately; "only you are so very strict. I thought you might say you brought them back with you without travelling a great way from the truth."

"Never mind, I will take them to Chorley. You go into your room and put your books and things

straight, if Susan hasn't already done it, and wait till I come; I shan't be long."

Butler Burke followed his cousin's advice, and as Purefoy entered Chorley's room, he went into his own. Here he found Susan, the boys' maid, busily engaged in unpacking his wardrobe, and stowing everything away in one of the three drawers of the bureau. Susan was a strong, stout woman of forty, or more, with no pretensions to beauty, but her good-natured face was a redeeming point, which made her popular with the boys. Burke sat down on a chair and looked on.

"Miss your home, sir, don't you?" said Susan. "Most gentlemen do a little at first, but when they get settled they are as comfortable here as anywhere. Find that chair rather hard to sit upon, sir? So I should think; it *is* hard—it is all made of wood. Get your own arm-chair soon, though, sir, of course. Get a very nice one—cushions and all—at Barton's, for thirty shillings—leastways, Mr. Purefoy did. Mr. Purefoy your cousin, sir? Indeed! nice gentleman Mr. Purefoy—very nice young gentleman. Your tutor thinks a deal of Mr. Purefoy, he does. He is very quiet and nice, and works uncommon hard; never gives any trouble, and sleeps like a lamb. His bed in the morning is just as it was at night; the things not rumpled a bit. The sheets aint here, and the

blankets there, and the pillows somewhere else, as they is in *some* gentlemen's rooms. There's Mr. Chorley, now, him that's lying ill in the next room, he's awful. I speak to him, but Lor', it aint of no use talking; he only laughs and says, 'All right, Suke!' and plump comes a pillow a thundering against my head. They do say as he had a fight this afternoon in the Playing Fields, and that some new young gentleman up with a cricket-ball and threw it at him, cutting his head open frightful. A cricket-stump, was it, sir? and—*you* did it. No, you are joking with me. Did you really now, sir? Well, I am sure you did not do it intentionally. Oh! you did it for Mr. Chudleigh; Mr. Chorley was going to lick Mr. Chudleigh, was he, now? and all through you. Ah! it was a great pity. You'll find, sir, we don't do those things here. It is what we call cowardly. But you'll soon find your level, as they say; and if Mr. Chorley do lick you when he gets well, you'll soon get used to it."

This was not a very cheering prospect for Butler Burke, but as Purefoy at this moment entered his room, his thoughts were turned into another channel.

"Chorley has accepted the grapes, and likes them very much," said Purefoy; "I did not tell him they were from you, which was fortunate, for he is in a great bate with you; he says he likes your pluck in

sticking up for Chudleigh, but you didn't do it in a proper manner; and he declares when he gets well in a day or two that he will give you a tremendous hiding."

"I wish I knew boxing," said Butler Burke, "and then, perhaps, he wouldn't be so cockey about licking me. Science, you know, is better than brute force, and although Chorley is older and bigger than me, if I knew how to mill I wouldn't stand still to be licked."

Although Butler Burke spoke like this, he did not at all like the prospect before him. He thought himself unlucky at getting into hot water so soon after his arrival at Eton, and now and then a wish that he was at home again with his mother and Letty would creep into his mind, and turn his thoughts towards the old familiar faces.

"Will you have your fire lighted, sir? I think you'll find it cold enough," said Susan, striking a match as Butler Burke replied in the affirmative.

"Don't be down in the mouth, Butts," exclaimed Purefoy, good-naturedly. "If Chorley does lick you it wont kill you. I must confess you deserve it. But if it's any consolation to you, I heard Chudleigh say that Chorley would have to mill him before he touched you. He said you were wrong in doing what you did, but you were a new fellow and didn't know any

better, and you did it for him, so he wouldn't see you bullied. It is rather funny, though, that Chorley should have begun to bully you at the Station, and that you should have so signal a revenge a few hours afterwards."

"What time do we go to bed?" said Butler Burke, yawning.

"We have tea at six, and that reminds me that I want mine. Lay my things, will you, Sukey? and get me a kettle. And we have lock-up at a quarter to seven, but it will soon get lighter in the evening, as the days get longer, and in about six weeks we shall have lock-up at a quarter to nine. We have supper at nine, and prayers at half-past, and Sukey takes Lower boys' candles at ten, fifth Form have them till half-past, and if I ask permission, my tutor lets me have mine till eleven or twelve, that is, if I want to sap particularly at anything. Cut along, Sukey, I am sure you have been fiddling about that fire long enough. If it wont burn, let it alone. Burke is going to mess with me, and I know my fire is all right, for I lighted it an hour ago, before I went out."

Butler Burke felt much refreshed after a cup of tea and a few slices of tongue, and when Purefoy pulled his comfortable-looking red damask curtains over the window, and poked up the fire, he felt more at home than he had yet done. Purefoy's room was prettily

furnished. A neat Brussels carpet covered the floor; his oaken bureau had been varnished, and the panels of the upper part had been replaced with crimson silk and wire-work; prints of pictures by the best masters adorned the walls, and a handsome glass surmounted the mantelpiece, which was covered with red velvet. Altogether it was very snug and comfortable, and as Butler Burke sat there, talking to his cousin about the old folks at home, he thought that there might be worse places for a fellow to come to than Eton.

CHAPTER IV.

"OMNIS AB OVO."

BUTLER BURKE was placed in middle Fourth, and as his studies had been well directed at home, he found himself tolerably well up to his work. Verses rather bothered him at first, but after a while, with a little coaching up from Purefoy, he soon made himself master of the contents of his "Gradus ad Parnassum," and was in a fair way of reaching that classic mount. He had not so much trouble with his Themes, for he was really a good hand at Latin prose, and his compositions were usually very creditable. He found he could manage his Long Ovid and Cæsar without the help of a 'crib.' But Farnaby was not so easy, though he seldom came to positive grief as he got a construe from some friend or other before school. Altogether his tutor was pleased with him, and much to the gratification of his friends, wrote home a satisfactory account of him. His exploit with the cricket-stump was gradually forgotten, although the boys in his tutor's house rather avoided him, which threw him a

good deal in the society of Purefoy. Now this was a most fortunate thing for Butler Burke, because it made him lay in a foundation of learning which was of great use to him afterwards when he spent his time in a slightly different manner, as will be duly detailed. At the end of his fortnight's grace he commenced fagging, and was fortunate in falling to the lot of his cousin, who gave him very little to do, and whatever he did dó was for himself as well, because, as I have already said, they messed together. When you have to go to Webber's for sausages, or to Barns's for spiced-beef or brawn, it is not a pleasant reflection as you bring the things back to your tutor's to think that they are for some other fellow; and college rolls, as I brought them hot and fresh from the bakehouse, were never so tempting to me as when I had been to get them for my "master," and knew that, that morning at all events, for me such luxuries were not. Burke had not run into debt to any great extent, but he incurred a liability to the amount of five shillings with one of the men at the wall, for as he did not always carry money about with him, he found it rather convenient to tick things as he was going in to, or coming out of, school, but when the sum reached one-fourth of a pound, he invariably, after the manner of capitalists, discharged the Israelite's claim upon him. The Jew in question was called Levi, who was a rival of Spankey's,

a long, thin individual, with a sallow face, and corkscrewy ringlets, was this Jew, who might have been taken for the lineal descendant of the impenitent thief. Scales and weights did he despise much, using his hands in lieu of them. So it may be imagined that a pennyworth of anything varied exceedingly, being sometimes more and sometimes less; but veracity compels us to say more frequently the latter.

Burke had learned to row at home, and could swim well, but he found that as yet neither of his accomplishments was of any avail, as it was too early and too cold for bathing, and one of the rules of the school is, that no boy shall go on the river until he shall have passed in swimming. So he took refuge in fishing, for he did not like cricket, and he would bring home many a nice basket of fish to show for his morning's work; and when occasionally he hooked a leviathan of the deep in the shape of a three or four pound trout, or a small pike, he would send it in to his tutor with his compliments, through the instrumentality of Bill Jones, the butler, and so, owing to one thing and another, to his fishing, to his being a good deal with Purefoy, and to his being well up to his school work, Butler Burke became looked upon as a slow sort of fellow, rather mild than otherwise, and he was taken very little notice of. Probably he would get a kick from Chorley as he passed him in the

passage, but that was all the attention that he condescended to pay him. He had not carried out his original intention of licking him, possibly owing to Chudleigh's vehement objection to such a proceeding, and at last Burke was generally regarded as a "man who would take well in collections or trials, but who would never do anything else worth talking about; never be a boating man or in the Eleven, you know." But, as will be seen eventually, this was a mistaken estimate of an undeveloped character.

Mr. Wynne took quite a fancy to Burke, and amongst other little kindnesses he showed him, he gave him permission to sit and read in his garden occasionally. Mr. Wynne's garden was a very pretty one, and somewhat extensive. It was quite at the back of the house, and could not be seen from the part occupied by the boys themselves. Mr. Wynne's house was constructed in a peculiar manner. It seemed as if the house occupied by himself and his family had been first built, and afterwards a wing extending some distance in the rear had been added. This wing contained three corridors, one on the ground-floor leading to the kitchen and domestic offices, another on the first floor, and the third above that. The two latter ones leading to the boys' rooms, which opened upon them from the right hand. The garden was nicely stocked with flowers in one part, and fruit and

vegetables in another. Butler Burke's favourite resort was an arbour covered with clematis, jasmine, and honeysuckle, all blending together in charming confusion. Close to him, and visible from a little window in the arbour, was a pheasantry containing ten or a dozen beautiful pheasants, whose eggs, Mrs. Wynne, being in delicate health, found very beneficial. These pheasants Butler Burke was very fond of, and would often bring them a few sponge-cakes or some biscuits. But they involved Burke in a very unpleasant dilemma, which afterwards became of a serious character, and entailed disagreeable consequences upon him. Somebody one day abstracted the pheasants' eggs from the nests, and suspicion did not exactly fall upon Burke, but Mr. Wynne asked him in a friendly way if he had taken any eggs.

"I don't for a moment suppose, Burke, that you have. I only ask you in order to satisfy my own mind. You were in the garden a good deal, and I should like to have the assurance from your own lips," said Mr. Wynne.

"No, sir, I have not touched them. I never for a moment dreamed of such a thing. I have looked at the birds, and fed them occasionally, but I really did not know whether they laid or not," replied Burke.

"Well, I am glad to hear you say so, although

your answer is only just what I expected. Of course I need not tell you that you may go into the garden just the same as usual."

"Thank you, sir," said Butler Burke, as Mr. Wynne walked away.

A few days passed, and Burke forgot all about the pheasants and their eggs. He considered the incident a trifling one, and allowed it to escape from his memory. He did not even mention it to Purefoy, but one morning after prayers he happened to go into the passage in order to see if there were any letters, it being the custom to place the letters on a window-sill opposite the butler's pantry. As it happened, there were none either for himself or for Purefoy, and he was just going upstairs, when Bill Jones, the butler, came out of the dining-room with a tray, upon which were the remains of Mr. Wynne's breakfast. Amongst other things on the tray, Butler Burke perceived a pheasant's egg. Going into the pantry, he said, "Let me have that egg."

"Can't, sir," replied Jones; "your tutor may ask for it. Would if I could, sir."

"Oh, never mind! no one will miss it. I never had a pheasant's egg in my life. I should like one awfully."

"Now, sir, you are in my way!" exclaimed Jones.

"Oh, hang that! I am going to have that egg,"

replied Burke, going to the tray, and laying hold of it before Jones could prevent him.

"Now, Mr. Burke, that's too bad!" said Jones. "Give it here; you will only get me into trouble."

"Not if I know it," said Butler Burke, in high glee at having secured the egg.

"Come, sir, give it me!" said Jones, getting angry.

But all Jones's arguments and persuasion were useless. Burke had the egg, and had made up his mind to stick to it. When Jones saw this clearly, he altered his manner, and said—

"Well, sir, throw the shell away when you have eaten the egg. And if anything should come of it you wont get me into trouble."

"All right; I wont get you into a row," replied Burke.

Putting the egg in his pocket, he went upstairs to his room, and put his egg-boiling saucepan upon the fire, because, although the egg had been already cooked, it was now cold.

"I wont let Purefoy know I have got the egg; he might jaw me for taking it from Bill Jones. The best thing I can do is to cook it quietly in my own room, and after I have eaten it I can shy the shell into the fire, and then Jones can't get into any row."

While reasoning in this way, Butler Burke had nearly cooked his egg, and was just going to take

it off the fire, when he heard a footstep in his room. Turning round, he was somewhat surprised to meet his tutor. I wont say that he was alarmed at this unexpected meeting, but he had a strange feeling that it would be productive of some unpleasantness, although what it would consist of, or what its nature would be, he could hardly have said.

"I have just come upstairs to say that your dame is very unwell this morning, Burke," exclaimed Mr. Wynne, "and I shall take it as a favour if you will ask all the Lower boys on your passage not to make more noise than they can possibly help."

"Certainly, sir; I will tell every one I meet, or I will go to the different rooms," replied Burke.

"What have you got there?" inquired Mr. Wynne, indicating with his finger the saucepan on the fire.

"Only an egg, sir."

"It is boiling, I can see. Let me take it out for you while you hold the saucepan," said Mr. Wynne, kindly.

"Thank you, sir," answered Butler Burke, getting very red in the face; "I shouldn't like to trouble you."

This proposition was extremely distasteful to Butler Burke, because he did not wish his tutor to see the pheasant's egg. He thought, and with some show of reason, that it might excite a suspicion in Mr. Wynne's mind that it was one of the stolen eggs.

"It will be no trouble," said Mr. Wynne, with a smile. "Bring the saucepan here, and give me a spoon; I will soon have it out."

Mr. Wynne spoke in a manner which showed he had made up his mind to assist Burke, who saw that there was no help for it; and, taking up the saucepan, he lifted the lid off, and handing his tutor a spoon, awaited the sequel in some trepidation.

"But why should it matter to me?" he said to himself; "I did not bag the egg from the garden. It was an egg that my tutor evidently did not want, or else he would not have sent it away."

"What have we here?" exclaimed Mr. Wynne, bringing the pheasant's egg to the light. "Why, Burke, where did you get this?"

"Please, sir, I——" Here Butler Burke completely broke down. He now felt the thoroughly false position he was in. "If I tell my tutor that I got it from Bill Jones I shall get him into a row, and I promised him I would not do that. Besides, I would rather be punished myself than he should get into trouble. Certainly he didn't give me the egg, but, anyhow, he was responsible for it. Confound it! I don't know what to do."

"Well, Burke, I am waiting for your explanation," said Mr. Wynne, sternly, looking fixedly at him.

Butler Burke, being utterly at a loss for a reply, remained silent.

"I wish you would speak, Burke," continued Mr. Wynne, "because I can only suppose from your silence what I should be very sorry to entertain for a moment. Of course you know what I mean. But perhaps you bought some eggs somewhere?"

"No, sir, I did not," replied Burke.

"Or you had them sent from home?"

"No, sir," again replied Burke.

"In that case, what am I to suppose? what can I suppose?"

Butler Burke looked steadily at the carpet, as if the pattern had suddenly assumed a great interest in his eyes.

"Now, Burke, I am going to ask you a question; will you answer me truly?" said Mr. Wynne.

"Yes, sir; you may rely upon that."

"Well, if I do you any injustice by putting such a question to you, you must, under the circumstances, refrain from accusing me of intentionally hurting your feelings."

"Oh yes, sir," replied Burke.

"My question is very simple," said Mr. Wynne. "Is that egg one of mine?"

Butler Burke could only conscientiously reply that it was; and so he said "Yes, sir, it is."

"Then may I ask how it came into your possession?"

This was the turning point in the whole affair. If Burke said that he took it from the butler, he would most likely get that worthy into temporary disgrace, but triumphantly acquit himself; and there were many reasons to induce him to adopt that course. In the first place, if he maintained a strict secrecy as to how he became possessed of the egg, he would lay himself open to the very grave suspicion of having stolen it from the pheasant-house, or at all events of being an accomplice after the fact.

"Please, sir," exclaimed Butler Burke, "I don't like to; I can't tell you."

"You can't tell me. Now listen to me. It will be much better for you to tell me the whole history of the affair. I will not go so far as to say that you took the egg from my pheasant-house, but it appears you must either have done that, or have received it from some one else who did. Upon one of the horns of this dilemma you must rest."

Burke made no reply.

"Well," said Mr. Wynne, "I will suppose that you will not betray your friend; only, I must say this, Burke, your conduct to-day is not what you have hitherto led me to expect from you, and I don't think it is either kind or proper for you to be on friendly terms with any one who has done what your friend

evidently has. I shall make it my affair to discover who the principal culprit is; but, until I make the discovery, or until you choose to divulge the name of your accomplice" — Butler Burke winced at this—"of your accomplice, you will bring me every day, at one, a hundred lines of Virgil."

And with a look of intense annoyance, Mr. Wynne left the room, and went downstairs to Pupil-room.

"How very unfortunate!" soliloquized Burke, when his tutor left him alone. "He evidently thinks I know who took the eggs, and wont give him up. I wish I had never seen the egg. I can't eat it now. I'll shy it away."

Taking it in his hand, he threw it through his open door into the passage. It hit the wall, but being boiled hard, it did not break, but rolled back towards Chorley's room.

In about a minute, Chorley himself, holding the egg in his hand, came into Butler Burke's room, exclaiming, "I say, where did you get this?"

"I don't see that it's anything to you where I got it," replied Burke.

"Isn't it? Well, we'll see about that. You bagged it out of my bureau, I suppose," he added, incautiously.

"Out of your bureau! I am sure I didn't. I had no idea you went in for pheasants' eggs."

"Hadn't you? I suppose I can have pheasants' eggs sent me as well as any one else," replied Chorley, who went back to his own room.

Butler Burke, after a little reflection, went to Purefoy, and told him everything as it had occurred, not omitting the last incident in the drama of Chorley suddenly appearing and demanding where he had obtained the egg.

"*Omnis ab ovo,*" exclaimed Purefoy, as Burke finished his recital; "that is, in the present case, every evil springs from the egg."

"Do be serious; you see what a row I am in," pleaded Burke.

"I know; but I dare say we shall unravel it in a little time. I think Chorley's asking you the question he did looks very seedy. I tell you what, I think Chorley took the eggs."

"Do you? By Jove! it looks like it. I'll go and tell my tutor," cried Burke. And before Purefoy could stop him, he had run downstairs, and stood before Mr. Wynne, who was correcting some Themes at his desk in Pupil-room.

"Please, sir," said Butler Burke, "I know—at least I think I know who took the eggs."

"Well, who was it?" was the calm reply.

"Chorley, sir."

"Why do you say so? Did you get your egg from him?"

"No, sir; but——"

"Then I tell you flatly that I don't believe you, Burke. I am very sorry to be harsh with you, but I don't at all like the way in which you have behaved all through this affair," rejoined Mr. Wynne. "And now I think of it, Chorley is the boy you quarrelled with on your arrival here. Your present charge against him, therefore, looks very suspicious; and I don't altogether like boys who are so very eager to say things about others, in order to exculpate themselves."

Mr. Wynne went on correcting a Theme, and Burke stood a moment looking very crestfallen.

"Please, sir," he began, making another effort to explain matters.

"I can't talk to you now, I am busy," said Mr. Wynne. And Burke, very unhappy, went out of the room and returned to Purefoy.

"I wish you wouldn't do things in such a hurry," said Purefoy. "To go to one's tutor in that way isn't the thing to do here, and if you are so impulsive, you will never do any good. Well, now you have been, tell me what passed."

Burke related his interview, and Purefoy said, "It is evident my tutor is angry, and prejudiced against you; so you must leave the thing to me for a day or two, and do your pœna. In the mean time I will do

all I can to find out whether Chorley really did take the eggs; and if I cannot find out anything, why the best thing you can do is to say that you got the one you had from Bill Jones."

Some days passed after this conversation between Butler Burke and Purefoy, but the latter made no discovery which would in any way exonerate his cousin, and Burke went on regularly every day at one, showing up a hundred lines of Virgil. This was a very unsatisfactory state of things, and Burke found the punishment very irksome; so much so, that he felt inclined to go to his tutor and tell him the real state of the case; but whenever he had almost made up his mind to do so, he thought that it would not be proper to get the butler into trouble, as he had promised not to.

It was undoubtedly too late now to go to Chorley, and accuse him of having the eggs, because, even if they ever had been in his possession, they would have been devoured long ago, and Chorley might, and very probably would, throw open his bureau, and say, "If you don't believe me, you had better look."

CHAPTER V.

THE MYSTERY CLEARED UP.

A FORTNIGHT passed away, and still Butler Burke every day at one presented those horribly wearying hundred lines. He gave up his fishing now, for he had no time for it. The hundred lines cut up his after twelves, and after four he had some work or other to do, while after six, at present was not long enough. Purefoy was utterly unable to make any discovery, and Butler Burke was beginning to think himself the most unlucky boy in the world, and to walk about with his eyes on the ground, as if contemplating instant and deliberate suicide.

One day when Burke came as usual with his eternal hundred lines, Mr. Wynne said to him, "Why not be a little candid with me, Burke? You must be a boy of a very obstinate disposition."

"Indeed I am not, sir," replied Butler Burke, the tears springing into his eyes.

"Well then, why not tell me all about that unfortunate egg? I am determined to find out, and if

you think that I shall forget all about it, I beg to assure you that you are greatly mistaken. Come, you had better confess who gave you the egg, for I do not think you took it yourself, and although I shall not think so highly of you as I did before, yet I shall consider that your repentance comes better late than never."

"No one gave it me, sir," replied Burke.

"Then the inference is that you took it."

"Not from the nest, sir."

"Burke, I am afraid you are trifling with me. There is something about this that I don't understand. I am very much displeased with you, and if I do not have a full confession from you by this day week, I will have you flogged."

Mr. Wynne spoke very decisively, and poor Butler Burke walked away more thoroughly miserable than ever.

When he told Purefoy this new phase in the affair, his cousin said, "I have an idea which may possibly be productive of some result; anyhow I will try it, and if I can make nothing out of it, I will tell my tutor myself how you got the egg, whether you like it or not. I don't see why you should allow yourself to be flogged for such nonsense. The pœna is bad enough; it is making you quite ill. You are not half the fellow you used to be."

Butler Burke went to his room to write some of the everlasting lines, and Purefoy sought Chorley.

"I say, Chorley," he exclaimed, as he entered his room, "I want to ask you a question."

Chorley was engaged in oiling a bat, and rubbing the oil in with a stump, and replied, "All right, my dear Miss Purefoy; go ahead!"

"Miss Purefoy" was a sort of badinage that Purefoy often had to put up with. Chorley, and boys of his disposition, considered Purefoy effeminate, not only in his habits, but in his appearance.

"Don't chaff, Chorley," said Purefoy, looking slightly annoyed: "I am serious."

"I dare say; you always are. Well, what is it?"

"Suppose a fellow has done something, and another fellow gets the credit of it, and in addition to that, gets a hundred lines at one, every day?"

Chorley looked up at this wonderingly.

"If you were the first fellow, wouldn't you give yourself up?"

"Well, I don't know exactly," replied Chorley, shaking his head.

"Well, I know a case exactly like the suppositionary one I have just put to you. Would you like to hear it? I wont keep you long," said Purefoy.

"Fire away, then, and be as quick as you can," replied Chorley.

"Some fellow bagged some pheasants' eggs," began Purefoy, but he stopped suddenly, as Chorley started and dropped the bat he held in his hand.

"What's the row?" demanded Purefoy.

"Oh! nothing," replied Chorley, recovering his equanimity; "go on!"

"I was going to say that some one took a lot of pheasants' eggs out of my tutor's garden, and one day, my tutor asked Butler Burke, who was a good deal in the garden, if he had touched the eggs. He said he hadn't, and there the affair would have ended, if, one morning, Burke had not taken an egg from a tray Bill Jones was bringing out of the dining-room. It was an egg my tutor had not eaten, and Jones made Burke promise if anything came of it, that he would not get him into a row. Well, Butler Burke took the egg upstairs, and boiled it over again; but while he was doing so, my tutor came upstairs, to speak to the fellows about not making a row, as Mrs. Wynne was not very well, and he saw the egg. Burke refused to account for his possession of it, and ever since he has had to show up a hundred lines at one."

"That is rather hard lines, I think," said Chorley.

"So I think. And what is still worse, if by this day week Burke does not tell all about it, he is to be flogged."

"By Jove! that's too bad," cried Chorley.

"I was going to ask you whether, if you were the fellow who took the eggs——"

"I take the eggs! Why do you say that?"

"I didn't say you did," answered Purefoy; "I only said, suppose you had done so, and you saw what a row Burke was getting into, what would you do? Would you let him be flogged; or would you give yourself up?"

"Well, I think I would give myself up. But I never knew anything about Burke having a hundred lines till this minute."

"I thought all the fellows knew it," said Purefoy.

Chorley went on oiling his bat, and Purefoy soon afterwards went back to Burke, and told him that he thought he had made some impression on Chorley, but they would see in a day or two. Purefoy, from Chorley's manner felt pretty confident that he was the real culprit, and he also thought that Chorley would give himself up.

"After prayers that evening, Chorley remained behind the others, and approached his tutor who was standing by the open Bible, at the head of the table."

"Well, what is it? You want to stay out, I suppose? You boys are always staying out," said Mr. Wynne, a little petulantly.

"No, sir, I don't want to stay out; but I have something to tell you," replied Chorley.

"Oh! indeed," said Mr. Wynne.

"You remember losing some pheasants' eggs, sir?" began Chorley.

"Yes, perfectly."

"Well, sir, I am sorry to say I took them."

"You! Then why did you not tell me before?" exclaimed Mr. Wynne. "Did you not know that I was punishing an innocent boy?"

"No, sir, I did not, indeed. I give you my word I did not until this morning," replied Chorley, looking his tutor boldly in the face.

"I believe you," said Mr. Wynne.

"It was that, sir, which made me tell you. I heard from Purefoy this morning that Butler Burke had the credit of taking the eggs, and so I thought if any one was punished, it ought to be me."

"Then I suppose the egg I found in his possession was given him by you?" Mr. Wynne asked.

"No, sir, it was not; and that is the most peculiar thing of all. That egg was one you sent away one morning at breakfast, and Burke, seeing it on the tray, took it, and when Jones asked him to give it back he wouldn't, but he promised not to get Jones into any scrape if you should by any chance see it."

"How do you know all this, Chorley?"

"Purefoy told me, sir; and Burke had told him," replied Chorley.

"I am very glad you have behaved in so manly a manner," said Mr. Wynne, "and I can almost forgive you for taking my eggs; but until I tell you to leave off you must do the punishment I gave Burke, and bring me a hundred lines every day at one."

"Yes, sir," replied Chorley, looking a little disappointed.

"Now run upstairs and send Burke to me."

Chorley went upstairs, and in passing Butler Burke's room, put in his head and said, "My tutor wants you, Burke. You are in for it! I wouldn't be you for something."

Butler Burke, rather alarmed at this, went to the dining-room, where he found Mr. Wynne waiting for him.

His tutor, much to his surprise, took him by the hand in the most kind manner and exclaimed, "I have done you a great injustice, Burke, but it was in a great measure owing to your stupidity in not making me your confidant."

Burke was at a loss to think what his tutor was alluding to.

"You will be surprised to hear," continued Mr. Wynne with a smile, "that I know all about the egg mystery?"

"Oh! I am so glad," cried Burke.

"And I now think as highly of you as ever. Run along now to your cousin, and he will, I daresay, tell you all about it. Good night."

"No more lines, I suppose?" asked Burke, laughing.

Mr. Wynne laughed too, and replied in the negative.

"Good-night, sir!" said Burke, joyfully, leaving the room and going upstairs three steps at a time.

"Hurrah! Purefoy," he cried, bursting into his cousin's room. "My tutor has found it all out; and he said you would tell me all about it. He says he likes me as well as ever again. How did he find it out? Did you tell him who really took the eggs?"

"You ask so many questions, my dear fellow," replied Purefoy, "that I hardly know where to begin; but I think Chorley took the eggs, and has given himself up. It is very jolly of him, and he cannot be such a very bad fellow after all. I told him this morning that you were being punished for some other fellow's offence, and knowing that he was actually guilty, he has made all the reparation in his power."

"Hurrah for Chorley, then!" said Butler Burke. "I shall like him, I think, after this."

Butler Burke got on better than ever after this little episode in his career, and became rather friendly

with Chorley, who began to take a fancy to him. Chorley initiated him into the mysteries of "tap," and taught him to drink beer. The X was also visited by them on Sunday after four, and Butler Burke learned how to drink brandy-and-water, but tobacco was as yet a luxury his stomach would not allow him to enjoy.

It being an early summer, bathing began earlier than usual, and Burke passed in the first batch that offered themselves. He was not long after this in getting a boat at Goodman's, and he became looked upon as a pretty good oar. Chorley took him up the river and inducted him into the mysteries of shandy-gaff at Surly; and once they penetrated as far as Monkey Island, and came down with their caps full of roses, as is the custom.

Purefoy looked on at all this with some displeasure, but made no remark. He did not like Butler Burke's growing intimacy with Chorley, and he determined to take an early opportunity of saying so. They were now getting into the middle of summer-half, and the 4th of June was approaching.

CHAPTER VI.

"DAGON FALLS DOWN."

One morning at breakfast Purefoy said to Butle Burke,

"I wish you were not quite so friendly with Chorley; he is not exactly the sort of acquaintance I like to see you make."

"I don't see why you should say that," replied Burke, rather hurt. "I should not like to do anything you would not approve of; but I must say I think Chorley a brick. You don't know him as well as I do; and he is really a much nicer fellow than he seems."

"You did not think so once, though. I remember the time when you were of a totally different opinion," said Purefoy, with a quiet smile, which slightly irritated Butler Burke.

"Ah! that was when I first came," he said.

"Chorley may be a brick; I don't say anything about that; but I don't like the way he goes on. He will teach you to drink and smoke. You are already

a great deal altered since you have been about with him."

"What else?" demanded Burke, doggedly.

"I will tell you," replied Purefoy, earnestly. "I have made up my mind for some time past to remonstrate with you; and I think the present time will do as well as any."

"Very well," said Burke, cracking an egg.

"I saw Tarver the other day, and he told me you hardly came to him now more than once a fortnight; and you know you used to come to my room in the evening and read a little Telemaque, or whatever it was."

"I have something else to do now," interposed Burke.

"Exactly; that is what I complain of," said Purefoy. "And another thing, I saw my tutor tear over your Theme yesterday; and last week you had to show up a second edition of verses, and all because you muddle your head at Surly or the Christopher with Chorley."

Purefoy said this rather bitterly.

"Well, what's the odds?" replied Butler Burke, carelessly, helping himself to some anchovy paste.

"A great deal, as you will find out."

"I don't think so; I am very jolly at present," answered Burke.

"Well, it can't last," said Purefoy. "My only hope is that you will get sick of it, and see what a fool you have been."

"No chance of that, old fellow," replied Butler Burke, with an assumption of indifference.

Just at this moment Chudleigh came into the room.

"Do you know Homer, Purefoy?" asked Chudleigh.

"No, I have not looked at the lesson yet."

"I am sure I don't know why you ever do; you are such a cheese. I want you to give me a construe. I would not have bothered you, only that fool Beaumont has locked up the crib, and I think he has gone up to Athens to bathe. At all events, we cannot find him anywhere."

"Oh! do you know," exclaimed Purefoy, "my tutor knocked me up at half-past five this morning, and asked me if I felt inclined for a swim. Of course I said yes, and we walked to Cuckoo Weir, and had a jolly bathe at Acropolis."

"By Jove! how jolly of him," replied Chudleigh. "But I say, do you think you can construe me?"

"I'll try," said Purefoy, opening his bureau and taking down his Homer. "Where is it, 'κυλινδετο λαος αναιδης,' was that the last line?"

"I think it was. Just pitch us your Liddell and Scott. All right, go ahead!" cried Chudleigh; "λαος αναιδης, that's it."

While the construing was going on, Butler Burke finished his breakfast and went to his own room to do some Greek derivations. He found Chorley sitting in his arm-chair, reading one of Marryat's novels—"Snarley Yow, or the Dog Fiend."

"Where have you been?" he asked; "I have been looking for you."

"I have been talking to Purefoy," replied Butler Burke.

"Purefoy! You are always with Purefoy."

"Indeed I am not. I am more with you *now*. Once I used to be always with him," said Butler Burke.

"I don't like him," exclaimed Chorley, after a pause.

"Well, I can't help that. I suppose I may know any one I choose," replied Burke, looking up from his Lexicon.

"Why don't you cut mess with him and mess with me?" said Chorley.

"I am sure I shan't; I am very jolly as I am."

"Well, don't get excited over it. You know I hate saps; and you can't deny that he is one of the beastliest saps in the school."

"Don't you slang Purefoy, Chorley, because I wont have it," cried Burke.

"Oh, indeed!"

"Purefoy is my cousin, and I know him at home, and my mater is a great friend of his mater's, and all that sort of thing. He is a very good fellow if he was not so slow. And he is a great deal cleverer than you will ever be, I can tell you."

"He'd better go to a girls' school, and you had better go with him," said Chorley, who seemed inclined to quarrel with Burke.

"I advise you to shut up, Chorley," cried Butler Burke.

"I should recommend you both to learn crochet and sewing," sneered Chorley.

"Look here," said Burke; "I don't want to have a row with you, Chorley, but you know I am not the sort of fellow I was when I first came, and if you go on chaffing me you may drive me to do something you will not like."

"I am not afraid of anything you may do, my dear fellow," replied Chorley, superciliously.

"No, I dare say not; I suppose you think you can lick me easily, but you may depend upon it, you will not do it without a fight," said Butler Burke, pluckily.

"Oh, indeed! Wont it shock the sanctity of your friend, Purefoy?"

"I don't know about that; but I am now very much inclined to believe what he said about you," replied Burke, unguardedly.

"Really! isn't it something like swallowing a camel?" asked Chorley.

"I don't care about camels, but I think you are an ass. I know I was one to take your part when Purefoy told me what sort of fellow you were," replied Butler Burke.

"I am sure I am very much obliged to you for your knight-errantry," laughed Chorley.

"And I thought of throwing over a fellow I have known ever so long for——"

"It was really very good of you to take my part," interrupted Chorley; "but I will let Purefoy know that I am quite capable of doing that myself, and if I were not, I should not come to you."

"I dare say you think yourself very clever, Chorley; but if I cannot talk as well as you can, I can do something else; and although you are bigger than me, I am not afraid to mill you."

"Don't be in a hurry," said Chorley; "you might be sorry for it afterwards; but the whole row is so like a nursery story, that I can hardly help laughing. Had not you better write home and make your people the recipients of the pretty tale? How the saint abused the naughty boy, and how predictions were made about prodigal sons, and husks, and swine; and how the milk-and-water fool who had not courage to be either one thing or the other, at last threw his power-

ful weight into the balance, and made the naughty boy kick the beam. Don't you think it would be highly interesting to one's pious maternity? The story would easily fill up four sides of cream-laid paper, or, if judiciously spun out, who knows that foolscap (just the sort of thing for you) might not receive the maternal tears shed for filial degeneracy?"

Butler Burke felt his accomplished friend's sarcasm acutely, and it made him so angry that he could not help retaliating as well as he could, even with the prospect of a fight before him which would be rather a serious affair, and one in which the chances were he would sustain a defeat. But although he had a thrashing before his eyes, he replied,

"If you think you are going to put off the mill we must have now by this sort of rot, you are slightly mistaken; and I tell you plainly, if you are not in Sixpenny after twelve, I will do my best to give you a hiding wherever I meet you."

"Put it conversely," cried Chorley, who had quite lost the placid smile he had formerly assumed.

"In the meantime, perhaps you will have the kindness to bunk out of my room," exclaimed Butler Burke.

"You don't suppose you are interesting enough to detain me?" replied Chorley.

"Will you hook it?" shouted Burke, in an uncontrollable passion.

"Because if you do," said Chorley, without noticing Burke's exclamation, "you are a greater fool than I always took you to be."

Chorley accompanied this with a short, dry laugh, which did not find an echo in Butler Burke's part of the room.

Putting his hands in his pockets, and whistling "Paddy will you now?" Chorley lounged into the passage, and meeting some one he knew, together they sauntered into the school-yard, and finding some little fellows playing at fives, they, with a few kicks, took the wall, and played till school.

This was a very unpleasant adventure for Butler Burke; but he felt that he was doing right. When it came to a question as to whether he should give up his cousin or Chorley, his better nature came to the rescue, and he almost instantly, as we have seen, determined to stand by Purefoy. He knew that Purefoy was his friend, because on many occasions he had proved his friendship, but Chorley he saw he could not depend upon.

In addition to this, his good sense told him that Purefoy's accusations against Chorley were well founded, and he began to think that he had made an injudicious acquaintance.

Butler Burke had thought a great deal of Chorley, and had liked to go about with him very much. He

had undoubtedly learned something from Chorley, and could, amongst other things, play a passable game of billiards, for a boy of his age. Chorley could do almost everything, and Burke looked upon him as something admirable, if not unapproachable. He made an idol of him, but now his Dagon fell down, and he saw that it was not so perfect either in construction or material as he had fondly supposed.

CHAPTER VII.

THE FIGHT IN SIXPENNY.

SIXPENNY is a corner formed by an angle of the wall of the Playing Fields. Part of the wall towards the west is covered with ivy, but the other part skirting the Slough Road is destitute of any parasitical garnishment, and stands plain and naked. Placed at an altitude of about seven feet is a white stone, which is said to commemorate the death of a young nobleman who came to an untimely end in single combat in Sixpenny. Whether this is a legend or not, I will not pretend to say, but candour compels me to confess that I have always regarded that white tablet as indicative rather of the fire-plug than of anything else.

Sometimes Fifteen Arch Bridge is selected instead of Sixpenny, as less liable to hindrance, for, though fights are seldom interrupted by the masters, yet if one happens to be passing through the Playing Fields he cannot help interfering.

Butler Burke had, after eleven o'clock school, gone straight to the Playing Fields, without returning to

his tutor's, and he had no doubt but that Chorley would not be long before he made his appearance. Burke had, during school, confided the fact of his being about to fight Chorley to the Earl of Horsham, who was next to him in the school-list, and with whom, consequently, he had an opportunity of conversing. Horsham was delighted at the idea of a fight, and readily consented to act as Butler Burke's second.

Chorley did not feel quite certain whether Burke really meant to fight him or not. "He surely wont be such a fool," he thought; "because I am sure I could thrash him easily. But anyhow, I will walk to Sixpenny after twelve, and see if he is there." So little importance did Chorley attach to the affair, that he did not even mention it to any one, or ask any friend of his to back him up.

The Earl of Horsham had told all the boys he met that "Butler Burke was going to mill Chorley," and in consequence there was a pretty good sprinkling of spectators.

Burke and his party arrived on the ground first, and every one talked about and canvassed the chances in the coming combat. Chorley was bigger and older than Burke, and the odds were certainly in his favour. Those boys who made a point of betting upon every event, began to make up their books, and three-to-one

in sixpences and shillings was freely laid against Burke.

The great authority in the betting committee was a boy called Irving, who had obtained the nickname of Cutty Irving, it was popularly supposed because he had smoked a small black cutty pipe longer than a cutty was ever known to last before—cutties being celebrated for breaking just as you get them nicely coloured, and begin to take a pride in them.

Cutty Irving even went so far as to lay four-to-one on Chorley in shillings, which at the time was looked upon as something singularly rash and adventurous by the more timid of the speculators, to some of whom, four shillings in the middle of summer half was looked upon as a thing not to be lightly staked upon a doubtful issue.

But Cutty Irving was considered as safe as the Bank of England. He never bet more than he could pay, and had never been known to make default when the settling day arrived.

So, following Irving's example, many shillings were laid by Chorley's supporters upon the chance of his success.

Butler Burke was stout and thick-set, with what is called a bull neck, and not so tall as his opponent by an inch or two. Chorley was older than Burke by more than a year, and had not the former been

dreadfully out of training, it would have been a more unequal match than it was at present.

While awaiting Chorley's appearance, Horsham thought it advisable to give Butler Burke a few words of encouragement.

"He is bigger than you, but I think you can last longer," he said. "You see he is in very bad training, and though he will most likely punish you a good deal, if you try and wear him, he will break down in time; he drinks and smokes too much to have much wind. Playing billiards at the Castle, drinking beer at the tap, and brandy at the X, and smoking half-a-dozen pipes a day, is not exactly the proper way to train for a mill."

Butler Burke smiled at this, and promised to do his best.

"Here he is! Here's Chorley!" cried some one.

Chorley slowly, with his hands in his pockets, strolled amongst the assembled throng.

"What's the row?" he inquired, carelessly.

"What's the row?" exclaimed the Earl of Horsham. "That's a good joke coming from you. Why, we are waiting to see your mill with Butler Burke, and you have kept us waiting long enough as it is."

"Think so?" replied Chorley, drily.

"Are you going to mill, or are you not?" asked

Horsham. "Or will you take the licking Butler Burke is quite ready to give you?"

"I shall have no particular objection to the licking, always provided he can give it me. But if he is such an ass as to think so, the sooner I undeceive him the better."

"All right. You had better strip, Burke," said Horsham.

"Well, as he has made up his mind to get a hiding, he must get it, that's all," exclaimed Chorley. "I say, who'll back me up?"

"I will, old boy; be delighted," replied Cutty Irving.

"Thanks, Cutty. Just lay hold of my coat, will you?" said Chorley.

Irving assisted Chorley to divest himself of his coat and waistcoat, and stripping off his braces, he tied a handkerchief round his waist, and turning up his shirt-sleeves to the elbow, he was ready for the contest.

Horsham performed the same offices of affection for Butler Burke, and the combatants stepped into a ring formed for them by the fellows who were looking on. Chudleigh, who happened to be on the ground, kept the ring the proper size by means of a cricket-stump with which he drove the fellows back when they pressed forward too much.

Chorley stepped up to Butler Burke, and the fight

began. Burke in vain tried to get within his adversary's guard, the greater length of his arms rendering it almost an impossibility; and after making some furious lunges and receiving two or three slight blows, he reached forward, when Chorley, taking advantage of the opportunity, and standing well on his toes, hit him a blow on the mouth that made all his teeth rattle like castanets, and sent him rolling heavily on the grass.

The Earl of Horsham called time, and Chorley, putting his hands in his pockets, sat down on the ground, and received the congratulations of his friends.

"I knew he hadn't a chance," exclaimed Cutty Irving.

And this opinion was generally acquiesced in by those around.

"Are you much hurt?" asked Horsham, kindly.

Butler Burke got up with the assistance of Horsham, and spitting out a mouthful of blood, said, in answer to his friend's inquiries,

"All right. I am not a bit hurt—only a little shaken."

But he was trembling violently, and Horsham took out of his pocket a little gold vinaigrette. Opening this, he gave it to Burke, and told him to smell it.

The pungency of the odour made him start a little at first, but in a few seconds he felt much refreshed

by it, and became comparatively calm. The fight now recommenced.

This time Burke was more wary, and manœuvred about a good deal, which distressed Chorley so much that his friends became alarmed, and shouted excitedly "to close and grass him."

Feinting with his right, Chorley advanced and threw Burke almost to the wall, when seeing, as he thought, his guard relaxed, Burke sprang forward, and Chorley, choosing his opportunity, let out with his left, causing Burke to fall against the bricks.

Horsham caught him in his arms as he was falling to the ground, and carrying him to the corner, laid him down and examined him. His face was covered with blood which flowed from his nostrils, and he gasped for breath as if some of the blood had gone down his throat and half choked him.

"Spit it out, old fellow," said Horsham, supporting his head; "you will soon be all right again. It will be our turn next time, you know."

Chorley stood against the wall sucking his knuckles, as he had knocked the skin off them.

Burke again had recourse to the vinaigrette, and in a short time recovered himself sufficiently to be able to meet his antagonist.

When the boys entered the ring, the expression of Burke's face was rather ferocious than otherwise, for

it had swollen a little here and there, and his lips were of the size of those of a native of Madagascar or Borneo. Horsham had wiped the blood away as well as he could, but there were still a few stains here and there.

Chorley, on the other hand, did not seem to have turned a hair.

Cutty Irving offered as much as seven-to-one against Butler Burke, but this he only gave once; afterwards he took the precaution to take those odds five or six times by way of a hedge, in case anything should happen to Chorley.

Chorley opened the ball by aiming a formidable blow at Butler Burke, who stepped back, allowing his opponent's fist to graze his cheek. Then, dashing forward before he could recover his guard, he struck Chorley full on the left eye.

"Well played, by George!" exclaimed Horsham, whose spirits began to rise.

Chorley shook his head and attempted a laugh, which did not last long, for Burke followed up his success by another blow, which took effect on Chorley's nose.

Cutty Irving, seeing the blood trickling down his face, called time.

"That's your sort, my boy!" cried the Earl of Horsham, patting Burke on the back; "you have tapped *his* claret at last."

"I know what, though," said Horsham to himself. "It will not be half a bad precaution to have a little brandy handy. There is nothing like being on the safe side, and I see plainly enough that Chorley has got lots of fight in him yet."

Walking to the edge of the ring, he beckoned to a little fellow standing at the extreme edge, who, in spite of violent efforts, could not succeed in getting through.

"Let my minor pass, you fellows!" exclaimed Horsham. "Here, Chudleigh, just make room there."

Chudleigh soon made the desired opening, and the Honourable Mr. Briscoe came up, panting and looking red from exertion.

Horsham pulled a florin out of his pocket, and whispered to his brother, "Cut up to the Christopher, minor, as hard as you can go, and bring back some brandy in a bottle. I haven't my flask with me, and you wont have time to go to my dame's for it. Hard all, minor; be as quick as you can."

Taking the money, Briscoe started off at his best pace.

When Cutty Irving perceived that Chorley was bleeding rather more than he liked, he called to a boy standing in the front rank of the ring, and said—

"Pilkington, peg away to Fellows Pond, and fill your hat with water."

"I shan't," replied Pilkington; "you can't fag."

"If I can't fag you, you young fool, I can do something else you will not like."

"What's the use?" said Pilkington; "my hat has got a ventilator."

"That's a lie, you young brute. Now, off you go. Oh! you wont, eh? Very well!" cried Irving, and with a sudden movement he caught hold of Pilkington, and twisting one of his arms round, he hit him with his fist upon the muscular part several times.

"Will you go now, eh?" asked Irving.

Pilkington promised compliance if Irving would leave off licking him, and set off at a run to the Pond, presently returning with his hat half full of water.

Irving dipped his handkerchief in it, and carefully bathed Chorley's eye and face, sending in his man as fresh as a lark.

Butler Burke came forward, looking more confident, with a half smile on his lips.

For more than a minute, they walked round one another, occasionally lungeing scientifically, but doing no mischief. At last Butler Burke retreated, and drawing his opponent after him, suddenly dashed

forward, but miscalculating his distance, he only grazed Chorley's temple.

Now was Chorley's time, and he did not fail to see it. Catching Burke before he could draw his foot back, he hit him hard on the forehead. Butler Burke staggered, and let fall his hands, and Chorley repeated the blow with greater force, which had the effect of sending him over as if he had been shot.

Horsham ran forward and carried him to his old place, to the corner, while Chudleigh kept the ground as clear as he could, to let him have air.

Cutty Irving came up and pryed into the corner, to see the effect of the damage. Burke was breathing heavily, and had not yet opened his lips.

"I say, Horsham," exclaimed Chudleigh, "this is a regular slaughter; hadn't you better let him take a licking."

"He is only a little bit stunned," replied Horsham; "he will be all right, presently. I have sent my minor for some brandy, and I expect him back every minute."

Cutty Irving went back to Chorley and said, "I think you have pretty well finished the mill; he wont do much after the knock-down blow you gave him just now."

Chudleigh knelt down on the ground, and taking Butler Burke's hand in his own, felt his pulse, and looked at his watch.

Getting up again, he appeared to be satisfied with the result of his examination, for he said to Irving, "I don't mind having a bet with you, Cutty. What odds will you give against Burke?"

"I will give you fifteen to two," he replied.

"Very well; will you make a note of it? I have not got a book."

Presently Briscoe returned with the brandy and gave it to Horsham, who poured a few drops in Burke's mouth. The boy opened his eyes and sat up.

"Give him some more," said Chudleigh.

Horsham poured about a wine-glassful down his throat, and Burke seemed much refreshed by it.

"Well done, old boy!" exclaimed Horsham. "How do you feel? You will go in again, of course?"

Burke took the brandy-bottle in his hand, and drank a little more.

"That's enough," said Horsham, taking it away.

"I wont be licked while I can stand, I know that," said Burke, gallantly. When he got up, Chorley looked rather contemptuously at him.

"Do you take a licking?" asked Irving of Horsham.

"Not yet, exactly. We mean to give you one," was the reply.

Chudleigh came up to Butler Burke, and whispered

in his ear, "You will beat him yet, if you hit him in the wind."

Burke nodded and faced his antagonist. Confident of an easy victory, Chorley sauntered up to Burke, and threw out his left in a careless manner, as if the event of the fight was a foregone conclusion. Burke stepped back, and warily beat the air for a little while, watching his opportunity. Then all at once he ran in, and made a feint at Chorley's face, but dropping his fist, he caught him in the wind, receiving Chorley's blow on his right arm.

"Well done!" shouted Horsham. "Hit him again."

Chorley doubled himself up and dropped. Irving called time.

"Try that again," said Horsham; "that is the way to punish him."

"Give us some of your brandy," said Irving, coming over to Horsham.

"Thank you, we'd rather not," replied he.

"What stingy beggars you are! we only want a little."

"I'll see you hanged first, and then I wont; will that do for you?" cried Horsham, handing the bottle to Burke.

"Here, Burke," he said; "wash your mouth out. It must be as dry as a chip."

Irving walked back, muttering something rather

uncomplimentary in its nature about Horsham, and sent up his man in not nearly such good condition as he should have been.

When they entered the ring, Burke pursued his old tactics, and by walking round and round, he visibly distressed Chorley, who made several attempts to get at him, each of which was foiled by Burke's superior agility. At last Chorley's face was covered with perspiration, and he fought rather wildly. After making a lunge at Burke he received an unexpected check, for Burke stepped back, and throwing all his weight and strength into his left arm, he gathered himself up, and rushing in, hit Chorley well on the forehead, striking him in the stomach with his right. Chorley threw up his arms and gasped for breath, while Butler Burke, before he could recover himself, hit him a most tremendous blow on the left temple, and Chorley fell like an ox.

Irving threw the rest of the water he had over Chorley, but without any effect.

Horsham pulled out his watch and looked at the time; five minutes elapsed, but Chorley remained in a prostrate condition. Going over to Irving, Horsham asked, "Do you take a licking?"

"Yes," he replied, sulkily, "I suppose we do."

"Hurrah!" cried Horsham, running back to Burke. "Hurrah! you have licked, and it has been one of

the best mills I ever saw in my life. Here, minor, give them the liquor." And he handed the bottle to Briscoe.

Butler Burke, amidst the congratulations of everybody, took his friend's arm, and walked triumphantly to the pump in the cloisters, under which he put his head, while Horsham pumped.

In a little while, Chorley, accompanied by Irving, performed the same operation.

Burke and Horsham walked down to "tap" and got some beer after the ablution in the cloisters.

Chorley returned crestfallen to his tutor's, to brood over the mutability of human affairs; while Cutty Irving went up town to Kitty Frazer's, the tobacconist, to smoke a pipe, and chat about the fight.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FOURTH OF JUNE.

THE fourth of June is a great day at Eton. It has taken the place of the much revered and deeply lamented Montem, and is looked forward to by every one with great expectation. It is not exactly a "non dies," for there is morning chapel at eight o'clock, but after that, with the exception of speeches and absences, and another chapel in the afternoon, there is nothing to prevent the boys from doing what they like. Absences are, indeed, the great impediments to the real enjoyment of a holiday. A holiday at Eton is a peculiar institution. Let us take an ordinary saint's day; for all saints' days are holidays. Butler Burke gets up, as usual, at seven, and goes to the mathematical school, where he must be at half-past. There he remains an hour. At nine o'clock there is absence in the school yard. That is, every boy answers to his name; and a very pretty sight it is to see the fifth and sixth forms standing in a semicircle, stretching from the Fives wall, upon which the head

master stands, half across the school yard. As each boy's name is called he lifts his hat, and says "Here, sir," and walks quietly away. At eleven o'clock there is chapel, and, of course, the Litany is read. At about ten minutes to twelve, as there is no sermon, Burke is released, and may do what he likes till two, when there is another absence, and after that, dinner. At three, chapel again, which is over about twenty minutes or a quarter to four; and from this time to six, when there is a third absence, is the pleasantest time. You can now run over to the Bells of Ouseley, or to Salt Hill, or pull up to Surly, and smoke your pipe quietly in one of the arbours. After six there is tea, and in summer half, lock up at a quarter to nine, and absence in houses.

It was the fourth of June, and Butler Burke and Chorley were walking arm-in-arm from their tutor's towards the wall, where Spankey was standing with a basket of nicely arranged bunches of roses and scarlet geraniums. Both the boys purchased some flowers, and Spankey fastened them carefully in their coats with a pin.

It may be wondered how Chorley and Burke became friends again after knocking one another about as they did in Sixpenny; but Chorley had taken the initiative, and, much to Purefoy's annoyance, they were reconciled.

After three o'clock school on the day of the fight, Chorley followed Butler Burke to his room, and exclaimed, with a slightly mortified smile—

"I suppose you will not give me a licking if I come into your room, Burke?"

"What bosh, old fellow; don't talk nonsense," replied Butler Burke, taking Chorley's proffered hand.

Burke was a generous, kind-hearted boy, and he was touched by his friend's submission; and, as he had won the fight, he could afford to be magnanimous.

Chorley shook Burke's hand with all the evidences of friendship, and said—

"Now our row is over I don't see why we should not be friends. One of us must have licked the other; and I believe I fought pretty well, although I did get licked."

"You milled splendidly, sir; no fellow could have done it better," replied Burke.

"Well, I don't know about that, exactly; I think you did it better, or our relative positions would be reversed," said Chorley, smiling.

"I am awfully sorry it ever came to that," replied Burke; "but it was not exactly my fault. Anyhow it is all over now, and no one will be more delighted to make friends than I shall. But, I say, did my tutor say anything about your face?"

"No," replied Chorley.

"Ah! your face is not so bad as mine."

"Did he ask you?"

"Yes, he did, after dinner to-day," said Burke.

"And what did you tell him?"

"I said I fell over a bat in the Playing Fields, when I was running after a ball," replied Butler Burke.

After this Burke and Chorley went about together as they did formerly; so there is nothing to marvel at in their being together on the morning of the fourth of June. They were going to absence. Being Lower boys, they went to the place where the master, who happened to be that week "in desk" was standing. After absence, Chorley said—

"Don't go back to my tutor's; come up to the Christopher, and have breakfast."

"Yes, I have no objection; I think I should like it; it will be a change," replied Butler Burke. "But I haven't much tin."

"That does not matter; I have," said Chorley, rather briefly, as if he did not wish to be asked any questions.

"Have you? How much have you got?" asked Butler Burke.

"About three or four pounds."

"You didn't tell me about it," said Butler Burke. "Where did you get it? Who pouched you?"

"I had it sent from home," replied Chorley, shortly.

"That is odd," thought Butler Burke. "I never saw any registered letter for him; and he has not had time to go up town to get a Post-office order cashed. I suppose he would have to go to Singleton's to get it, and he clearly could not have done it; it is a sheer impossibility."

But, as they talked about other things, the incident escaped his memory, and he was in excellent spirits as they passed under the stern-looking gateway of the Christopher. With a capital appetite, and a good breakfast in prospective, there was no substantial reason why he should not be elated.

"I don't see the fun of tea and coffee," said Chorley. "Let us have some French wine; my pater very often drinks it for breakfast."

Burke made no objection; and after ordering the breakfast and a bottle of Chablis, they were shown into number nine, which was Chorley's favourite room.

"Is the Prince coming to-day?" inquired Butler Burke, as he helped himself to the wing of a chicken nicely cooked with mushrooms.

"So I heard. The Queen, they say, is at Osborne, and can't come," replied Chorley, unwrapping a cutlet from its "caisse."

After breakfast they went to the school yard to see the Prince walk from "Chamber," accompanied by the provost and head master, to upper school, where the speeches were to be delivered. Seats had been fitted up for gaily-dressed ladies, and the boys who were to speak had an audience they might well be proud of.

Chorley got tired of speeches very quickly, and said to Burke, "Let's cut this, and go to Bird's-eye Bristol's; I dare say we shall find some one there."

"Very well," replied Burke, "I have no objection; but I don't see how it is to be done. We are Lower boys, you know, and the sixth form præposter will not let us out."

"If he says anything to me I shall say I am in Lower Lower, and I should like to know how he is to tell the difference," said Chorley.

"Well, I don't see how he can, exactly," replied Butler Burke.

"You stick close to me, then," continued Chorley, "and say the same."

Chorley's plan succeeded, and, effecting their escape, they walked arm-in-arm up to the Brocas, for Chorley was fond of "buckling-to," as he called walking arm-in-arm.

Bird's-eye Bristol was a dog-fancier; his real name was Bristol, but he had been nicknamed Bird's-eye. He was about five feet nothing in height, thin and

cadaverous-looking, and he always wore a sycophantic leer on his countenance; he dressed himself in a fur cap, a velvet coat, and cord breeches. Bird's-eye was in great request, and highly popular with those boys who thought it the thing to do to keep what the author of "Verdant Green" calls "a huz and buz." Bird's-eye's patrons would come up to see their dogs, and sit in his cottage and smoke and drink beer, for they were "potent at potting." Bird's-eye kept two small cads to look after his canine animals.

These boys groaned under the appellation of "Herring," which was their unfortunate patronymic—I say groaned advisedly, for their personal peculiarities, coupled with their family name, subjected them to perpetual ridicule. One had red hair, the other a corpulent figure. The former was denominated the Red Herring, the latter the Bloater.

On their arrival, Chorley and Butler Burke found Cutty Irving blowing a cloud, and he greeted them with acclamation.

"Gents, will yer please to lush?" inquired Bird's-eye, with a suavity of manner peculiar to himself.

"I think we will, please," said Chorley. "Send the Bloater for a pot of beer."

The Bloater, who had been fighting mouth to mouth with a pup, picked himself up at hearing his name pronounced. He was not long kept in igno-

rance of his mission, for a half-crown, thrown by Chorley's skilful hand, rattled against his shins, and picking up the money with a short yelp of pain, he set off on his errand.

"Jove!" cried Chorley, "I have left my pipe at my tutor's. Got any weeds, Bird's-eye?"

Bird's-eye produced some suspicious-looking cigars from under the bed, which stood in a corner of the room, and proffered them to Chorley, who upon seeing them immediately demanded, "Are these the worst you have, you old cad?"

"Them's the werry wust, sir, if I never spiks no more," replied Bird's-eye, grinning from ear to ear.

Chorley took one and began to smoke.

"Now, sir, you is burning incense to Bacchus," said Bird's-eye.

"Who's he, Bird's-eye?"

"The old party as lives by baccy, sir."

"You're classical, to-day, Bird's-eye."

"Oh! I is, sir; I is," replied the dog-fancier.

Chorley's own classical attainments were nothing to boast of, but it is to be supposed he knew that Bacchus was the god of drunkards.

"I am going to have some shandygaff," exclaimed Irving. "Here, Red, you go and get some ginger-beer."

Red rushed out of the door with the impetuosity of

youth, and not looking before him, of necessity ran against the Bloater.

"Hallo!" cried Chorley, "you careless little beggar; you have upset the malt. Come here!"

"Wollop 'im! It was Red as done it," snivelled the miserable Bloater.

But the excuse availed him not. Chorley seized him, and delivered him to the tormentor. Bird's-eye administered a castigation, and then despatched him again. This time he returned with the beer in safety. After this, Chorley's terriers were brought in, and with some cleverness they worried a few rats which Bird's-eye provided. Butler Burke amused himself with a rough Skye he had lately purchased from Bird's-eye. He was teaching it to beg, and to carry a stick in its mouth, and to lie down and pretend he was dead. These were his three tricks, and Burke gave him a lesson every time he came up to Bird's-eye's. Chorley at length, in the hilarity of the moment, and the exultation of his spirits at his terriers having acquitted themselves so well, favoured the assembled company with a song.

> "Give me my pot and my pipe,
> And——"

But, quo musa tendis?

When they were tired of Bird's-eye's establishment, and the varied amusements it afforded, they walked

to the rafts, and going up the ladder at Goodman's, which led into the workshop, they watched a boat which was in process of construction. Eventually wearying of this, they descended, and Chorley ordered his boat to be got out. Lying down on a horse-rug spread in the stern, he allowed Butler Burke to scull him lazily a little way up-stream, when, shooting up some dead water, they lay under the willow boughs, and pulling some books out of their pockets, began to read, in which position they indulged until the clock of St. George's warned them that it was time to go back to College to absence.

In the evening, the boats as usual, went in procession from the Brocas up to Surly, accompanied by the Leander's Eight. Butler Burke and Chorley walked down to the Brocas after tea, and having arrived there, wandered about amongst the carriages until they saw one which would do for them. It had a capacious dickey, which was as yet untenanted; into this they quickly climbed, and fastened the apron comfortably round them. When the boats started the carriages also started, and went up to Surly by land.

They arrived there before the boats, and leaned over the hurdles near the Britannia table, for there were two fellows at their tutor's in that boat, and one, Paddy Lascelles, Chorley fagged for, so he knew that he would stand a good chance of getting some cham-

pagne; nor was he mistaken, for both Butler Burke and himself got two tumblers-full. Finding that no more was to be expected in that quarter, they went to some other acquaintances, where they were more fortunate.

Each boat on its arrival at Surly goes to its own particular table, where a capital supper is laid out for them, and having drunk their wine and demolished the viands, they set out on the homeward track, and row down to Windsor Bridge, when the fireworks begin. The boats are seven in number, the Monarch (ten oar), the Victory, the Prince of Wales, the Britannia, the Dreadnought, the Thetis, the St. George, and, I believe, lately the Defiance has been repainted and made to do duty on festive occasions. The boys who row in them are the best oars in the school, and are dressed in a very pretty costume, which is only worn on the 4th of June, Election Saturday, and check nights.

When Chorley and Butler Burke reached their tutor's, they were not, strictly speaking, sober; but the magisterial eyes are not over critical unless the case is very flagrant, and they escaped without any punishment other than a bad headache the next morning.

As Burke was going to bed that night, Purefoy came into his room, and said,

"Did you take any money out of my bureau to-day, Butts?"

"No, I did not," replied Burke, sleepily. "If I had I should have told you. Have you lost any?"

"Yes. I had some in my bureau last night, and I cannot find it now."

"How much?" asked Burke.

"Between three and four pounds," replied Purefoy.

"That's odd," said Butler Burke. "Well, good-night, old boy; I'll talk to you in the morning. I feel so seedy now." And in a few minutes he was fast asleep.

CHAPTER IX.

SWEEPSTAKES.

A FEW days after the fourth of June, Mr. Wynn's Sweepstakes took place. All the fifth form and sixth form boys were strokes, and they drew for their bows amongst the Lower boys who had passed and could row.

One morning Butler Burke was sitting in his room, looking over his Lemprière, for he had to do "proper names," when Chudleigh looked in and said, "There is Chorley howling for you in an awful manner."

"Well," said Burke, "if he wants me, he must come for me. I am very busy just now."

Chudleigh disappeared, muttering, "Sorry I spoke." And directly afterwards the door opened again, and Chorley made his appearance.

"You are my bow, Burke," he exclaimed.

"How do you mean?" said Butler Burke.

"I mean in my tutor's Sweepstakes. I have drawn you. There were more bows than strokes, so they have made me a stroke, and I have drawn you."

"Have you, though?" said Burke, looking up.

"I think we have a very good chance," continued Chorley. "But you must come down to the Brocas every day after twelve as soon as you can."

"All right; I'll come. Only don't badger me now; I am doing 'proper names.' I say, who was Epaminondas?"

"Some Spartan swell, I think; but I wont swear. Look him up," replied Chorley.

The eventful day quickly arrived, and during the interval, Butler Burke practised every day with Chorley. Every one acknowledged that they were a formidable pair, and stood a good chance of coming in somewhere. Chudleigh, who, it will be remembered, was not very well disposed towards Chorley, had declared that he would bump him. "I have no chance myself," he said, "and as I know that, with the bow I have drawn, winning is out of the question, I wont let Chorley win if I can help it."

Two or three other boys expressed themselves in a similar manner; and it will be seen that Chorley would still have to encounter Charybdis, even if he were lucky enough to escape Scylla.

Chorley selected the lightest and narrowest skiff he could find at Goodman's, and both Butler Burke and himself made up their minds to do everything to win. The sweepstakes were to be rowed after ten; and

when the morning arrived, Chorley walked up town with his bow, on the way picking up his coxswain, Lord Fitzwinton, one of the smallest and best coaches in the school. At the raft, Chorley carefully inspected everything, and finding it all arranged to his satisfaction, he got in with his crew and pushed off into mid-stream, and then pulled gently up to the Clump.

"Look here, you fellows!" he exclaimed to Fitzwinton and Butler Burke. "It will be our own fault if we don't win this race. We are as strong as any of them, and I want to win, to rile the fellows who are going to bump us. You must pull like a brick, Burke, and you, Fitz, must steer through them all."

The boys promised compliance, and Chorley continued—"Directly you hear the gun fired, Burke, just back water a little."

"Back water!" cried Butler Burke, astonished. "What is the good of that?"

"Well, you will see. This is not the first sweep I have rowed for, and I flatter myself I know how to win one as well as any fellow at Eton or Westminster. I should have won last year if I had not broken my oar."

"I wish you would explain a little, though," said Burke.

"I'll bet you Fitzwinton will tell you I'm right," replied Chorley, smiling. "What do you say, Fitz?"

"Yes, I quite agree with you," replied Fitzwinton. "You see," he added, "what Chorley means is this: the boats that go on will unavoidably foul one another."

"They must do it—can't help themselves," put in Chorley. "We are in the third row, and if we can only keep clear, we shall be all right."

"Fortunately," said Chorley, "I have drawn Eton, so that we can make a broad sweep when we pull on. At first all depends on you, Fitz, because you must steer as nicely as possible through the lot of boats you will meet with under Bridge."

They now reached Brocas Clump, and proceeded to take their places in the third row. The boats were in position as they arrived, and the starters were regulating their respective distances. The captain of the boats and some swells were standing together on the bank. Buckingham Shellville, the captain, held a gun in his hand. He ran his critical eye over the three rows of boats on the river. "Third row," he cried, "Eton, come up a little. Down, two, Windsor. That will do. Easy there!" Finding them all in proper position, he exclaimed "Make ready," and raised the gun to his shoulder. A puff of smoke, a report, and they were off. Uplifted oars cleaved the water, and splashing it far and wide scattered the spray in all directions. Three boats in the first row got off clear

and made way; two from the second also effected their escape; the others were for the most part jammed together in hopeless confusion, in little knots of four or five. In time oars began to float down stream, and there was one swamp. The first boats had turned the corner and were out of sight. Chorley, who was lying on his oars, smiled, for he saw Chudleigh was entangled, and making frantic efforts to get free. Butler Burke was painfully excited. "Confound it!" he said; "why doesn't Chorley start? Here we are losing the race!" Suddenly Chorley, who had been looking round, espied an unencumbered channel. "Now then," he said between his teeth, "now then. Row on all." A few vigorous strokes brought them under Bridge, above which several boats, which had not the remotest chance, were labouring their way up, and amongst them was Chudleigh, who had extricated himself and had passed the shed. Three boats were lying-to under the bank, and each darted forward when they saw Chorley: one took middle-stream, one stayed near the Windsor bank, while the last made for the Eton side. By this severance of their forces they defeated their object: for Chorley bent over his stretcher till his oar quivered in the water, and the little skiff flew along as if endowed with life, and fully capable of entering into the spirit of the race; and as Lord Fitzwinton skilfully steered so as to avoid them,

they passed with the greatest ease. The three boats pulled frantically after them, but after they had gone fifty yards or so, Chorley's superior strength showed them the folly of attempting to follow him, and so they pulled up some boards from the bottom of their boat, and sailed slowly with the stream back to College, with Chorley's sarcastic laugh ringing unpleasantly in their ears.

When Chorley reached Clewer he saw seven boats before him, and at Lower Hope he overtook Chudleigh, who did all he could to foul him, which at last he succeeded in doing; but as the bows of Chudleigh's boat ran into his, Chorley shipped his oar and placed it against Chudleigh's rowlock. By this means he pushed himself clear and recommenced the race. Chafing at the delay, Chudleigh tried to repeat his manœuvres, but without success; the speed with which Chorley put his boat along rendered his efforts futile. A large number of boys were running along the bank, and they backed up Chudleigh furiously, for Chorley was not very popular, owing to his bullying propensities.

"Foul that beast Chorley!"—"Well pulled, Chudleigh!"—"Now then, put her along!"—"Foul Chorley"—"Spurt her, Chudleigh!"—"Well rowed, well rowed!"—were some of the remarks that issued from those who were running round.

But Chorley soon distanced Chudleigh, who, with a peculiar jerk, contrived to break his rowlock.

"By George, my rowlock's broken!" he exclaimed, with apparent surprise; "what hard lines!"

"We must drift back to the Brocas, I suppose," said his bow, by no means sorry that the contest was over, for he was already knocked up.

When Chorley passed Athens, there were three boats before him, one of which had nearly reached the rushes.

"Well rowed, indeed, bow," he said, giving a longer and steadier stroke. "Well rowed, indeed. Are you much blown?"

"No," replied Burke, "I have got second wind."

"All right; row on, then. Pull well through the water and don't chop your stroke."

When he reached the rushes, he met one boat coming down, and it was clear that the race would be between that one and his own. On arriving at the pole, he passed the third, and on descending the stream he had the satisfaction of perceiving the second a few yards before him. A little energetic pulling brought him alongside, and a spurt put water between them. Chorley's rowing that morning was a thing to admire; his stroke was at once elegant and vigorous, and he rowed with immense power without seeming to labour at all.

"Who is that?" asked Buckingham Shellville of some one near him, as Chorley's boat passed where he was standing at Lower Hope.

No one knew.

"Whoever he is, he is a splendid oar, and will be in the eight some day, if he stays," said Shellville.

At the Clump, the first boat was only a few yards in advance, and Chorley hoped with a few more strokes to pass it.

There was a good deal of excitement among the fellows on the bank, and they backed up the first boat rather loudly.

"Put the spurt on, bow!" said Chorley, in a tone of assurance.

"Really I can't," replied Butler Burke. "I feel so ill, I don't think I can pull another stroke."

"Not pull another stroke? Oh! hang it!" cried Chorley; "you are not going to shut up?"

"I am, indeed, I am afraid," replied Burke. "I can't help it."

As he spoke, his voice was little above a whisper.

"Don't shut up; anything but that," said Chorley. "Just contrive to move your oar up and down a little in the water, till the giddiness goes away, and I will do the work. Steer against me, Fitz."

Chorley prepared himself for an heroic effort. The men in the winning boat were pulling very languidly.

By making very great efforts, Chorley succeeded in coming up with the first boat as they passed Tolladay's raft. Ever since Butler Burke shut up, his exertions had been very fine.

"Now, Burke," said Chorley, "see what you can do."

Butler Burke summoned all the energy he could to the rescue, and changed the feeble strokes he had been pulling ever since they passed the Clump, into something a little more vigorous.

Chorley really worked like a bargee, and the veins on his forehead were swollen almost to bursting. The cries on the shore were deafening. As the boats passed Searles' they were bow and bow. Both Butler Burke and Chorley were very much exhausted, but the excitement of the moment inspired them with new strength. The shadow cast by Windsor-bridge on the river enveloped them. Butler Burke threw all his strength into a final stroke, and fainted, falling down in the bottom of the boat. Chorley threw up his oar, and uttered an exclamation of despair. They had lost the race by little more than a yard, and the winning boat pulled down to the Cobbler and returned to the raft amidst tremendous cheers. And we must do the School the justice to say that when Chorley paddled back to Goodman's, he was also loudly cheered for the plucky way in which he had contested the best race of the half.

CHAPTER X.

GOLD AND SILVER.

A FEW days after the 4th of June, Purefoy and Butler Burke were, after twelve, returning from the New Fives Walls, where they had had an excellent game. The faces of both boys glowed from the effects of the healthy exercise they had been indulging in. They had been playing for about an hour and a half, and they were now returning to their tutor's to dinner. Instead of going round through Keat's-lane, they preferred taking the quicker way through the alleys which led to John Hawtrey's Field and Carter's-passage. It was much the pleasanter way to go, not only because it was the nearest, which is certainly an inducement after playing several games of fives, but because it was quiet and unfrequented. Purefoy liked solitude, and delighted in retired places, where he could either read or converse with a friend upon some topic in which both took an interest.

"I must have my revenge to-morrow; you won three games out of five!" exclaimed Butler Burke.

"Whenever you like, old boy," replied Purefoy, who seemed pleased at his victory.

"By the way, what do I owe you? You paid for the fives-balls to-day; and now I recollect, you did the same thing the last time we played together."

"Did I? Well, I had quite forgotten it. As far as I am concerned it does not matter a straw," replied Purefoy.

"Oh yes, it does," said Butler Burke; "these things ought to be attended to. I hate a fellow who will sponge on somebody else who happens to be good-natured. For my part, I like to square accounts as soon as possible; and then no mistake, or misunderstanding, or bad feeling can possibly arise."

"All right. Then you shall pay the next time, and the next in succession to that. Will that please you?" said Purefoy, smiling.

The boys walked on a little way in silence, when Butler Burke suddenly exclaimed—

"I say, Purefoy, did you find the tin you lost?"

"What tin?"

"Why, didn't you ask me, on the 4th, if I had gone to your bureau and helped myself, for you had lost a lot of money?" replied Butler Burke.

"Oh! I know what you mean, now," said Purefoy. "But when you began to talk about tin with such impetuosity, I hardly knew what you meant."

"Well, have you found it? That is what I want to know. Money cannot walk off of its own accord. If it took itself off, why, you may safely swear some one gave it a helping hand."

"I am sorry to say I have not found it," replied Purefoy; "nor have I seen any signs of it."

"You are sure it was in your bureau?"

"Yes; I am positive about that, or I should not say so. I had some money sent me the other day, and I went up town to pay Singleton something I owed him for books, and I paid Knox a bill after that. I think I had a little more than three pounds left; this three pounds I put in my bureau."

"Where?" asked Butler Burke.

"In the central pigeon-hole, as well as I can remember. It might have been in one of the side ones; but I know I placed it in one of them."

"And when you came to look for it it was gone?"

"Exactly," answered Purefoy, laconically, as if he were somewhat annoyed at the reminiscence of his loss.

"It certainly is very strange," said Butler Burke.

"What annoys me is," said Purefoy, "that it is the middle of the half, and I don't like to write home for some more just now, and the money I have left is going rather quickly. I shall, I expect, have to make

you my banker, and draw upon you for the next week or two."

"You know you may do that. As long as I have a penny you may always have half of it."

"You are very kind," said Purefoy; "but if a penny is the extent of your resources, why, half that extravagant sum will hardly suffice for my pressing necessities."

"But about your tin?" exclaimed Butler Burke.

"Well, what about it?"

"Why, this. In the first place, you take it very easy; much more so than I should, I think."

"What's the good of putting yourself out about it? I know it is annoying, because I am the interested party, and who should know better than me? But I cannot see the fun of grizzling and growling over it," answered Purefoy, looking his impetuous cousin steadily in the face.

"Well, of course you will please yourself. It is nothing much to do with me," said Butler Burke. "But if it were my case, I must say I would do something about it."

"What would you have me do?" queried Purefoy.

"Do you think the money vanished?"

"No; I don't think it vanished exactly, but it disappeared mysteriously."

"Do you think somebody bagged it?" asked Butler Burke.

"If you will have it, I do," replied Purefoy.

"Whom do you suspect?" said Burke, rather anxiously, looking at his cousin as if the affair began to interest him.

"There I am at fault. I have no evidence to make me suspect anybody. I have only a general idea that some one took it."

Butler Burke shook his head. This reply was vague enough indeed. He had thought that Purefoy had some circumstance fresh in his mind which tended to throw suspicion upon some individual in particular.

"You must not say a word about this, Burke, to any fellow," said Purefoy.

"Why not?" demanded Burke, in astonishment.

"Why, my dear fellow, don't you see that if it got about that I had lost some money, and that I thought somebody had bagged it, the whole house would be uncomfortable. The boys' maids would be angry and annoyed, because fellows would say directly that they have more facilities for getting at fellows' bureaus than anybody else."

"Why didn't you lock your bureau," Burke remarked.

"Why don't I do lots of things? It is very easy

to talk about things after the event, and say all that about shutting the stable-door after the horse is stolen; but I left my bureau open because I was in a hurry. It was past the hour, and I was afraid Masters would be out of chamber, and it would be 'all up' before I could get into school. It was careless on my part, I know, and you may say it served me right to lose the money."

Purefoy finished this speech with a smile.

"Not at all. I don't say it was your fault; because it is beastly if a fellow cannot leave his bureau unlocked; and it is very dreadful to think that there should be a thief in the house."

"So it is," replied Purefoy. "It makes one look over the things in one's room and count them. One cannot feel safe. I declare I look at my watch with extra affection."

"Oh, that's rot!" ejaculated Butler Burke. "No one would bag a fellow's watch."

"Why not? On the contrary, I think, if a man will take one thing, he will take another, and if three or four pounds vanish, why should not a watch find itself legs and toddle off also?"

"Well, I don't know, I am sure. I hope mine wont though," replied Burke, laughing, and taking out the article in question, as if to assure himself of the fact of its being in its right place.

In another minute the boys arrived at their tutor's, and going upstairs, washed their hands, and presently, as the bell rang, came down to dinner.

All dinner-time Burke was thinking about his conversation with Purefoy respecting the money he had lost. He considered it clear that some one had taken it. Purefoy was not the sort of fellow to have spent it and then to have forgotten all about it, for he was always clear-headed and straightforward. This being the case, it followed that there must be a delinquent, and in the house too. Butler Burke knew that he would not have done such a thing for worlds, and at first he had some difficulty to convince himself that any other boy was depraved enough to do so. But at last he could arrive at no other conclusion. He had heard of such things happening at other houses, and he knew that fellows had been sent away for it; but as yet it had never taken place in his tutor's. It was looked upon as an offence of singular enormity, and the house in which it happened was considered disgraced by it; so much so, that it was generally tried to hush it up and prevent the scandal from getting about.

What Purefoy had said, too, about not mentioning it to any one else, seemed to him, since his cousin had explained his meaning, extremely proper; because all the boys in the house would feel slighted and

insulted by a general suspicion which could point to no particular person. Therefore he resolved to comply with his cousin's request, and say nothing about it. He felt, though, that he would like above all things to find out the culprit; but, at present, he was like a blind man looking for a needle in a bundle of hay. "After all," he said to himself, "it is no business of mine, except in this way: I am so great a friend of Purefoy's, and so much in his room, that the fellows would, perhaps, say it was me."

This was not improbable, and Butler Burke acted very wisely in not mentioning it to anybody.

But a circumstance happened which placed all his care and prudence out of court. After dinner he went into his cousin's room to get a book he wanted. When Purefoy saw him enter, he exclaimed,

"You have not said anything to any one about that money I lost? Perhaps I may be mistaken after all."

Before Burke could reply to this question, a voice behind him said,

"What money have you lost, Purefoy?"

Turning round, he perceived Chudleigh, who, in coming along the passage, had just looked in.

"Oh! nothing," replied Purefoy. "I did not know you were there."

"There is no particular harm if I am, I suppose?" said Chudleigh. "I can easily go if I am not wanted."

"Nobody wants you to go," said Purefoy, hoping that Chudleigh would not press his question. But in this he was mistaken; for, almost directly, he continued—

"But what about this money?"

"What money?"

"Why, the money you were talking about when I came in. Did not you say you had lost some?"

The question was so point blank that there was no possibility of avoiding it.

"Well, suppose Purefoy did say so," interposed Butler Burke. "I don't see that it is anything to do with you, or anybody else."

"Oh, indeed! That's your opinion, is it?" replied Chudleigh. "As it happens, I was not talking to you."

Butler Burke made no reply.

Turning to Purefoy, he said, "If there is any mystery about it, I am sure I don't want to know; only hearing you say that you had lost some money, I naturally asked you about it."

Burke took the book he came into Purefoy's room to get, and, without making any further remark, he went back to his own room, thinking how unfortunate it was that Chudleigh should have looked in at so inopportune a moment.

Soon after, Chudleigh made an apologetic remark for going into Purefoy's room, and walking along the

passage, as he had nothing particular to do, he dropped in upon Chorley.

Chorley was sitting in his arm-chair, with a Gradus by his side, making some Latin verses.

"Have you got an old copy of 'Hero and Leander?'" he asked.

"Yes, I think I have," replied Chudleigh.

"I wish you would lend it me."

"All right; you shall have it. I will look it out after four. It is about time to go into school now. Will you come with me?"

Chorley put on his hat, and took his books, which he put under his arm, and Chudleigh having done the same, they left the house together.

"Butler Burke's a great friend of yours, isn't he?" said Chudleigh.

"Yes; we pull together very well. Why? what's the row with him?"

"Oh! nothing particular. But have you heard anything about Purefoy losing some money?"

When Chorley heard this apparently simple question, he dropped the books he had in his hand. Chudleigh hardly noticed the circumstance at the time, but he remembered it well afterwards.

"No, I have not," replied Chorley; "have you?"

"Well, I will tell you what I heard. I came into Purefoy's room just now—not for anything in parti-

cular, but you know fellows often look in on one another when they are walking about the passage, and have nothing to do; and as I entered the room, I heard Purefoy ask Burke if he had told anybody about some money which had been lost."

"Lost by Purefoy?" said Chorley.

"Yes, by Purefoy. Burke was going to answer; but before he could do so, I spoke, and asked what money it was, and all about it; but neither of them would say anything about it, and Butler Burke told me it was not my business. I know it doesn't concern me exactly; but a thing of that sort concerns the whole house."

"So it does," Chorley answered.

"I thought it rather odd that Burke should try to shut me up so quickly. What do you think?" continued Chudleigh.

"I think so, too. It looks very seedy," said Chorley, his face lighting up as if he had unexpectedly found the way out of some dilemma.

"I'll tell you what I thought," observed Chudleigh. "I thought that Butler Burke had been bagging Purefoy's tin, and they had settled it in some way between them; or else that Burke was trying to fix suspicion upon some one else."

"Yes; that is more likely," responded Chorley, hastily.

"So I think myself; and I am sorry for Burke if it is so. I always thought him a very nice fellow."

Their conversation was here interrupted by cries of "All up! all up!" and the long gown of a master swept by, indicating that its possessor was going into school. It was a fourth-form master, and Chorley, being in his division, followed him up the staircase leading to Upper school, leaving Chudleigh, who was in a higher division.

What Butler Burke had feared as likely to happen actually came to pass By a series of accidents it had been suggested that he was the actual taker of Purefoy's money. In a day or two the fact of Purefoy having sustained a loss got all over the house, and Butler Burke was regarded with considerable distrust and suspicion. It was strange that his friend Chorley should not have defended him; but instead of doing so, he was one of the most eager of his accusers, though he acted in a quiet, underground sort of way.

CHAPTER XI.

TURNING THE TABLES.

So strongly did the tide set in against Butler Burke, that he found himself cut by every one who had formerly been on friendly terms with him. At first he could hardly believe it; but when he encountered nothing but averted looks and cold replies, he could not shut his eyes to the kind of feeling that was afloat respecting him. It was hard to bear. He was an honest, open-hearted boy, frank and straightforward in everything he did, and to be accused tacitly of a crime which everybody must shrink from was a great affliction.

"I wish some one would openly say what they think. Just let them tell me to my face, and I should know what to do," said the poor fellow.

But up to the present time no one had thought fit, or had dared, to say what was evidently in everybody's mind.

Some, perhaps, did not like to say anything until they had absolute proof of his misdeeds. Others again

were afraid, because they knew that Butler Burke could, and would, fight very well.

One day as he was coming upstairs he felt some one touch him behind. Putting his hand round, he felt the back of his coat, and found that the boy who had touched him, whoever he was, had put a piece of paper under the collar of his coat. Taking it to the light, he looked and perceived that there was something written on it.

When he saw what that was, he turned scarlet, and his face became as hot as fire. There was only one word written on the paper, but when he read that word he felt like the prisoner in France, who, condemned to *travaux forcées* at the galleys, bares his shoulder in order that the indelible badge of disgrace—the everlasting *fleur-de-lis*—may be branded upon it. That word was "*Thief!*" Yes; some one had gone so far as to affix that epithet to him, and he, not knowing who the offender was, was powerless to resent the insult. Crushing the paper in his hand, he sought Purefoy. He was not in his room. Sitting down on a chair, he awaited his return. The door was partially open, and any one passing through the passage could see him. Some one passing by did see him, and immediately exclaimed "I say, there's Butler Burke bagging some more money."

With a bound, Butler Burke sprang from his chair,

and with rapid strides endeavoured to overtake the offender. This he succeeded in doing just as he reached the top of the stairs. He was a little fellow of the name of Abbott; he was the son of a peer, and prefixed Honourable to his name. Seizing him by the arm, Burke dragged him into the middle of the passage, and, blind with fury and passion, began to thrash him, hitting him anywhere and everywhere. Abbot shouted for some assistance, and hearing the noise, several boys came out of their rooms; among them were Lascelles and some other big fellows.

"Let him go!" exclaimed some one; "don't lick him like that."

"What's he done?" said another.

"I saw him—the beastly cad—in Purefoy's room," said Abbott between his sobs; "and I said 'there's Burke bagging some more money.'"

"If he did say so you have no right to lick him for it," said Lascelles, addressing Burke. "Let him go. Everybody knows what you are."

Butler Burke, seeing that popular opinion was against him, gave Abbott a parting kick, and let him go.

"You cowardly little thief!" exclaimed Lascelles, "I thought I told you not to lick him. Come here, and I'll see how you like it."

Lascelles advanced a step and laid hold of Burke, upon whom he inflicted a very respectable hiding.

Burke in his turn could hardly restrain his tears, not so much at the pain of Lascelles' blows, but because he had openly been called a thief by a fellow older and bigger than himself, whom he could not be revenged upon.

"Lick him, Lascelles!" cried the boys who were looking on. "Give it him. Let him have it!"

When Lascelles had thrashed him to his satisfaction, he let him go, and returned to his own room. Butler Burke slunk away to Purefoy's room again, but as he went along the passage, a general hiss followed him, and cries of "Thief! thief!" resounded in his ears. And much to his mortification, Abbott's voice sounded louder than any one else's.

He had not long been waiting for his cousin before he came in. Purefoy at once perceived that Butler Burke was much agitated, though he was at a loss to guess the cause.

"What's the matter, eh?" he demanded.

"Why," said Burke, in a broken voice, "I can't stand it. I shall run away."

"But what is it? What have you been blubbering for?"

"The fellows called me a thief, and they say I bagged your money, and Lascelles has just licked me because I pitched into Abbott for saying that I was in your room because I wanted to bag some more money;

and some fellow wrote 'Thief' on a bit of paper, and stuck the paper on the collar of my coat."

Butler Burke poured out his list of grievances in a breath, without giving Purefoy time to comment upon them.

"It is too bad. Who could have started the report? It must have been Chudleigh. Never mind, Butts, I know you are innocent. It will all come out by-and-bye."

"But all the fellows have cut me. I have only you to speak to now. It is too much for any fellow to stand."

Purefoy walked up and down the room as if much annoyed.

"There is Chorley, too; he hardly speaks to me," said Butler Burke.

"Well, that is no great loss, I should think."

"I don't know about that. It was only the other day we were so jolly together. On the fourth, we went up to the Christopher and had an awfully jolly breakfast together."

"Who stood it?" asked Purefoy, with evident interest.

"Why, Chorley did; you know I had no tin," replied Burke, testily.

"That's very strange," said Purefoy, moodily.

"Why is it strange? Chorley had a lot of money

with him, and I don't see why he should not stand something when he has the tin; I have often stood him breakfasts at the Castle, and cider-cups at Salt Hill; and you know every Sunday we have dined at the Castle, and for the last two dinners I paid, and they came together to about three pounds."

"I will tell you why I think it strange. On the morning of the fourth, before breakfast, Chorley came to me and said he was hard up."

"Well," said Burke.

"And he asked me to lend him some silver, as he wanted to go up to Surly. I lent him five shillings; and I opened my bureau to get the money; he was close to me. And now I remember I saw him looking over my shoulder. He could easily see that I had some money in the pigeon-hole."

"Well, what of it?" said Butler Burke, who did not seem to see what his cousin was driving at.

"If you will wait a bit, and not be so impatient, I will tell you. Just as I gave Chorley the five bob, the bell rang for prayers, and I went down, leaving my keys in my bureau. Now do you see?"

"Yes; now I begin to see what you mean, I think."

"Very well; then I will tell you something else. I remarked that Chorley, who sits exactly opposite me generally at prayers, was not there that morning;

and this fact is fresh in my memory, because my tutor nailed his shirking prayers, and said to some one, 'Tell Chorley to come here;' and when he came down he got a pœna, because I met him in the passage afterwards with an old fifty lines in his hand. You know he always keeps a lot of lines on hand, because he finds them useful. He does them when he has nothing to do: but when he wants to go anywhere, and he gets a pœna, he can take some old lines and show them up. Who's to tell the difference?"

"You mean to say, then—" began Butler Burke, when his cousin interrupted him, saying,

"I mean to say nothing; draw your own conclusions. Shall I state the case to you?"

"Yes, do."

"All right. Well, to begin. Chorley, at half-past eight on the fourth of June, is without a rap—at least we may presume so. he was not, why should he borrow five shillings? He does not go down to prayers. The passages are empty. The rooms are empty; the boys' maid, perhaps, has gone down to the kitchen to get some bread and butter. My keys are in my bureau. After prayers, Chorley goes up town with you; he receives no letter; he changes no Post-office order. He has two or three pounds in his pocket, and stands an expensive breakfast. Well, what do you think of it?"

"Hurrah! Purefoy, you've hit it, I am sure," cried Butler Burke, his eyes sparkling once more. "What a clever fellow you are!"

"Not at all," replied Purefoy; "any one could have put those simple facts together. You must remember, too, how Chorley behaved to you about those pheasants' eggs—he only gave himself up when he couldn't help it; and as this is a much more serious affair, I don't suppose he will give himself up at all."

"And if I were to say that he stole the money, I suppose he would deny it," said Butler Burke.

"Of course he would. No, that is not the way to do it. You know that it is horrible that you should be bullied and persecuted for another boy's offence."

"Don't talk about it. I have had enough of it, I can tell you; and if it went on to the end of the half, I think I should go pretty well mad," said Butler Burke, with a shudder at the bare idea.

"What I think, then, is, that we ought to tell my tutor. Chorley, you see, has no mercy upon you, and why should you have any upon him? For my part, I think he will richly deserve all that he gets."

"I think so, too," replied Butler Burke. "I think it is beastly of him to let another fellow get blamed for what he knows very well he has done himself. And now I think of it, Chorley did not like my questioning him about his tin."

"Oh, he did not, eh? What did you say?"

"I was, of course, surprised to see him so flush, and I asked him where he got the tin from, and I think he said he had been pouched that morning."

"Yes; that is just what he would say; but we have proved that he could not have been pouched. Now, what do you say; have you any objection to my telling my tutor all about it? I shall tell him everything from beginning to end, and tell him my chain of evidence against Chorley."

"Very well," replied Butler Burke. "I really am not selfish, but I do not see why I should suffer to screen another fellow who does not care a straw for me. You may do what you like, and say what you like; I am sure you have my full permission."

Purefoy got up, and said, "I am going now. If I can find my tutor, I shall be with him, I dare say, half an hour. Will you wait till I come back? If you go out into the passage you will very likely only get bullied."

Burke said he would do as Purefoy proposed; and going to the window, he looked out. The Honourable Mr. Abbott was standing in the yard, and looking up he happened to perceive Barke. No sooner had he done so than he seized a stone and threw it up at the window. Butler Burke withdrew his face only just in time, for the missile crashed through the

glass within an inch of his head, falling with some force against the opposite wall. "I'll give it you, my boy," muttered Burke, "when I get hold of you!"

Sitting down, he impatiently waited his cousin's return.

"What should I do without Purefoy?" he thought.

CHAPTER XII.

"ONE OF MY HEROES."

PUREFOY found Mr. Wynne disengaged, which was rather a wonder, as the life of an Eton master is anything but a sinecure. What with morning school, prayers, breakfast, construing after ten, school at eleven, pupil-room and looking over Themes and Verses after twelve, dinner at two, school at three, pupil-room very likely after four, school at five, tea, and perhaps pupil-room after six, supper at nine, and prayers at half-past, it can easily be seen that a mastership at Eton is anything but a sinecure. Mr. Wynne happened to be in his study. Purefoy knocked, and he entered when he was told to come in.

"Oh! it is you, Purefoy," said Mr. Wynne, with a smile; "what can I do for you?"

"Are you very much engaged now, sir?" Purefoy asked.

"No, not particularly. To tell you the truth, I am going out into the garden to feed my pheasants; you know I take a great interest in them."

"It is a nice amusement, sir," replied Purefoy. "I have some rabbits at home that I make great pets of, and you would hardly think what an interest I take in letters from home describing their sanitary condition and maternal prospects."

Mr. Wynne laughed at this, and asked what he did with the superfluous members of the family; Purefoy replied that sometimes they were killed and eaten, and now and then, when a market offered, his father's groom had full and ample authority to sell them to the highest bidder, which authority, as he was paid a handsome commission for doing so, he seldom omitted to exercise.

"Butler Burke, sir, used to be rather fond of pheasants' eggs," said Purefoy, with a half smile.

"Yes, I remember; I am afraid I did him great injustice at the time; but it was a great deal his own fault. If he had only told me the facts at once, I should have known what to do directly; but he concealed all the main features of the case from me, and when I cross-questioned him, he sillily refused to answer. So when I saw him actually boiling one of my own eggs, what could I do? the circumstantial evidence was so strong."

"So it was, sir," replied Purefoy.

"But you said you wanted to see me about something," said Mr. Wynne.

Purefoy replied in the affirmative, and his tutor asked him to come into the garden. He gladly accepted the invitation, and followed Mr. Wynne into the drawing-room, and from there they went into the garden.

"A very unpleasant affair, sir, has happened in the house," Purefoy began, "and I do not know how to rectify a great mistake which has arisen without your intervention. As happened once before, Butler Burke is being blamed for a fault which another has committed, and it is strange enough that we are satisfied that other one is Chorley. The facts, sir, are briefly these:—I had some money sent me which was safe in my bureau on the morning of the fourth of June, when I went down to prayers. Some one took that money, and suspicion has fallen upon my cousin. This afternoon some fellows openly called him a thief, and he came to me. I thought the matter over, and came to the conclusion that Chorley was the thief, and that Butler Burke has been most unjustly accused."

"By all means let me hear the evidence you have to adduce. This is a much more serious matter than I at first imagined," said Mr. Wynne.

Purefoy then carefully recapitulated his chain of evidence, giving Mr. Wynne link after link with great minuteness, not omitting the most trivial

circumstance. In point of fact, he stated his cousin's case with the ability of a Nisi Prius lawyer addressing a jury, and it was plain that what he brought forward had its weight with his tutor. When he had done, Mr. Wynne said,

"You have stated everything so lucidly, that I cannot help being of your way of thinking. Butler Burke, it seems to me, is labouring under a most unjust and unfair imputation; and I must confess I had a better opinion of Chorley up to the present time. You remember, I dare say, Purefoy, that in that pheasant business he came to me and gave himself up, and I was rather pleased with him for doing so."

"Well, sir, how do you think we shall be able to establish Burke's innocence?" asked Purefoy.

"Ah, that is the question. I am a little puzzled. I have not the slightest moral doubt of Chorley's guilt. But if he persists in denying it, I really think we shall have some difficulty about the matter. But you must leave it to me. I will write to his mother to-night. Poor thing! she will be terribly annoyed; for, of course, he must leave my house. I could not have him here after this. Did I tell you that his only near relations are his mother and his sister, who are passionately fond of him? His sister is quite a child—about fifteen, I should think; but she thinks her brother is everything that is fine, and noble, and

good. I am very sorry this has occurred—very sorry indeed, for their sakes. If suspicion had not fallen upon your unfortunate cousin, Butler Burke, I think we could have hushed the matter up, for I am convinced that you have no personal feeling in the matter.

"Oh dear, no, sir; none whatever. I only wish the commonest justice should be done towards my cousin; because, to be called a thief is, to my mind, and to his also, the most horrible chaff one could have to put up with."

"You must tell your cousin that I see nothing for it for the present—that is, for a day or two—but to put up with the very great unpleasantness of his position; but he will be fortified with the consciousness that his innocence will sooner or later be proclaimed, and then he will be more popular than ever. I will do all I can for him, and you may tell him he can rely upon me to vindicate him. I should advise you to keep all your facts about Chorley to yourselves until you hear from me again; in fact, let the matter remain in *statu quo*."

Purefoy promised compliance; and thanking Mr. Wynne for his kindness, rejoined Butler Burke, who eagerly accosted him as to the result of his interview with his tutor. He was considerably crestfallen when he heard what had taken place, for he thought that the proclamation of his innocence would immediately

follow. Purefoy, however, assured him that the fact of Mr. Wynne's believing their story at all was a great thing gained, and that it ought to be a great consolation to them to know that they had so powerful a coadjutor at their back; and at last, after a little of Purefoy's cogent reasoning, Butler Burke began to fall in with his views and to adopt his way of thinking, although it was undoubtedly a great hardship to go about as a suspected thief. He knew that he should get a great deal of bullying and unmerited contumely. His back and his arms were still quite sore from the thrashing Lascelles had given him. But his mind was considerably lightened by the reflection that his tutor believed in his innocence, and he felt that he could bear his cross with more courage and fortitude than he could have done had he had to class Mr. Wynne amongst his enemies and detractors.

The next day Mrs. Chorley, accompanied by her daughter Constance, arrived at Windsor, and drove immediately to Eton. Mr. Wynne received them very kindly, and thanked them for so soon answering his letter in person. After the usual compliments had passed between them, Mrs. Chorley said—

"You did not explain in your letter why you wanted me to come to you at so short a notice. You merely said that you had some grave news to tell me about my boy. Will you at once relieve my anxiety, and tell

me the nature of the communication you are going to make? I trust he is not ill."

"Oh, no; he is in perfect health. It is about a totally different matter that I am going to talk to you."

Mrs. Chorley fidgeted about in her chair, as if annoyed and anxious.

"You may as well have the plain truth sooner or later, without any circumlocution," said Mr. Wynne, "and so I may tell you the whole affair, my dear Mrs. Chorley, in half-a-dozen words. Your boy has, I am sorry to say we have reason to believe, helped himself to another boy's money."

Mr. Wynne had put it as delicately as he possibly could, but still the mother and sister knew perfectly well what he meant. Mrs. Chorley arose from her chair, and said with vehemence,

"Do you mean to tell me that my boy is a thief, Mr. Wynne?"

"Such is the melancholy fact," he replied, sadly, for he felt for the evident anguish of the proud old lady before him.

"Oh! I will not—cannot believe it," she cried, passionately.

"Mr. Wynne said he 'had reason to believe,' mamma," exclaimed Constance, in a soft melodious voice, which trembled a little. "Perhaps, after all, they may be mistaken. It is so unlike Edmund, is it not?"

Mrs. Chorley reseated herself, and said as calmly as she could,

"Will you have the kindness to go over everything, and let us know the history of the whole affair? I am quite strong enough to bear it, and I would rather hear it now from your own lips, and," she added, in a murmur, "as Conny says, they may be mistaken after all. God grant it! oh, God grant it!"

Mr. Wynne with great minuteness told them all, and his hearers listened patiently without once interrupting him. When he had finished, a great sigh escaped the unhappy mother, who said,

"Your tale has more than probability in it—I sent him no money; nor did his sister; and I know of no one who could have done so. I am afraid that he is what the world will call him—a thief. Oh, the dreadful word! it will kill me, I am sure, to pronounce it again. Oh! Mr. Wynne, Mr. Wynne, this is a great blow for me. I am not so young as I was once, and my whole mind is centred on that boy."

Mr. Wynne endeavoured to comfort her as well as he could; but she had too much sterling common sense to be misled by his kind but weak arguments. She knew that her darling boy had committed an offence that would cling to him as long as he lived—that it would be a reproach to him till his dying day.

"What will his punishment be here—I mean at the school?" asked Mrs. Chorley.

"If I complain of him to the head-master, as it is my duty to do, he will be flogged, and turned down into a lower division, and, at the end of the half, he will be obliged to leave the school," replied Mr. Wynne.

"Is there no way of averting all this terrible disgrace?—can we not avoid it somehow? As yet, you say, only two boys and yourself are cognizant of the facts. Oh! Mr. Wynne, anything I have in the world——"

"I should be only too glad to serve you in any way," he said, interrupting her; "but the difficulty is this: Butler Burke, one of the finest boys in the school, is suspected, and openly taunted with the commission of your son's offence, and he has an imperative right to demand that the real offender shall be unmasked, in order that he may be openly and honestly acquitted. Boys are the most unfeeling creatures in existence; and you do not know what a life they make any boy lead who transgresses any one of the laws that they consider it proper to observe."

"If that boy only would——" began Mrs. Chorley, but as the impracticability of the idea struck her, she broke off abruptly.

"You were going to remark—"said Mr. Wynne.

"I was going to say, if that boy—what is his name?"

"Butler Burke do you mean?"

"Yes, Burke. If Burke would only consent to be suspected until the end of the half year, when Edmund could leave quietly, without all the disgrace and annoyance you have described to me!"

"My dear madam," replied Mr. Wynne, very sternly, "if you were not agitated, you would not, I am sure, make such an unfair proposition. I should not feel myself justified in mentioning such a thing, either to Butler Burke, or his cousin—I should not, indeed. What interest can either of them have in your son, who has wronged them both?"

Mrs. Chorley, as Mr. Wynne spoke, saw the selfishness of her proposal; and she felt the force of his remarks, which were certainly unanswerable. The tears started to her eyes as she saw the hopelessness of their position. Constance was weeping bitterly, and she had hidden her face in her pocket-handkerchief. Mr. Wynne walked uneasily up and down the room.

"I will tell you what I will do, Mrs. Chorley," he said, at last. "I will send Butler Burke to you, and you may speak to him. I shall not influence him one way or the other."

Mrs. Chorley looked her thanks, but she was too

agitated to speak. Mr. Wynne knew he was not doing right; but he could not help feeling for the evident grief of the unhappy mother and sister. Mr. Wynne left the room. In a few minutes the door opened, and Butler Burke's round and jovial face peered in. He was about to withdraw when he saw two strange ladies, for he had merely been told that he was wanted in the drawing-room.

"Come in, little boy!" exclaimed Mrs. Chorley.

"Mamma, you must not call him little boy," interposed Constance, reprovingly. "Don't you know Edmund told us that every one at Eton was called 'mister.' So you must say Mr. Burke."

Butler Burke smiled at this, bowed to the ladies, and walked into the room, wondering who they were, and what they could possibly want him for.

"Pray sit down, Mr. Burke," said Mrs. Chorley.

"Come on the sofa; there is room here by me!" exclaimed Constance, who had wiped away her tears.

Butler Burke did as he was requested; and as he looked at Constance Chorley, he thought he had never seen so lovely a little girl in his life.

"Edmund Chorley is my son," said Mrs. Chorley, by way of explanation.

Burke felt uncomfortable at this declaration.

"Fancy old Chorley having such an awfully pretty sister!" he said to himself.

"Mr. Wynne has told me all about a certain affair in which you and your cousin, Mr. Purefoy, are interested, and in which my naughty boy has lately borne a part," continued the mother, her heart fluttering and beating violently.

"Oh! I know what you mean, Mrs. Chorley," replied Burke. "Pray do not say any more; it must be very painful to you."

"What I want to say is this. You know if poor Edmund is exposed, how severely he will be punished, and how he will be disgraced for ever."

"I don't want to do him any harm, I am sure," said Butler Burke.

"I know you do not—I am confident of that. And it is that reflection principally which emboldens me to speak to you."

"I only want to clear myself," replied Burke. "I have been bullied out of my life, I assure you, within the last day or two."

"Well, do you know what I am going to ask you to do?" said Mrs. Chorley, her voice shaking very much. "I am going to ask you to bear it till the end of the half year."

"What!" exclaimed Butler Burke, in astonishment. "Stand it till the end of the half, and be cut by every one except my tutor and Purefoy? Oh! I cannot—indeed, I cannot!"

"He is my only son, and I—I love him so," said Mrs. Chorley. She had just strength enough to complete this sentence, and then she broke down.

It was a strange sight to see this handsome, proud old lady, pleading with the fair-haired boy by the side of her daughter.

Mrs. Chorley's sobs were audible throughout the room. Butler Burke felt very uncomfortable; he did not know what to do. He thought he had never been in so uncomfortable a position before.

"I should be very glad to do what she asks me," he thought. "But hang it! I can't; it is not reasonable to ask a fellow to do such a thing."

Suddenly he was aroused from the reverie into which he had fallen, by a tiny silvery voice by his side, which said,

"I should be so much delighted if you would do as mamma asks you, Mr. Burke."

"Would you?" he said, rather clownishly.

"Oh yes; because then my brother could leave quietly, and he would not be disgraced in the school, and go through all the dreadful punishments Mr. Wynne was telling us about. The boys would not think the worse of you for it. At the end of the half-year Mr. Wynne would tell them all about it, and how grandly you behaved, because going through all that would be very grand. And I should quite

love you for it. I would make you one of my heroes. I have several heroes—Bayard, the French knight, without fear and without reproach, is one of my heroes; and I would put you next to him in my mind."

Butler Burke looked at the little fairy beside him, and felt his resolution waver. He thought he could go through everything to be "one of her heroes."

"Will you?" she asked. "Oh, will you do it? Will you save poor dear, wicked Edmund?"

In her intense anxiety she took his hand in hers, and looked up eagerly in his frank, honest face. He returned her gaze, and their glances met. He could not withstand the earnest entreaty which was depicted upon that sweetly pretty, tear-stained countenance. So he replied in the affirmative. He said, "Yes." It was only a little monosyllable, but it bound him to a great deed—perhaps more than he thought of at that moment.

Constance Chorley cast a look of intense gratitude upon him, and, springing up from the sofa, she ran over to where her mother was sitting. "Dear mamma," she cried, "he consents. He has promised he will do it. He will save Edmund."

Mrs. Chorley looked up, hardly able to believe in such good fortune. "Have you, indeed?" she demanded, looking at Butler Burke,

"Yes," he replied; "I have promised Miss Chorley, and I will keep my word."

"God bless you!" said the old lady, throwing herself on Constance's breast, and sobbing hysterically.

Butler Burke thought he might run away now; for he did not like to intrude upon the mother and daughter any longer. Casting his eyes down on the sofa, he saw a glove. It evidently belonged to Constance. He took it and put it in his pocket, and then quietly stole out of the room, without any one noticing it. He met his tutor in the passage.

"Well, Burke?" said Mr. Wynne, inquiringly.

"I have promised, sir," he replied.

"You are a noble fellow, then," said his tutor, squeezing his hand warmly. But he said to himself, "Upon my word, I can hardly tell whether I am doing right or wrong."

Burke went upstairs to Purefoy, to tell him all the strange events that had occurred.

CHAPTER XIII.

UNDER A CLOUD.

Butler Burke walked slowly along the passage after leaving his tutor. The magnitude of the sacrifice he was making flashed across his mind, and he almost regretted that he had promised so readily and so rashly. He had elected, of his own free will, to be considered unfit for the society of gentlemen. It is true that he knew himself to be innocent; and he was pleasantly conscious that Mr. Wynne, and Mrs. Chorley and her daughter, were also fully aware of the fact. When he thought of Constance Chorley, he felt very determined and eager to go through with the task he had allowed others to impose upon him. No knight of old could have entertained a more chivalrous devotion for the "fair ladie" of his love than Butler Burke did for the beautiful girl who had only a few minutes before twisted him round her finger so consummately, not with diplomatic art and *finesse*, but with the convincing eagerness of a frank outspoken nature.

Purefoy was not a little astonished at the recital of the strange scene which Butler Burke had just gone through, and at first he could not restrain his indignation. "It is too bad!" he exclaimed. "I don't like to see you made a fool of in this sort of way. I think Mrs. Chorley must be very selfish indeed to ask you to do such a thing; and why my tutor should agree to so extraordinary a compact, I declare I cannot imagine. I should have thought that he would have been one of the first to discountenance it. He ought to see justice done you. I know well enough what a life you will lead till the end of the half. You will be very sick of it before long, and bitterly regret the silly promise you gave so foolishly just now."

"Possibly I may," replied Burke, looking very disconsolate and downcast; "but I don't think you, as a religious man, or even a friend of mine, ought to talk to me like that, Purefoy."

"If I have said anything unkind, or anything that has hurt your feelings, try to forget it," said Purefoy, calming down a little; "but Chorley has shown himself such a beast, that I don't think he deserves any mercy, and it riles me to see you sat upon."

"What you say is very true, but he has got such a jolly sister, and she talked so prettily to me, that I couldn't stand it. I promised whatever she liked to

ask me. I stood out against the old woman, but Constance licked me directly."

Purefoy smiled at this, but it was a smile of dubious import, and Butler Burke continued: "The fact is, they are both awfully fond of Chorley, and they want him to leave quietly at the end of the half without any row; because, if he was shown up now, he would be sent away, and as I have promised them not to say anything, you must oblige me, Purefoy, by agreeing to do the same thing."

Purefoy grumbled a good deal at this; but Butler Burke exclaimed, "Oh! but you must. You cannot make me look a fool."

"If I consent," said Purefoy, "I shall do so on compulsion. But, look here, suppose we go up town and have an ice or something, and talk on the way. What do you say? Will you come?"

"Yes; I'll come. Wait a minute, while I go and get my hat," rejoined Burke, who left the room quickly, without looking before him, the consequence of which was, that he ran full tilt up against somebody.

"Why don't you look where you are going to?" cried Butler Burke, angrily.

"Oh! it is you, you young thief. You had better shut up, I should think," was the reply.

Looking up, in the most utter astonishment, Butler

Burke perceived that the speaker was Chorley—the boy who had wronged him in every possible way. Was it possible that he could have the hardihood and the impudence to look him in the face, and taunt him with a theft of his own committing? Apparently, it was possible, because it had actually happened. Burke was completely overwhelmed. It was a little too much that the one for whom he was sacrificing so much should join the number of his enemies, and take a prominent part against him. Butler Burke was on the point of saying "Well, old fellow, you ought to be the last to reproach me, considering everything;" but, although he was in a terrible passion, the image of Constance Chorley rose up between the object of his resentment and his just annoyance, and he bowed his head to the first blast of the fierce storm he had invoked.

"If I were Purefoy," said Chorley, "I would kick you out of my room very quickly, I can tell you."

After this heartlessly cruel speech, Chorley passed on.

"Can he have forgotten that I licked him in our mill," thought Burke. "I can't understand this. Perhaps he thinks that as I am under a cloud, I am obliged to put up with his cheek; and he may imagine that by bullying me, and getting up a feeling in the

house against me, he will drive away suspicion from himself. That is it, most probably. But it is rather too hard to be chaffed by Chorley."

He went to his room and got his hat, and rejoined his cousin.

"I say, Purefoy," he immediately exclaimed; "what do you think happened a minute ago, just outside your room? I ran up against Chorley, and he called me a thief, and said if he were in your place he would very quickly kick me out of his room. Did you ever hear such a thing in your life?"

"'Pon my word," answered Purefoy, "that licks everything I ever heard. He must be a bad-hearted fellow. This shows him to be worse than I always took him to be, and you know that I never had a very good opinion of him. Well, do you feel inclined to waver now about your promise?"

"I did just now; but when I thought of the beggar's sister, I made up my mind to keep my word and put up with it. I know it will be awfully beastly, but you'll see I'll do it."

Purefoy and Butler Burke went up town to Knox's, where they got some ices. Purefoy, as may readily be imagined, was furiously indignant with Chorley, and very much regretted that Butler Burke could not at once vindicate his innocence, and be revenged upon so treacherous and perfidious a fellow. But all his

arguments were of no avail with Burke, and at last he gave up endeavouring to persuade him.

Burke explained, "That he did not care a straw for Chorley himself; but his people were so very much cut up; and that sister of his, Constance—pretty name, isn't it, Constance?—made such an impression on me, that I could not help myself."

"Well, Chorley's a lucky fellow, that's all I can say," replied Purefoy, surlily.

When Mr. Wynne rejoined Mrs. Chorley and her daughter in the drawing-room, it was arranged between them, principally by Mr. Wynne's advice, that Chorley should not be told anything that had occurred just at present.

"Leave him to his conscience," said Mr. Wynne. "As Butler Burke has consented to undergo martyrdom for one who, I must say, is not worthy of his sympathy, why, the thing must take its course; although I must say that, to see the innocent suffer goes very much against the grain with me. However, the die is cast, and we must watch the course of events."

Mrs. Chorley was profuse in her thanks to both Mr. Wynne and his generous pupil. She wished to see Burke again in order that she might thank him as he deserved to be thanked; but Mr. Wynne objected to such a procedure.

"It was a little rude of him, perhaps," said Mr. Wynne, "to run away as he did without wishing you good-bye, but it also showed great delicacy on his part. He saw how agitated you were, and he instantly withdrew in order that you might give way to your feelings without the restraint that a stranger's presence is sure to inspire. If you were to see him again now it would only cause him a great deal of embarrassment, for boys or men, who behave as he has behaved to-day, do not care much about thanks; they are perfectly satisfied with the consciousness of having done as their better feelings have dictated."

Mrs. Chorley and Constance took their leave of Mr. Wynne very sad and very grieved, and yet with their hearts considerably lightened by the reprieve their Edmund had obtained through the magnanimity of Butler Burke.

Mr. Wynne could not help thinking that it was an honour to him to have two such boys as Burke and Purefoy in his house, and he determined that he would, by his behaviour, show Burke how highly he thought of him. Days flew by after these occurrences, and Burke found that he had by no means made a bed of roses for himself to lie upon. He was most distinctly under a cloud; for although no one had clearly proved him a thief, everybody thought him so. Some boys had gone so far as to urge Purefoy to tell

Mr. Wynne all the circumstances; but this, as may be supposed, he steadily refused to do, averring that the real culprit would be found out some day. Then the boys went away, thinking that as Butler Burke was Purefoy's cousin, the latter wished to let him down easily, and, to use their own expression, "that they had squared it together somehow," and what is everybody's business is nobody's business; so though all the house was more or less interested in the detection and punishment of the offender, yet as Purefoy refused to move in the matter, the house avenged itself upon Burke in every possible way, and his existence was not one of unmixed happiness.

When he took down his dictionary one day he found a leaf turned down and the word "Fur" thickly underlined. He would find "Butler Burke is a thief," written in pencil on the walls; and a thousand other petty annoyances greeted him at every step. Even his letters were by some one indorsed with "thief and robber" before they came into his hands. He could not go out of his tutor's if there happened to be any one in the yard without some one throwing a stone at him, or hissing, or "shinning" him if he passed near enough. So things went on for several days, and Burke found his only consolation in Purefoy's society, which was of great advantage to him. He went not into the haunts of men as was his wont formerly, for if he

walked down to the Playing Fields to have a game at cricket, he found no one who would play with him, and some one would be sure to "swipe" at him, and try and cut him over with the ball. If he went on the river, some one would splash him, and try to swamp his boat, so that it was much more comfortable for him to see if he could not do a better copy of verses than usual, or a better Theme than ordinary. And in these laudable efforts he succeeded beyond his expectations. He was "sent up for good" one week, and his Verses read before the whole division in which he was placed. One little circumstance occurred which was a pleasing oasis in his everlasting desert. He received a letter one morning which, to his surprise, was signed Constance Chorley. She began:—

"My dear Mr. Burke,—I dare say you will be very very much surprised at hearing from me; but I cannot help writing you a few lines to cheer you up a little, and if my poor letter has the effect I wish it to, it will make me very happy. To begin; I must say I feel very much for you, and so does dear mamma, who is always talking about you; and I think I may tell you a secret, which is this: You will get a note some fine morning, asking you to come and see us in the holidays. You need not get angry and say you will not come because Edmund is sure to be at home,

because he is going to Germany. We mean to send him to Bonn or some place abroad. Will you mind writing to me to tell me how you get on? I am *so* anxious to know if you are very much teased by the other boys. I have shown this letter, as far as I have gone, to mamma, and although she scolded me at first for writing it, she says that now it is written I may send it, and she told me to add, that a cake and some other trifles will be sent to some one at Mr. Wynne's whose name begins with B. And now, as mamma is going to send Thomas to the post almost directly, I must conclude my letter by assuring you that you are never out of our thoughts, and we shall always love you for your noble kindness to that bad boy, Edmund.—Ever yours, gratefully." Then came the signature.

Butler Burke read this charmingly innocent epistle over a dozen times, and then put it away in his bureau amongst his most sacred treasures, and whenever he was more than ordinarily miserable, he would take it out and read it over again. He thought so much of it that he would not even show it to Purefoy, to whom, as his great friend and ally, he confided everything. Chorley was evidently playing a part in his persecution of Butler Burke, and he looked ill at ease. Perhaps he was ashamed of what

he was doing. Most likely he had taken Purefoy's money when acting on the impulse of the moment. Many boys have been known to yield in this way to a sudden temptation, the gratification of which has embittered their existence to its last moment. Consequences are not thought of until it is too late. Although he might have wished to make restitution, yet he had not the courage to do it; and as day after day rolled on, and the days multiplied themselves into weeks, he found it more and more difficult to give himself up, and do justice to another wrongly accused. He saw also how dreadful the consequences of such an offence were, and he endeavoured to throw suspicion upon Burke in order to divert it from himself.

But there is one thing we must do Chorley the justice to mention; he had resolved from the first that if Butler Burke had been publicly accused of the theft, and if Mr. Wynne had threatened to have him flogged and sent away, then he would have come forward, have vindicated Burke's character, and have boldly declared himself the actual offender. But owing to the singular course events had taken, he had not an opportunity of doing so, and as time went on he was more and more confirmed in the dubious and cowardly course he had adopted. He thought that very likely next half the affair would be very nearly forgotten,

and that Burke would by degrees recover his position in the school, and then, he added to himself, "Everything will come right again, and I shall not have been sent away, which I think would nearly break my heart. I can't think whatever made me bag Purefoy's tin. It was an irresistible impulse, and it betrayed me into an act I can never too much regret. It is a thing I will never do again, and as it is a secret, I must do all I can to keep it so, let the consequences be what they may to Burke or anybody else."

CHAPTER XIV.

BUTLER BURKE BREAKS HIS PROMISE.

Butler Burke, much to his disgust, found himself every day growing more and more unpopular in the house; and he could not disguise from his mind the fact that there was an organized party in the house who had resolved to band themselves together in order to make the house so disagreeable and uncomfortable for him, and to render his life so miserable and unsatisfactory to him, that he would at the end of the half be glad to leave Eton altogether, or, at any rate, that he would prefer moving to some quiet dame's house, where he would not be so much molested and persecuted. This organization, in a house like Wynne's, was most formidable; beeause the house had a reputation for bullying, and had acquired a sort of preeminence in the art all through College.

Just about this time Chorley acquired a little popularity by an event that happened in College. The provost, who was a very old man, died, and the headmaster reigned in his stead. It used to be the custom

for every new head-master to give the first boy he flogged a birch that had never been used before, tied up with Eton blue ribbon; and in addition to that, a dozen of champagne—only I believe the latter has fallen slightly into disuse. Chorley was well acquainted with this fact, and he determined to get the birch. He observed to one of his friends, that "he didn't care a hang about being flogged as long as he got the twigs." He hadn't quite made up his mind how he would get them. He certainly might blow up the gas-works, but then in all probability he would be sent away. He might shirk chapel and six o'clock absence on the first Saint's-day, and scull up to Maidenhead in his outrigger; but he thought the surest way would be to shirk the first school. This he did, and was of course "put in the bill." After he had received the castigation, he coolly demanded the birch, reminding the head-master that it was a time-honoured custom; and after a little conversation his request was acceded to, with a promise that it should be sent to his tutor's. This was accordingly done, and Chorley had it suspended over his mantelpiece on the horns of a stag. This made Chorley rather famous, and almost every one in College came to look at "Chorley's twigs." All this was annoying to Butler Burke, who saw that the more he was persecuted and tormented the better Chorley got on. It was extremely mortifying, and

Burke felt it. He knew that he could crush him with a word, and yet he could not utter that word. Chorley, as far as he was concerned, was safe. Another thing which worried Burke as much as anything was the great amount of fagging he had to do. Almost all the boys in the house fagged him whenever they could get hold of him.

One day he was as usual sitting in Purefoy's room engaged in study, when a stentorian "Here!" resounded through the passage.

"I say, there's a 'Here!'" said Purefoy.

"Yes, I heard it plain enough," replied Burke; "but they need not alarm themselves—I am not going. I shall say that I am fagging for you."

"Don't say that," said Purefoy. "It is not strictly true, you know; and if I were appealed to, I could not say you were fagging for me."

"Well, but I want to finish this 'Lucian,'" said Burke; "and I feel so comfortable and jolly, that I would give anything not to be disturbed. Besides, fellows are always fagging me, and I don't see it."

"You had better go, I think; it is Lascelles' voice, and he is sure to lick you if you keep him waiting. The chances are there is no one else in now, and that you are the only Lower boy on the passage."

Purefoy's advice was too good not to be acted upon. Burke did not want to be licked by Lascelles, so he

went to his room as quickly as he could, just as another "Here!" was ringing along the passage.

"Why didn't you come before, Master Burke?" exclaimed Lascelles.

"I was at the other end of the passage, and I was not quite sure at first whether it was a 'Here' or not," replied Butler Burke, trying to excuse his remissness.

"In fact, you waited as long as you dared, to see if any other fellows would come."

"I swear I didn't, Lascelles," replied Butler Burke, rather "in a funk" at the expression of Lascelles' countenance.

"Well, you will just send the first Lower boy you meet to me, and fag up to Layton's yourself, and get me a penny bun; and when you get there, mind you don't steal anything, as they will most likely stick it up to me."

To be fagged up to Layton's was no joke, for it was a shop in Windsor opposite the Castle, nearly two miles from Burke's end of College, and Butler Burke did not look very happy at the prospect before him.

"Be off with you!" said Lascelles, as Burke picked up the penny he had thrown carelessly towards him. "Perhaps you will be a little more lively the next time I give a 'Here!'"

Butler Burke went downstairs to the lower passage,

and there he found two or three Lower boys, among whom was Abbott. Burke could not help selecting him.

"Lascelles wants a Lower boy, Abbott," he said, "and you had better go to him. I shall tell him I told you. You had better make haste, too, or he'll send you up to the end of the Long Walk to get a bit of moss from the statue."

"He'd better send you to steal a pint of pigeon's milk, or a hot-water ice, or a map of the Undiscovered Islands," cried Abbott, dexterously springing by Burke, and running up to Lascelles' room.

When he entered it, Lascelles exclaimed—

"It is very odd I can't get a Lower boy when I want one. Where did that little disguster, Burke, meet you?"

"In Lower School-passage," replied the Hon. Mr. Abbott, inventing a lie of no ordinary magnitude.

"Well, go to Webber's, and get me half-a-dozen bottles of lemonade, a dozen sponge-cakes, and half-a-pound of ice—vanille."

"Tick?" inquired Abbott, laconically.

"Yes; down to my tick, and if you're more than five minutes, I pity you," said Lascelles, significantly.

Butler Burke returned to Purefoy's room, looking rather disconsolate. But when he told Purefoy where Lascelles had fagged him, he said,

"I think I can help you out of your little difficulty. The last time I was up town, I bought some things at Layton's, and consequently I have some of their bags. You will find them on the top shelf in the bureau. I cannot give you a bun, but you will easily get one at Brown's, which, in comparison with Layton's, is no distance at all. So you see, you must not look so cut up. You can finish your Lucian, and in about three quarters of an hour you can go to Brown's and get the bun. You must take very good care that Lascelles does not see you, though."

Butler Burke thanked Purefoy very much indeed for this suggestion, and resolved to act upon it. Lascelles took the bun when he brought it him, looked at the name on the bag, and then shying it at him, told him to eat it; and although Burke was not at all in the humour for eating buns, as he had just indulged in some custards at Brown's, yet he was obliged to eat it before Lascelles would allow him to leave the room.

The next day after twelve, Burke and Purefoy determined to vary the monotony of their lives by walking up to the oak in the Playing Fields to whip the stream for a trout. So taking their rods with them, they left their tutor's, and went towards their destination. As they got into the street, it seemed

rather singular to Burke that about a dozen boys, from their tutor's, appeared to be following them. "Perhaps they are going to play at cricket, or stump and ball, or something of that sort," he thought. Yet whatever their object might be, he could not help feeling uneasy, he hardly knew why. When they entered the Playing Fields he turned round and saw that these boys were still following them, and he recognised them as the most virulent and determined of his persecutors. Chorley was there, and Abbott, and several others whom he knew entertained a feeling of most violent hatred and dislike to him. Burke did not say anything to Purefoy about this, because he thought he would only laugh at him for being so nervous as to apprehend anything unpleasant from the fact of ten or a dozen boys from their tutor's having followed them to the Playing Fields. Purefoy was looking at the sky, and calculating the position of the wind, and prophesying a good morning's sport, in which predictions Burke could not acquiesce. However, he held his tongue, and in due time they crossed the bridge over Fellows Pond, and struck across Lower Club towards the river. To Burke's great alarm, the boys who had been following him pursued the same direction. As he noticed this, he could not conceal his fears, and he said to Purefoy.

"I say, Purefoy, I dare say you will think me a fool, but those fellows with Chorley and Abbott have followed us all the way from my tutor's. I don't know what to make of it. They don't any of them belong to Lower Club, so they can't be coming to play here, and from what I know of them, I think they must be following me to bully me. What do you think?"

Purefoy turned round, and reconnoitred their pursuers, who were laughing and talking together, as if anticipating some great amusement.

"I really don't want to disturb you, but I can't help thinking the same thing. It is so odd that they should come up here. They are not going to fish, that is very clear, because they have no tackle with them."

Very much concerned, and ill at ease, the two boys walked on to the oak, and leant over the railings to look at the stream. It was a lovely morning for fishing, and the fish themselves were very lively, jumping up and down, and disporting themselves in every part of the stream. There had been a little rain the night before, and consequently the river was not quite so clear as it usually was. But that was all the better for their purpose, as the fish would bite more freely.

"Let us show them that we are not afraid of them,"

said Purefoy. "Take out your rod and begin to fish. On occasions of this sort there is nothing like a little confidence."

Burke assented to this, and they both got out their lines, and finding a favourable spot where the branches of the trees would not interfere with their piscatorial operations, they commenced their pastime. The boys who had been following them stopped and held a council together, and at last they walked directly towards Burke and Purefoy, who continued quietly fishing, only their hearts beat a little quicker than usual at the anticipation of the annoyance and violence which certainly appeared in store for them. Burke after a little exertion succeeded in landing a fine fish, weighing between four and five pounds. Purefoy was not long in obtaining one somewhat smaller. When Chorley and his friends came up to the oak they looked on for a few minutes without speaking. At last Abbott laid hold of Burke's fish, and sticking a willow branch through its gills to carry it more easily, expressed his determination of carrying it back to College.

"You must be a thief to steal another man's fish like that," said some one with a laugh.

Butler Burke blushed crimson at this speech; and now he knew that Chorley and the rest of them had come there to persecute and annoy him. The tears

sprang involuntarily to his eyes as he thought how powerless he was to resist so many. If it had only been Abbott, he knew he could easily have thrashed him.

"Oh, I don't see why I shouldn't. It seems to be the fashion to bag things at my tutor's," replied Abbott, swinging the fish over his shoulder.

As Butler Burke saw Abbott making off with his fish, he got into an uncontrollable passion, and throwing down his rod, he rushed after him, saying, "You put it down, will you?"

Thus conjured, Abbott thought that discretion was the better part of valour, for he had been rather roughly handled by Burke on one or two previous occasions, so he threw down the fish and ran away as fast as his legs would carry him. Burke, however, ran the faster of the two, and after a short chivey, succeeded in capturing him. Where he hit Abbott, Burke scarcely cared, but a shower of blows descended upon him, here, there, and everywhere. Abbott shouted loudly for assistance, which was promptly rendered him. For a short time, until Abbott was actually overtaken, Chorley and his friends had looked on, waiting the issue of the race; but when that was no longer doubtful, they rushed forward in a body to rescue Abbott. Purefoy remained with his rod in his hand a passive spectator. What

could he do?—positively nothing; so he waited the issue of events. Chudleigh and Fisher were the first to lay hold of Butler Burke, and that too in no gentle way.

"Hold him, and let Abbott lick him!" exclaimed some one.

No better plan being proposed, they held Burke, while Abbott revenged himself by kicking and hitting him to his heart's content. His struggles were ineffectual, and he had the mortification of being bullied by a fellow who would not have dared to speak to him if he had been by himself, instead of being backed up by ten or a dozen fellows.

"I think I should duck him in the river," suggested Chudleigh. "I believe they used to duck thieves in the Middle Ages."

"Yes; let's duck him! Let's duck him!" repeated all of them, much pleased at the suggestion.

Burke made frantic efforts to escape from his tormentors, but they were fruitless; his hat had rolled to the ground long ago, and had been trampled under foot. His jacket was torn up the back. His face was bleeding from some violent blows, and altogether he presented a very sorry spectacle.

Burke finding that he could not escape, made up

his mind to tell Chorley something that would make him repent his share in the transaction.

"Purefoy, come here!" cried Burke.

"Purefoy can't help you, my good thief," said Chudleigh, coarsely.

Purefoy, hearing himself called, came up to the throng around his cousin. Although he knew nothing about fighting, he had resolved, if they tried to throw him into the river, that he would do all he could to create a diversion in his favour.

"I want to speak to Chorley, Purefoy," said Butler Burke. "There can't be any harm in that, surely. They may do what they like with me after that. You talk to them, will you? I am too excited."

"Let him speak to Chorley, you fellows," said Purefoy, who guessed what Burke was going to do, and who was secretly rejoiced at it.

"Well," said Chudleigh, "he may speak to Chorley if he likes, but he must make haste about it."

Chorley looked a little uncomfortable, as if he did not exactly like the turn affairs were taking.

"Hold him tight," he said.

"Oh, don't be alarmed; I am not going to touch you," replied Butler Burke, his lip curling with ineffable disdain. "The hiding I gave you in Sixpenny was enough to last you your lifetime, I should think; but never mind. Come here, I wont keep you a moment."

Chorley approached, and Butler Burke whispered something in his ear. The communication was not a very lengthy one, but as Burke proceeded Chorley's face turned ashy pale, and he listened with the greatest interest. When Burke left off, Chorley looked as if some one had struck him a heavy blow and half stunned him. Turning to Chudleigh, he said, "Let him go, Chudleigh, will you? He has had enough."

"Let him go! Why, just now you were very anxious to shy him into the Thames, and now you say, let him go. What has he been saying to you? He must have some strange influence over you. I for one shall not let him go. For my part, I hate thieves, and I don't see the fun of having any at my tutor's."

"Well, I have changed my mind," replied Chorley, who, physically, was no coward. "Why, does not matter to anybody. And if any one tries to annoy Burke, why, he will have to see which is the stronger, him or myself."

"All right, I'll back you up," said Purefoy, valiantly, although he trembled a little at his presumption.

"Now, will you let him go?" exclaimed Chorley.

"No, I wont," replied Chudleigh, resolutely.

"Very well, then, take that," said Chorley, giving him a heavy and unexpected blow in the face.

This released one of Burke's arms, and he made the most of the opportunity by hitting Fisher as hard as he could. After this the fight became general; but it was a very unequal contest of more than three to one. Purefoy, although he did more than any one expected from him, was soon disposed of, and sat on the ground wiping the blood from his nose, and having very confused ideas of things in general. Chorley did not seem to fight as well as usual. He was confused by something, and appeared very much at sea. Butler Burke did wonders, but he was eventually overpowered, and while some of the combatants guarded Chorley, the others took hold of Burke by the arms and legs and dragged him towards the river. No one spoke a word; but the purpose of all was evident. Butler Burke knew that intercession on his part would be worse than useless; but he was consoled by the fact that he had had a struggle for his liberty. When his captors reached the bank, they swung him backwards and forwards two or three times, and then let him go. Butler Burke fell with a dull, heavy splash into the river. The stream being very rapid at that particular point, he reappeared considerably lower down towards the bridge. As soon as he came to the surface, he swam with a few vigorous strokes towards an ait which stood in the centre of the stream; upon this he landed, and sat down shivering and

shaking upon the ground. His enemies looked over the willows that fringed the bank, and watched him with some interest. Chorley walked moodily back to College. Purefoy walked to the river bank, and stooping over, dipped his handkerchief in the stream and bathed his wounds. This was the position of affairs when Mr. Wynne suddenly made his appearance on the scene. He had been up to his farm at Chalvey, and he had taken the Playing Fields on his way home as being pleasanter than the Slough road.

"What is all this?" he said, sternly, laying his hand upon Chudleigh's shoulder.

All started at the sound of his voice, but no one made any reply. Purefoy having gone through his lavatory process, approached the group. When Mr. Wynne saw him, he said,

"Come here, Purefoy. Why, what is the matter with you all? you appear to have had a general fight. Will some one be good enough to explain the meaning of such a singular scene? And who is that on the ait in the river?"

"I don't see why you should not know sir," replied Purefoy. "That is Butler Burke on the ait, and he has been shamefully treated. He left College with me to fish this morning, and all these fellows followed us, and after annoying us in every way, they threw Burke in the river."

"Is this true?" asked Mr. Wynne.

"Yes, sir, it is," replied Chudleigh; "we did throw Burke in the river, and as Purefoy has chosen to tell you all about it, I will tell you why we threw him in the river. He is a dirty little thief, and stole some of Purefoy's money, and as Purefoy is his cousin, he did not like to tell you."

Here was a dilemma for Mr. Wynne. The catastrophe they had all been trying to avert, had in spite of all their efforts, happened at last.

"I will look into this," he said. "In the meantime I shall take down your names." Having written down their names on a piece of paper, and deposited it in his pocket, he went to the bank's edge, and shouted, "Burke!"

"Yes, sir!" replied Burke, who knew his tutor's voice.

"Can you swim back to shore?"

"I am afraid not, sir; the stream is so strong," replied Burke, who had been debating that question with himself for the last three minutes.

"Then stay where you are until I send a waterman to you."

Burke promised to do so. Telling the boys to go back to College, Mr. Wynne took Purefoy with him, and walked rapidly to where he knew there usually was a waterman. Having found him they got into

his punt, and Mr. Wynne told him to punt up stream. When they reached Burke, he was half dead with the cold; but they got him back to College, and gave him a warm bath, and some brandy-and-water, and in the afternoon he was himself again.

CHAPTER XV.

RUNNING AWAY.

CHORLEY walked back to College very much perplexed. Butler Burke's communication to him had not been of a very reassuring nature. Burke under the influence and excitement of the moment had to a certain extent broken his promise to Constance. He had told Chorley that it was well known by Mr. Wynne, and his cousin Purefoy, that he was really the thief who had stolen the money. "If you want any proof or confirmation of this assertion," he said, "you must come to my room, and I will give you all the particulars minutely." Chorley, wishing to know the worst, had made up his mind to come to Butler Burke, as the latter had proposed, and with that intention he sought him in his room after four that day. Burke had recovered his involuntary immersion in the river Thames, and was reading a book. When he saw Chorley enter, he exclaimed, "I was expeeting you; sit down, and I will answer any question you like to put to me."

Perhaps he only wants to frighten me into some

confession, thought Chorley; it is as likely as not that he has his suspicions, but how he can have any certain proof against me I cannot imagine. He says that my tutor knows all about it. Well, in that case, why does he not tell me of it, and complain of me at once? My tutor, I know, is not the sort of man to let a thing hang over a man's head for any length of time in that way, and that affair happened on the 4th of June, while it is now the first week in July. In addition to all that, Burke has been accused of stealing the money, and has been a good deal bullied about it. Now it stands to reason if he really knew who did it, that he would move heaven and earth to exonerate himself and clear his character. I am afraid I was a great fool this morning to take his part as I did, and to believe him so readily. Perhaps it is not too late even now to put a bold face on the matter, and repudiate the whole thing. I think I had better try it, at all events, and see what effect it has upon him.

"I am sorry those fellows shied you into the river this morning," said Chorley; "but you know, the fact is, they have a great prejudice against you."

"They have, I know," replied Butler Burke; "but that prejudice will soon be transferred to another."

"What do you mean?" demanded Chorley, slightly alarmed.

"I mean what I say; that the real culprit will soon stand in his proper position."

"Then you mean to stick to what you said to me this morning, which, as of course you are aware, I only laughed at. I defended you from Fisher and the others because we used to be great friends once, until this unfortunate affair, you know, between you and Purefoy."

"Between yourself and Purefoy, you mean, my dear fellow," said Butler Burke, astonished at his cool impudence.

"It is very easy for you to say so, but what proof have you? Naturally you wish to exculpate yourself as well as you can; but of course I am not going to be made a scapegoat for you without attempting to defend myself."

"I will give you every proof," said Burke. "You have at last come to the point, and now you shall hear everything."

Chorley got up and stood near the fireplace, with his arms folded and his head a little bent, while his eyes were fixed upon the carpet. Butler Burke told him how Purefoy had first of all put the different links of evidence together until they found one long chain, which was then presented to Mr. Wynne, who upon being convinced that it was truthful, and would hold water, wrote instantly to Mrs. Chorley, who, in

conjunction with her daughter, had induced him to promise that he would not say a word to any one until the end of the half-year. "And if I had not been driven pretty nearly mad this morning, I would not have done it."

"And my mother was here, and I knew nothing at all about it!" exclaimed Chorley.

"She was too ill to see you, and every one thought it would be better not to say anything to you upon the subject at present."

"Pretty well you have kept your promise to my mother," said Chorley, bitterly.

The truth of what Butler Burke said flashed across his mind directly, and he knew that he was discovered. It was a crushing reflection, because he had flattered himself that he had cleverly directed suspicion into another channel.

Chorley could easily guess what the sequel would be; he had heard from Chudleigh that Mr. Wynne had come unexpectedly upon the scene, and the conversation that took place subsequently had been repeated to him. Mr. Wynne was clearly bound now to clear Butler Burke from all suspicion; and Chorley knew very well that he would do what his duty dictated. Chorley had his generous impulses as well as his bad ones, and after a few moments reflection he said to Burke,

"I am much obliged to you, Burke, for your kindness, and if I ever see my sister again I will tell her that you are not to blame; circumstances were too strong for you. You have behaved better to me by far than I have to you. Don't say anything; I am going to speak to my tutor. I can see very plainly that my little game is over here. Well, it is a pity, but it can't be helped; it is no use crying over spilled milk; and I suppose people will say it served me right."

There was an expression of despair upon Chorley's face as he said this that rather touched Burke, who felt sorry for him.

"I am sure I could not help it," said Burke to himself, as Chorley slowly left the room; "they drove me to it, and after all it came about through circumstances over which I had no control. I wonder what he meant by saying, 'If he ever saw his sister again;' and why is he going to his tutor? He is rather an extraordinary fellow; I never could quite make him out."

Mr. Wynne was in his Pupil-room looking over Verses, when Chorley came to him with a request to speak to him alone for a minute or two.

"Will not after six do as well? I am, as you see, very much occupied just now, and, to tell you the truth, I would much rather not speak to you at all. You can easily guess why."

"I shall take it as a very great favour, sir, if you will speak to me," said Chorley, with an earnest sadness in his grave face.

"Very well, very well," said Mr. Wynne, impatiently; "come in here." And he led the way into his study. "Now, what is it?" he asked.

"Butler Burke has told me all, sir, and now, what are you going to do with me?" replied Chorley, abruptly. "I wish you to be frank with me; I don't want to be told that I have behaved badly, and all that, because I know it. It is a very important crisis in my life, sir, and I think I have a right to ask what you intend to do."

Mr. Wynne, finding that he had been entrapped by Chorley's decision into a conversation he had wished to avoid for the present, thought that as the subject had been broached, the best thing he could do would be to go on with it and have it out at once, so he replied,

"There are only two courses open to me, as your tutor, Chorley; the original plan I consented to at the urgent entreaty of your mother and sister has by some strange means been defeated, and I must do justice to Butler Burke. If you stop at Eton you must be flogged and turned down; and even then it is doubtful whether the head master will consent to your staying; but, perhaps, at my intercession he may. If you like to chance that, you can; but if not,

you must instantly return home. However, I have telegraphed to your mother, to hear which of the two courses she prefers, as it is only proper that she should decide for you. I do not wish to be hard or unkind, but my duty is plain and simple."

"Very well, sir; I am much obliged to you for being so candid with me," said Chorley. "As you have sent to my mother, I must of course wait till you receive a reply."

Chorley walked out of the study without another word, and Mr. Wynne thought he must be a hardened boy to take the serious consequences of his offence so quietly.

That day, at five o'clock school, all who had participated in the outrage on Butler Burke in the morning, were sent to the head master to be flogged, which, as may be supposed, did not increase Burke's popularity.

Although Chorley appeared not to be alive to the disgrace that he had incurred, he was in reality very much so. So much so, indeed, that he resolved to run away. He very quickly made up his mind that he would not be flogged and turned down, and then take his chance of being sent away. Nor did he like the idea of being sent home to his mother's custody. He hardly liked to face her tears and lamentations. He thought to himself that he would leave Eton that

evening quietly, and no one should know where he had gone to for the present. That would also be more like his general character, which was bold and adventurous to a degree. He had an uncle in the north of England who was a civil engineer, who was at that time engaged in constructing a railway through an important part of Yorkshire. This uncle would be likely to receive him kindly, and he would, perhaps, apprentice him to his own business. He would write to his mother from his uncle's house, and then everything would be arranged in a proper manner. He had plenty of money, for his mother had been unusually liberal in that respect lately, and he had several times been at a loss to understand the reason of such munificence; but since the events of the morning he understood it fully. One thing he was as firm as a rock about, and that was, he would not be disgraced and flogged before his friends and companions. He would rather die first. His arrangements were soon made. He would not burden himself with carpet-bags, or any unnecessary wearing apparel; what he stood upright in would amply suffice him until he reached his uncle's house in Yorkshire. His room was on the lower passage, and his window looked out upon the yard. He would not go until after lock-up, as he might be missed and traced. As he was a Lower boy, his candle was taken always at ten o'clock.

Then would be the time to go. Of course getting out of the house in the ordinary way was out of the question; he must of necessity make his exit through his window. From this there was a drop of from ten to twelve feet, and he thought that it would be only prudent to tie his table-cloth to one of the bars, and to descend by that, which would reduce the drop to something insignificant. There were still some dangers to be anticipated before he got clear of College, because he had the gauntlet to run of all the policemen and masters who chanced to be out.

Sometimes boys were allowed to go out after lock-up, very often in winter, when lock-up is at six, but not so frequently in summer, when it is so much later. Whenever this happened it was customary for the boy's tutor to give him a pass, or piece of paper with the boy's name written on it, the hour when he went out, and the tutor's initials or name at the bottom.

Chorley had often amused himself by imitating his tutor's initials, or more strictly speaking initial, for he used to sign orders, and Themes, and Verses with an unpretending W. So Chorley had no difficulty in making himself a pass, and then he thought he was prepared for every contingency. He was so anxious that he could not eat any supper; but he appeared in the room, and he showed himself at prayers. Some of his friends looked coldly upon him, and he felt that

rumours were getting abroad about him. He had, by referring to "Bradshaw," found that a train left Windsor at 10.45. If he did not catch that he would have to stop at Windsor all night, and that he did not wish to do, as it would be extremely dangerous. The thing that Chorley dreaded more than anything was the telegraph. If this were put in operation, he knew he would not succeed. If he could once reach London he would be safe. He would get a cab *outside* the Great Western Railway station, so that the vehicle could not be traced by the railway officials, and drive direct to the Great Northern, where he would take the mail to Carlisle. These were his plans, and after prayers he got into bed with his things on, and waited impatiently for Susan to take his candle.

CHAPTER XVI.

BUTLER BURKE'S TRIUMPH.

CHORLEY had not long to wait in his enforced and somewhat uncomfortable position, for in a few minutes the boys' maid appeared, and saying, "Good night, sir," took the candle away with her, thus effectually preventing any re-illumination.

Sometimes boys read after their candles have been taken, but very seldom. Generally speaking they are too tired to do anything of the sort, and as a rule they go to sleep almost as soon as they get into bed; but when they do light a surreptitious candle they are prudent enough to hang up one of their blankets or the counterpane against the window, or the light would otherwise penetrate to the street and catch the wary eye of the night policeman, who is instructed to inform the masters of houses of all such breaches of discipline.

As soon as Susan had left the room, Chorley got carefully out of bed, and walking gently across the room opened his window. Singularly enough, Purefoy's room was exactly over Chorley's, and as the latter put his head out to reconnoitre the night and the state of the

yard, he distinctly heard Purefoy's voice in eager conversation with some one whom, in a few moments, he discovered was Butler Burke. Turning almost on his back, Chorley looked up, and much to his delight perceived that although Purefoy's window was open he was not looking out. Still there was every necessity for the greatest caution; and in his movements Chorley was as quiet as a mouse. He had undone his window with the greatest gentleness and care. It was not like ordinary windows; it was one of those which take out altogether when they do come out; in fact, strictly speaking, they are not intended to come out at all. There is a small part of it at the top which, as you push it, swings back on a pivot; but the lower part will not come out unless you remove one of the uprights, which are nailed into the frame to keep it in its position. This Chorley, in conjunction with nearly everybody else, had long ago done; so that all he had to do on the present occasion was to remove the window, and place it on the floor by the side of the wall. He accomplished this satisfactorily, and he next took his tablecloth and tied one end of it to a bar which ran across outside his window. Whether this bar was originally placed there to prevent any one getting either in or out, I cannot possibly undertake to say; but it certainly proved no obstacle or impediment to Chorley; indeed, it rather

assisted him than otherwise. For had it not been there he must have tied the cloth to the leg of a chair, or some other equally unsatisfactory piece of furniture.

The night was rather dark, but the light coming from the different boys' rooms made a sort of artificial light in their immediate neighbourhood. Chorley was not afraid of this; his only fear was that he might be seen or heard before he got clear of the precincts of his tutor. There was no lock or key to his room, but he had had a bolt put on near the bottom; and with the assistance of this he could sport his oak whenever he chose. He had frequently done so; and if any boys came to his door, and were refused admittance, they would think that he was asleep and would not answer. Shooting the bolt into its place, he put on his hat, and feeling in his pocket to see if his watch and money were safe and in their proper places, he prepared to descend.

Just as he was about to throw the tablecloth out of the window, he heard some one cough above him. He instantly conjectured that it was Purefoy. The voices had ceased, and Purefoy's visitor, whoever it was, had evidently retired to his own room. Most likely Purefoy had come to the window to indulge in a reverie; if so, he might stay there till midnight—who knew? Chorley cursed Purefoy in his heart, and wished him

at the bottom of the Thames. It was certainly very provoking, for time was flying with its proverbial rapidity; and do what he could, Chorley's thoughts were eternally fixed upon the chances of his catching the 10.45 train. Upon his succeeding in doing so, everything depended. Fuming and fretting at the untoward delay, he stood impatiently waiting for some sign that Purefoy had retired from the window, but he heard nothing. It would not do at all to venture to escape under Purefoy s very nose as it were, because the slightest noise would most probably arouse his attention, and he would give an alarm which would be fatal to Chorley's plans.

While in this state of suspense and anxiety, the college clock solemnly and slowly struck the quarter past ten. Chorley stamped his foot upon the floor with vexation, and bit his thumb-nail to the quick. He almost despaired now of being able to put his plans into execution. Suddenly he heard a noise as of some one moving overhead; then he distinctly heard the window put in. Chorley thanked Heaven that at last this danger was removed; Purefoy had at last gone to bed, and now he could let himself down to the ground without fear of detection.

Getting out on the ledge of the widow, he seized the tablecloth with both hands, and went down as sailors do on a rope, hand over hand; but when he was

about a couple of feet from the bottom, the cloth gave way and he fell heavily to the ground—the cloth descending gracefully upon him in his fall. The distance he had to drop owing to this accident was not great, and he was only a little shaken. It was in one respect a fortunate occurrence for him, as the tablecloth would not now be left as a witness against him. Taking it in his hand, he threw it behind one of the gates of the yard, and then walked quickly through College. Fortunately he encountered no one, and succeeded in reaching Barnes' Pool in perfect safety.

After he had once crossed the bridge, he ran as fast as he could up town. Chorley was a good runner, and he did his best on the present occasion. After severe exertions he reached the station, and rushed on the platform. He did not wait to take a ticket, because he was afraid he would not have the time. He had often on previous occasions taken his place in a carriage, and given a porter some money to get him a ticket. It was this course that he intended to pursue now; but his astonishment was intense when he perceived a solitary porter turning out the gas. Going up to him, he said,

"Am I in time for the 10.45 up train?"

"10.45 up train, sir? just gone, sir," replied the porter, in a sleepy voice.

Chorley staggered against the wall, and uttered an exclamation of despair. The train had gone; what was he to do? To remain in Windsor all night would be to invite certain capture in the morning. There was one chance left, and that was but a slender one; he might possibly obtain a fly at the White Hart or the Castle, which would take him up to London. He had taken off his white tie and put on a coloured one, so that he did not look like an Eton boy; he might say that he was an officer in the army, and that he had to report himself at head-quarters at a certain time. He would most likely have to pay heavily for the accommodation, but that he was prepared to do.

Collecting himself, he went to the White Hart Hotel, and asked if they had any flys. They replied that they did not send out so late at night, except very short distances. Chorley, a little discouraged, walked on to the Castle. Here they were more obliging, and by promising to pay what they demanded, he found himself in a short time rattling along the London road at a good round pace.

Chorley's absence from his tutor's was not discovered until the next morning, when the boys' maid came to call him. Her surprise was unlimited when she found the bed was empty.

"He have slep' in it," she muttered, as she perceived

that the clothes were ruffled. Thinking that he had got up early and gone to bathe before school, she said nothing about it.

The preposter of Chorley's division marked him "ab horâ" in the bill; and as he had several excuses to get, he thought he would not go for Chorley's until the last, as Mr. Wynne's house was at the extremity of the College,—consequently he did not send in his bill until after prayers.

The first thing in the morning, Mr. Wynne received a telegram from Mrs. Chorley in answer to his own. It was brief, and to the point; it consisted of these words; but what could have been more expressive?—"Send him home." It was all that she could trust herself to say, and Mr. Wynne felt that she had acted wisely in so deciding.

"But," he said, "before he goes, which shall be after breakfast, I must let the boys know that Butler Burke is innocent of the charges that have been laid against him."

After prayers that morning, Mr. Wynne said to the captain of the house, who was about to leave the room, "Stop a moment, Wingfield, and you other boys. I have something to say to you." As the boys heard this announcement, they all remained in their places, and Mr. Wynne, after a preliminary cough, said: "I want to say a word or two to you about an injustice

you have done Butler Burke. You have accused him of a very grave crime, the actual perpetrator of which will leave this house in half-an-hour. Burke, I may say, was perfectly able to prove his innocence at any time, but yielding to the urgent invitation of several people, he consented to lie under the stigma of being considered a thief, until the end of the half. I need not ask you to do Burke justice. Now go and talk it over amongst yourselves."

Butler Burke was overwhelmed with congratulations, and those who had been most bitter against him were now his warmest friends.

When the preposter came to ask why Chorley was not in school, Mr. Wynne was a little surprised; but when he was nowhere to be found, his surprise was unbounded; he caused a search to be made in every direction, but unsuccessfully, and his agitation increased hour by hour, until in the middle of the day it culminated, and he was on the point of going to London to put the police on the alert, when he received a telegram, dated Carlisle Station, that Chorley had arrived safely at his uncle's, and telling Mr. Wynne not to be anxious about him.

Thus ended an unpleasant affair, which, however, as we have seen, turned out well for our hero in the end.

CHAPTER XVII.

MAKING HAY.

CHORLEY was not very much missed at Wynne's. As it is in the great world, so it is at Eton. If a boy leaves, he is to a certain extent dead to the rest of the school. He is very rarely talked about next half; his particular friends may say that it is excessively annoying to be deprived of his society, but even they soon make fresh acquaintances, and in a very short space of time his memory dies out and he is forgotten. So it was with Chorley; the fact of his running away and escaping from Eton without being caught created a little sensation. Boys canvassed it, and wondered at it; but eventually Chorley was put down as a thief and a cad, and no one thought it worth his while to mention his name. Butler Burke, as may easily be imagined, became a prodigious favourite. All the boys who had persecuted him when he was under suspicion endeavoured to make up as well as they could for their ill-usage. There were some who

considered that Burke had behaved very sillily and brought it all on himself. If they had been in his position, they declared that they would have told all about it at once, rather than lie under the odious stigma of being looked upon as a thief.

But these were boys of little magnanimity, who could not understand the beauty of Butler Burke's self-sacrifice. Burke himself was sorry for Chorley, but notwithstanding his grief for his former friend, he could not help feeling glad at the course events had taken. He would have been more than mortal if he had not done so. It placed him at once in his former position, and, in fact, elevated him a great deal higher. Mr. Wynne was very proud of him, and most of the boys in the school who knew anything about his story looked upon him as a sort of juvenile hero. This, however, soon passed away, and Butler Burke relapsed into his old ways and habits; that is, he spent some of his time with Purefoy; but a great deal more of it he spent in boating, and sometimes a game of billiards, although he rarely indulged in the latter amusement. He played a good game of billiards for a boy of his age, because he had been accustomed to play at home with his father on the long winter evenings. But his father had always cautioned him not to play more than a game now and then, as it was what he called

a "fur temporis," and "You know," he added, "that you cannot afford to waste your time in playing at billiards. You must be Captain of the Boats before you leave Eton."

Burke's father was tolerably well off, and he could afford to start his son well in the world. He did not care about his distinguishing himself in the school list; he only wished to see his name in the "Boating Calendar," and to hear other boys say that he was a good oar. It is strange how old boating men wish to see their races rowed over again in the persons of their sons.

Mr. Burke had been at Eton himself, and had been captain of the "Thetis." He would have been Captain of the Boats, only the captain of the "Prince of Wales" happened to be desirous of the same honour, and as he had the right of seniority, he took possession of the coveted distinction.

Mr. Burke could not stop another summer half, as he was already in the sixth, so he was obliged to leave; and now he wished to see his son attain the aquatic honours which had been denied him. Butler Burke was at first very much grieved when he thought of Constance and Mrs. Chorley. He pictured to himself their grief, their inconsolable chagrin, at the unfortunate events in which the brother and son had been

the chief actor. What would they think of him? He had, to some extent, been to blame in the matter; but saying what he did would not have led to the disclosure of the real offender, had not Mr. Wynne come suddenly upon the scene and put the questions to the assembled boys which elicited the replies that came from them. He had broken his promise, which was, not to mention his knowledge of Chorley's guilt to anybody. He had mentioned it to Chorley himself, and in that he was to blame: at least he thought so; and young minds are often very sensitive. He considered that some explanation and some apology ought to be made to Mrs. Chorley; it might have been that he did not wish to lose caste in Constance's opinion, but however that was, he thought it his duty to write a letter to Mrs. Chorley. This epistle, which was composed by him with some care and a little expenditure of paper, was characteristic of the boy. It was generous in its tone, kind-hearted in its import, and altogether a letter which did him credit; he said, amongst other things,

"I am, perhaps, in writing to you, committing an act which you and Miss Chorley may consider indelicate. I should not be surprised if you look upon me as the destroyer of your son: if so, you would not be doing me justice. The painful discovery which,

believe me, I allude to with regret, was made by accident, and, upon my word, through no fault of mine. Chorley, I think, acted very wisely in going away as he did, and I hope with all my heart that he may succeed in the new career which he has chosen. You must permit me to say that one fault committed in extreme youth does not necessarily condemn the one who commits it to a life-long punishment; we think nothing of it here. The thing made a stir at first, but it was soon forgotten; and most likely if you were to come to Eton now and say to some boy, 'Who was Chorley?' he would reply, 'Chorley! let me see. Who was he?' or something of that sort. I trust sincerely that you do not, my dear Mrs. Chorley, regard me with any displeasure, as I tried to do what I promised you under very disheartening circumstances; and if I did not succeed as well as I wished, the failure cost me as much pain as it did Chorley's nearest and dearest friends."

When this letter was despatched, Butler Burke waited impatiently for an answer. It was a few days before it arrived. To Burke's delight, he perceived that it was addressed to him in the handwriting of Constance. Trembling with eagerness he broke open the envelope and read it. It was everything that he could desire. Constance said that her mamma had

desired her to answer Mr. Burke's very kind note, and they both begged him to consider them his warmest and most attached friends. They entirely acquitted him of any blame, as they were sure he had done his best. It was the fortune of war, she said, and they supposed that misdeeds were always punished sooner or later. They hoped that Chorley would get on in his new vocation, and they had every reason to think so, for the letters they had received from him were quite reassuring, and full of hopes for the future, regrets for the past, and promises of amendment. In conclusion, they assured Mr. Burke that their feelings towards him were unaltered, and they hoped, if his friends made no objection, they might have the very great pleasure of his company for a week or ten days in the holidays. They would give a longer invitation, only they were sure his own family must be so fond of him that they would refuse to part with him for more than that time.

Burke was much pleased with this letter. He valued Constance's good opinion more than any one else's, with the exception, of course, of his mother and father, and he feared at one time that he had fallen into disgrace with her. But this letter set his fears at rest, and he was now perfectly happy again. Purefoy was especially pleased at Chorley's flight,

because it exonerated Burke, and made him an honest man again with his companions; but even Purefoy, after a short time, began to forget the occurrence and think of other things, for the life of a schoolboy is one of high-pressure. The steam is always up, and the puerile engine runs at speed along the scholastic metals. Burke did not forget it on account of Constance. Thoughts of seeing her again in the holidays kept the affair green in his memory.

One day, after coming out of school, he proceeded directly to his room, and he was slightly astonished at the spectacle which presented itself. Usually his room was the picture of neatness, order, and regularity; but now its condition was a mixture of chaos and Lisbon after the earthquake. Two chairs were elegantly perched upon the top of the bedstead. The table was standing upon its head, with its legs coquettishly protruding in the air. The contents of the water-jug had been emptied into the grate, which promised to become rather rusty in the morning in consequence. Some books were floating upon the surface of the shallow pool formed in the grate by the water. The modest pictures turned their backs on such a scene of desolation, and hid their shining faces that the deed might pass unnoticed. Books were scattered about the floor like gems in the Eastern

tale at the bottom of the Diamond Valley, and his tea and sugar had formed an indissoluble alliance with the remains of a pot of marmalade.

Burke gazed on this with unutterable disgust. It was very clear that an enemy had been sowing tares, or in Burke's own vernacular, "Some infernal fellow had been making hay in his room." He had more than once assisted to "turn up" some other boy's room, but this was the first time he had ever experienced the bitterness of the thing himself. After gazing at it for a little time, and wondering who could have done it, he went into the passage and called Susan.

Susan made her appearance after some delay, and on seeing the havoc, exclaimed with an unmistakable air of indignation, "Oh, Mr Burke! who have done this?"

"Just what I want to know," responded Burke, surlily.

"Oh, dear! oh, dear!" said Susan.

"Extremely jolly, isn't it?" exclaimed Burke, satirically.

"I never see such a mess," replied Susan.

"Nor I," said Burke; "and as it is not a pleasant state of things, the sooner it ceases to exist the better; so lend a hand, Sukey."

In a wonderfully short space of time things were, under the energetic efforts of the boys' maid, reduced to order. The books were securely encased, the pictures recovered their bashfulness, and the table and chairs were restored to their normal position. It must be confessed, however, that Susan did growl over the fire-grate, and no wonder.

"That's better," cried Burke, at last, panting with exertion. "Sukey, I'm indebted to you."

Just as Susan left the room, Chudleigh entered it.

"Have you heard about Lascelles?" he exclaimed.

"No; what about him?"

"Oh! if you have not heard, I'll tell you; you ought to see it."

"I am afraid I cannot get away, though, if it's any distance," said Burke.

"Why not?"

"Well, just at this moment, there is a great gulf between me and anything out of doors, which I must bridge over with a Copy of Verses."

"Oh! hang the Verses; you had better come and see Lascelles drive tandem through College."

"Drive tandem!" echoed Burke, in astonishment.

"Yes; why not? Paddy Lascelles made a bet last week at the Barracks that he would drive through College twice and not be nailed. I think the bet's an

even pony. He is to drive from the Castle through Eton to Slough, and back again to Windsor. He starts at half-past twelve; so if you want to see it, you had better look alive."

"By Jove! I think I shall fluke doing Verses; I should like to see Paddy drive tandem through College," said Butler Burke.

"Well, if you like to come, you can come with me," replied Chudleigh; "and I will tell you all I know about the thing as we go along."

"I wonder if he will get nailed?" said Burke.

Chudleigh also wondered, and both wondering, they left the house together.

CHAPTER XVIII.

DRIVING TANDEM.

CHUDLEIGH and Butler Burke made their way to the Wall. Several boys were standing about waiting to see Paddy Lascelles drive tandem, for the thing had got about, and some interest was felt in the success of his daring exploit. Their presence, however, was hardly fair to Lascelles, for it considerably increased the risk he ran. The Playing Fields were nearly empty, and even those who go down "to the sea in ships" had left the smiling Brocas ungraced by their presence. If any master had seen so many boys hanging about one particular spot, his suspicion that something was going on which was not strictly proper, would of course be instantly aroused. Spankey, Levi, and Bryan were at the Wall. The one with his tin-case full of "tarts, cakes, and buns," the other with his wicker-basket replete with the same juvenile delicacies; and the latter with his ambitious-looking cart, from whose magic depths he extracted ices of three kinds, villanously compounded. Spankey's facial muscles

were incapable of rigidity, for they seemed to be kept as well oiled as his smile, which was at all times peculiarly unctuous.

"Tarts, cakes, and buns, this morning, sir?" exclaimed Spankey, with his accustomed affability.

"What tarts have you?" asked Burke.

"Gooseberry, raspberry, and apple-tarts, sir—Mr. Butler Burke, sir."

"Well, give me a raspberry."

The door of the black tin-case revolved with a grateful sound upon its amiable hinges, and disclosed three trays, one above the other. The middle one was pulled out by Spankey, and Burke was soon deeply occupied in demolishing the sweets he had asked for.

"What for you, sir—Mr. Chudleigh, sir?" asked Spankey, in his blandest and most insinuating manner.

"Nothing," replied Chudleigh; "I wouldn't have anything from such a ruffian as you are. I tick with Bryan, and he is not so big an old Jew as you are."

"Cent. per cent., sir, is his profits!" said Spankey, with his imperturbable smile.

"Oh! shut up," answered Chudleigh, contemptuously, going over to the place where Bryan's cart stood. On his way he passed Levi, the undersized

Jew we have mentioned before, whose features altogether would not have helped him much with a jury.

Levi, in a thick, husky voice, for which he was remarkable, was saying to a boy who was trying to induce him to trust him,

"It's too pad; you owe me thirty shillings, and I can't tick any more—I can't, indeed, till you let me have some monish."

The boy made a spring towards Levi's basket, and pulled out a handful of cherries, with which he ran away triumphant, shouting out,

"Sold again, you old cad!"

To which Levi replied, in a low tone, "Yes, and not got the monish."

Levi took out his note-book, and finding the place he wanted, on the top of which the boy's name was written, he put down "Cherries, 9*d.*;" thereby charging eightpence more than he had any legal or moral right to do.

Bryan was more popular than Levi, whose trade seemed to be principally among the smaller boys, whose faculties were not sufficiently on the alert to show them that they were being made the spoil of Israel.

When the boy who had plundered Levi of his cherries had run a little way, he stopped, and shot the stones at the Jew. He was as skilful with these pastoral

weapons as David the son of Jesse; and the shower of stones that fell upon the Israelite's face stung him like so many gad-flies.

Lascelles was acquainted with some of the officers who were quartered at Windsor, and they had one day made him a bet that he would not drive tandem through College without being detected and flogged. He backed himself readily at three and two to one to do it. He felt confident in his power of "getting up" so that no one would recognise him.

While Chudleigh was eating an ice, a slight commotion amongst the assembled boys showed him that Lascelles was coming. Turning round, he saw two handsome bays drawing a slender trap along in splendid style. Lascelles was dressed in a coachman's coat, of a whitey-brown colour, with a comforter round his neck. A white hat, with a black band, was set jauntily upon his head; he had a pair of green spectacles on his eyes, and some dark whiskers, well arranged on his face, completed his disguise, which was not easily penetrated. His self-possession was admirable. He neither looked to the right nor to the left, but straight before him, and was soon lost to sight by the angle formed by the road to Slough. The crowd then dispersed—few caring to wait until he returned.

At this juncture Mr. Wynne happened to pass by, and seeing the number of boys who were dispersing, he looked round him in some astonishment. At last he espied Burke and Chudleigh. Going up to them, he exclaimed,

"What is the meaning of this, Chudleigh? Is anybody hurt? or has there been a fight?"

"Yes, sir," replied Chudleigh, catching at the idea. "I believe there has, between two Lower school boys. I did not look at it. I happened to be passing by."

"And you have been patronising the sweets, I suppose?" replied Mr. Wynne, looking at a half eaten tart he held in his hand.

Satisfied with the explanation, Mr. Wynne passed on, and in a short time Lascelles drove back from Slough, passed through College a second time at a rapid pace, and drove into the court-yard of the Castle, where his friends were awaiting him.

"I think it was a plucky thing for him to do," said Chudleigh to Burke, as they went back to their tutor's.

"Do you?" replied Burke. "Well, it is one of those things I should not care about doing myself."

When he got back to his room he busied himself for half-an-hour over longs-and-shorts and the "Labours of Hercules."

CHAPTER XIX.

THE BELLS OF OUSELY.

SUMMER half was drawing to a close. The sculling and the pulling were over. To the great delight of every inmate of Mr. Wynne's house, Lascelles had won the former, and great were the exertions of Butler Burke at hoisting. He had gone down to Barnes Pool, where a great number of boys were collected discussing the race, and awaiting the coming of the swells from the Christopher. The wall was entirely covered by boys, who kicked their heels monotonously against it, all, by the way, keeping time together. This produced a dull sort of sound, which was not exactly unmusical. When a horse or a cart, or a solitary wayfarer passed through College on his way to Slough, or to Windsor, they were assailed by a perfect storm of shrieks, and howls, and hisses; and, in fact, every description of puerile noises. Sometimes the horses would prick up their ears and start off at a quick pace, giving their drivers great trouble to hold them in When this was the case the noises were redoubled.

After the race, all the swells, or men, in the boats

went to the Christopher to drink Lascelles' health in brimming cups of champagne. When this was over, they all, to the number of about sixty, went into the street and formed into two solid rows, each taking the arm of the one next him. Then this phalanx marched steadily and irresistibly into College, sweeping all before it. When Barnes Pool bridge was reached, two boys placed themselves one on each side of Lascelles, who placed an arm round each of their shoulders. Another boy went in front, and putting one of Lascelles' legs under each arm, he was raised completely from the ground. Then they started off up College with him, the whole school running before and after them, shouting, hurrahing, and waving their hats. Having gone as far as Luxmore's old house, they turned round again, and having reached the spot they started from, all his friends advanced and patted him on the back until his breath was nearly beaten out of him, saying,

"Well sculled, old boy! Well sculled, Lascelles! Hurrah!"

While this is going on, all the boys rap with their knuckles on the top of their hats, or move their hands about inside of them, making a great noise—and this is hoisting. Eight hundred boys, glowing with the exercise, in a frenzy of excitement. doing homage to

one who has proved himself superior to all in the pastime that Etonians excel in; that boy himself standing proudly happy, like a king, to receive the applause of the whole school. It is a sight that cannot be seen anywhere in the universe but at Eton.

Butler Burke, nothwithstanding that Lascelles had often given him a licking, liked him. Besides, if he had hated him, he would have been glad of his triumph, because it was a triumph for the house; and the pride Eton boys take in belonging to a swell house is a little remarkable. So Burke nearly knocked the crown out of his hat in his frantic demonstrations of delight; and then he went up to him and patted him timidly on the back, crying out,

"Well sculled, Paddy; bravo, old fellow!" But directly afterwards he took care to get out of the reach of Lascelles' boots, as he had a wholesome dread of being "back-shinned."

The day after the hoisting, Burke had an engagement with Purefoy. It was "play at four," and they had the afternoon to themselves. They had arranged to go somewhere, but they had some difficulty in making their minds up. Burke proposed Salt Hill; but Purefoy said he was tired of the place. He also objected to the Bells of Ousely, as being a little too far. At last he suggested that they should go to the

end of the Long Walk. Butler Burke grumbled at this, because there was no prospect of beer; but he sullenly acquiesced, and they started on their way. When they arrived at the station, Burke said,

"I feel awfully thirsty; I don't know how you feel."

Purefoy could not help confessing that the heat had made him, in rustic phrase, "rather dry."

"Well, then," said Burke, "let us run over to the Bells; we shall have lots of time to do it."

After some demur, Purefoy consented, and they struck across the Park. They had some difficulty in finding their way, and once or twice nearly lost themselves. In fact, they were so long in going that Purefoy more than once proposed that they should turn back, but this Butler Burke would not listen to. He had come out for some beer, he said, and he would not go back without it. Besides, it was not likely he would, after going such a thundering long distance after it. To this Purefoy replied that there were beershops in Windsor.

"I don't care about that," said Burke; "we are nearer the Bells than we are to Windsor, and I don't think I could get back, upon my word I don't, without some malt liquor."

"Well, if you are determined, I suppose we must go on; but I can tell you one thing."

"What is that?"

"Only this; we shall miss absence as safe as a shot."

"All right; I can do a hundred lines, I suppose?" replied Burke.

Purefoy growled now in his turn, and they walked on in silence, until the Bells hove in sight. It had formerly been a very popular hostelry with Eton Boys when the boats went down the river; but now Surly Hall has usurped its place, and the Bells is only famous for its traditions, and its beer, above all its beer, which is really excellent. When they reached the Bells, it was half-past five.

When Butler Burke saw the time, he pulled rather a long face.

"Make haste, Butts, and drink your beer," said Purefoy.

"What for?" asked Burke.

"What for? Why, to get back to College, of course, in time for six o'clock absence. We have half-an-hour, and we may do it if we sweat."

"Oh! I dare say. I am not going to do anything of the sort," replied Butler Burke, decisively.

Purefoy looked astonished.

"If you like you can go back; but if we were to run ever so hard we could not get there in time."

"Do you think so?"

"I am sure of it."

"In that case, what are we to do?"

"Why, we may as well stop here as do anything else. We are safe for a hundred or two hundred lines, and we may be as well hanged for a sheep as a lamb, so let us stop here an hour and walk home quietly. Be jolly for once in your existence, and make your miserable life happy."

Purefoy, after thinking the matter over, sat down and made the best of things. They had another pot of beer, and went down to the bank of the river to lie down on the grass and the stones which fringed it.

When we consider the walk they had had, the heat of the weather, and the strong ale they had imbibed, it is not surprising that they both fell asleep. The sun went down during their slumbers; the swans on the river retired to their nests; the night dews began to descend, but still they slept.

All at once Purefoy awoke, and started up. It was nearly dark. It could not be far off nine o'clock. He trembled all over. At first he could not understand it all; but the truth soon burst upon him. They had fallen asleep, and had slept a long time. Going to Burke, he shook him. Burke turned over and said in a low drowsy voice,

"All right, Sukey, look in again." He thought he was being called in the morning.

"Now look here," said Purefoy, "we have got ourselves into a beastly row."

"Eh?" said Burke, sitting up and rubbing his eyes. At last the situation forced itself upon him.

"Well, you're a nice fellow, to sleep like that," he said, laughingly.

"It is all very well to laugh; but what is to be done?" replied Purefoy.

"Oh! if that's all, I can soon tell you."

"Can you? I wish you would then."

"Well, I suppose we must have some more beer, and then cut home as quickly as we can."

"What a fellow you are for beer! I think you have had enough already," said Purefoy, who was in a bad temper.

"I am the best judge of that," replied Burke, entering the public, and calling for a pint of ale.

By the time they left the Bells it was almost dark, and the boys were in some apprehension lest they might again lose their way.

This was a reasonable fear, for the path was anything but well defined.

Purefoy was excessively annoyed at being out so late. He knew Mr. Wynne would be alarmed, and

would worry himself. He had never done such a thing before, and he walked along sulkily, without speaking a word. At last Butler Burke broke the silence,

"My tutor wont say anything; so you needn't look so cut up about it."

Purefoy growled a reply.

"Oh! if you are going to sulk, you can," replied Burke. "I dare say I can be as disagreeable as you."

"And a little more so," put in Purefoy.

"Come, old boy, I can make allowance for your feelings; but what is the good of turning rusty? with me, too. I haven't done anything."

"Oh, haven't you? I think you have."

"What?" asked Burke.

"Why, if it had not been for you, we should never have gone to the Bells."

"Well, it's no use crying. Here, drink a drop of this."

"What is it?"

"Only a little brandy I got before I left. I thought we might want it."

Purefoy took the proffered cordial, and drank a little. This mollified him, and he condescended to be more sociable.

"Do you think we are going the right way?" he asked his cousin.

"To tell you the truth, I don't," replied Burke. "I have not much knowledge of the Park, but I have wandered about here and there occasionally. If we get out of these trees, we shall see the lights from the Castle."

They walked on heavily and wearily for some time, but they did not emerge into the open.

After some time they could not disguise from themselves the fact that they were lost in the forest. It was not a nice prospect; but they were more annoyed than frightened. There was no moon, and they only had that hazy sort of light which is characteristic of our summer nights to guide them. There was a slight breeze, which whistled mournfully through the trees; the crisp leaves rattled together. Occasionally a bird, disturbed, would fly away with strange noises, and a rabbit would rise under their feet, making them start, and dart away.

Purefoy proposed that they should rest a few minutes and think what was best to be done. They sat down at the foot of a thick gnarled oak, blighted and withered. It had a sort of railing round it. When Burke perceived it, he changed colour, and laid hold of Purefoy's arm.

"Look!" he said, in a tremulous voice; "that is Herne's Oak."

CHAPTER XX.

THE HAUNTED OAK.

Most people have heard of Herne's Oak, which has been celebrated by Ainsworth in his admirable romance of "Windsor Castle." Those who have not read Mr. Ainsworth's book may still have heard of the far-famed tree. Although the ghost which used to haunt the immediate vicinage of the tree is supposed to have been laid by the blessed ministrations of holy priests, still two schoolboys may be excused for feeling a little nervous at finding themselves at about ten o'clock at night near the haunted Oak.

When Purefoy heard Butler Burke's remark, he smiled, although he could scarcely help shivering.

"Well, suppose it is Herne's Oak; what of it?" said Purefoy.

"What of it? Well, only this, that I wish I were a few miles away," replied Burke.

While he spoke, the crescent moon broke from the clouds which had hitherto obscured it, and the blasted Oak was distinctly visible. Purefoy thought of "The

Merry Wives of Windsor," and how poor old Falstaff was pinched by the fairies and sylvan spirits. The Oak looked harmless enough in the calm flood of moonlight which streamed down upon it. Its twisted branches appeared white and silvery. Here and there a limb stood out rather threateningly, as if holding forth a menace to the nocturnal wanderers who had taken the liberty of reclining at the base of the parent stem.

"You may chaff as much as you like, Purefoy," said Burke; "but I don't half like this."

"What bosh!"

"Bosh! is it? All right, old fellow; it may be bosh. We shall see. I hope if the ghost does come, he will pay you more attention than me."

Burke, after this pious wish, took the flask out of his pocket, and imbibed some more brandy. He afterwards handed it to Purefoy, who was not above following his example.

"I suppose the ghost ought to come with horns on his head?" said Purefoy; "so if you saw a stag with antlers, you would swear you had seen Herne the Hunter."

Butler Burke was about to reply, when something arrested his attention. With his eyes fixed upon some object in the distance, he seemed incapable of opening

his mouth; he could only point with his finger. Purefoy looked in the direction indicated, and perceived a dark shadow flitting about from tree to tree. Then it disappeared.

"There! did you see that?" cried Butler Burke, the perspiration starting from every pore.

"Yes, I did; perhaps it is some ranger or gamekeeper."

"It is no more a gamekeeper than you are," replied Burke, his teeth chattering together.

"What is it, then, as you seem to know all about it?" asked Purefoy.

"Why, it's a ghost; it's Herne the Hunter."

At this announcement, Purefoy laughed outright.

"Oh! you may laugh," said Burke angrily; "but you will find out presently that it is nothing to laugh at. I have often been told about this tree, and the strange things that are seen here; and now I believe it all. Why, there isn't a man or a woman in Windsor who would go within half a mile of it after dark."

Purefoy remained silent after this. He was rather interested; he did not go the length that Burke did, but there was a mystery somewhere, and he was determined to solve it. While he was gazing intently at that part of the forest where the

apparition had been last seen, it appeared again, and it was strange that either it had the power of being in three places at once, or else there were two other creatures very much resembling it.

"Now what do you think?" asked Butler Burke. "You wont say you don't believe in ghosts now, will you?"

"Yes, I will," replied Purefoy boldly.

"What do you call that, then?" said Burke, pointing triumphantly towards the forest.

"I don't care for that," said Purefoy.

"But seeing's believing, isn't it?" persisted Burke.

"In this case it is not."

"Well, then, how about the Witch of Endor; you believe *that*, don't you?"

"Things are altered since those days," replied Purefoy, feeling a little uncomfortable when Burke spoke of the Witch of Endor. He could not help thinking of an old illustrated Bible they had at home, in which was a terrible picture of the witch raising up the body of Samuel to Saul.

An open glade stretched from the haunted oak to the belt of trees which we have called the forest. This glade was not of any great extent, but the ghost or ghosts would have to pass across it before

they could molest the boys. The apparitions continued to flit about; first here and then there, much to both Purefoy's and Burke's alarm,—although the former was more puzzled than frightened.

"I wish you would go away from here," said Burke. "Let us make a run for it."

"If you like, we will; but I should like to see the end of this," replied Purefoy.

"Oh! would you? then I should not. I have seen quite enough, I can assure you," replied Burke; "and if you had the least regard for me, you would go at once."

"Well, but which way shall we go?"

"Which way? Well, my idea is that the Castle is behind the ghost."

"In that case we should have to pass it," said Purefoy.

"So we should," said Butler Burke, looking rather crestfallen.

"Will you take my arm? and together we shall be a match for any ghost. Besides, I have heard that ghosts never hurt people," said Purefoy, trying to reassure his more timid friend.

"I don't know," said Burke doubtfully, ransacking his mind for all his nursery lore. "I think," he added, "that I have read somewhere that the

leprechauns in Ireland will bite and pinch you if you laugh at them."

"Oh! don't talk such nonsense," replied Purefoy, losing his patience. "I am more afraid of a blow on the head with a stout cudgel than any of the nonsense you talk of. But come, if you intend to; my tutor's will be shut up, and we shall have the police scouring the town after us."

"All right, I suppose. If you will be so foolhardy, I must come with you."

Rising from the ground, they stood up and looked about them. Purefoy could not help wishing that he had a yard and a half of good blackthorn, for he was more afraid of human agencies than of supernatural ones. They had proceeded half-way across the glade, when three distinct apparitions showed themselves. This time they were all together. They did not raise their arms or menace the boys in any way. They seemed perfectly still, like misty exhalations. Could they be spectral illusions? Purefoy determined to find out. The faint pale moonlight revealed a few stones lying at his feet; he selected one, and stooped down to pick it up. Then with great rapidity, he threw it at the spectres. He heard a cry, which was weird and ominous. It sounded like "wyl wyl onowmen."

Was this the language of the spheres, or the tongue in which departed spirits converse? Purefoy did not seem to know exactly. Directly after the stone was thrown, the illusion, if it was one, vanished.

Butler Burke gazed on all this with tacit amazement.

"Now for it," cried Purefoy; "let's run for it." And leading the way, he plunged into the darkness that was caused by the deep foliage of the trees. Burke followed closely at his heels. Hardly had Purefoy proceeded a dozen yards under the shelter of the trees, than an iron grasp descended on his arm, a hand was placed over his mouth, and he lay upon the grass a prisoner.

It was too dark for Butler Burke to see plainly what had become of Purefoy, but he missed him. Gazing around him in great perplexity, he stood, at a loss what to do. While in this state of anxiety and doubt, he was treated in the same way as Purefoy, and he lay helpless on the ground in the hands of his captors. He was in great alarm, for although naturally a brave boy, he was a little nervous on the present occasion, and his conversation with Purefoy had prepared him for an encounter with some impalpable beings. Not a word was spoken, but he was conscious of some one of the ghosts rifling his pockets, and then they disappeared as noiselessly as they came.

"Purefoy!" cried Butler Burke, as soon as he recovered his presence of mind.

Soon an answer came from a spot hardly six feet from where he himself was.

Getting up, Burke walked over to where the voice came from.

"They haven't spirited you away, then?" asked Purefoy, laughing.

"What is the meaning of it all?" inquired Burke, who had rather vague ideas of the whole occurrence. He could not say that they were ghosts now, but he was not very clear about the matter.

"Have the plundering rascals robbed you, too?" asked Purefoy.

Butler Burke felt in his pockets, and replied rather angrily,

"Confound it! yes; six bob I had in my breeches-pocket, and my watch and chain. By Jove! that's a little too bad."

"Nice sort of ghosts, eh?" said Purefoy.

"Have they served you the same?" said Butler Burke.

"Exactly; every rap I had they've taken, besides my watch."

"What where they, then, do you think?"

"Gipsies, my dear Butts; I heard them talking to one another in their own language. But let us get

back as soon as we can, and tell the police; they may catch them. I don't feel inclined to lose my property in this way. I suppose you will shut up about ghosts, though, after this."

"I say, don't tell the fellows; I shall get chaffed awfully," said Burke.

"I wont promise," replied Purefoy; "the joke is too fine. But come on, we must make haste. It must be nearly eleven o'clock."

After some running, they saw the lights of Windsor Castle, and guided by these, they soon got into the town of Windsor. They told the first policeman they met how they had been robbed, and then hurried back to College. When they were half way between Windsor Bridge and Barnes Pool, they met their tutor with two of the College policemen. He was coming out to look for them. Mr. Wynne sternly demanded where they had been. Purefoy told his story plainly and ingenuously. Mr. Wynne was much annoyed, but eventually the ghost part of the story made him laugh, and he told them to hurry home to get some supper. The next day he told them to bring him the morning's Homer, written out and translated.

The police after a desperate fight with the gipsies, whom they easily discovered, recovered the stolen property; so that the chaff about ghosts was the only consequence of their adventure.

CHAPTER XXI.

A WATER PARTY.

It was Mr. Wynne's custom to give a water party every summer half. Sometimes he went down the river, and sometimes in the other direction. Last summer he had gone down as far as Staines, and picnicked in the vicinity of the stone which marks the spot where the mailed barons forced King John to sign the Charter. So this year he resolved to go up.

A former pupil of his lived near Cookham, and he knew that he would gladly allow him to bring his boys to that part of his estate which fringed the river. However, he wrote him a line saying,

"My dear Wetherall—I was really at a loss to know where to go this summer, until I thought of you. But I am sure you will, with your usual kindness, allow us to camp somewhere on your territory. We shall not come like a flock of locusts to devour the land, because we shall bring plenty of good things with us, which I sincerely hope you will help us to

demolish. If I should in any way be trespassing upon your kindness in selecting your place for my water party, pray let me know."

The reply from Wetherall was equally urbane; and it was finally decided that the boys should this year go up the river.

Burke had never been to a water party, as this was his first half at Eton, so he looked forward to the excursion with some anxiety. He was afraid at first that Mr. Wynne would not ask him to come, because he very rarely took any but fifth and sixth form boys.

However, Butler Burke was so great a favourite with his tutor, that Mr. Wynne asked him among the first.

"Have you ever been to one of my tutor's water parties?" he said to Purefoy.

"Yes. Last year I went. I had just got into fifth form, you know."

"Did you like it? Is it good fun?"

"Yes, it is very jolly indeed! We went down the river last year," replied Purefoy.

"Which way are we going now?"

"Up, I think—past Maidenhead. The river is very pretty there, from all I have heard."

"Do all the masters in College have these parties?" said Burke.

"I am sure I don't know: you had better ask them," replied Purefoy, testily.

He was reading; and when a person is reading, and trying to digest what he reads, he does not like to be interrupted.

"Well, you needn't snap a fellow up like that," said Burke.

"I'm reading."

"Yes; I see that."

"If you were reading, would you like to be badgered?"

"I don't want to badger you," answered Butler Burke.

"Then why do you do it?"

"Oh! you are a beast. I am sorry Chorley's gone."

When Purefoy heard him say this, he put down his book, and said very quietly,

"I don't think it is exactly right or proper for you to talk to me like that."

"Well, never mind, old boy," replied Burke, good temperedly. "I only wanted to make you talk. Put down your book, and come out. You will kill yourself if you sap eternally as you are doing at present."

"But——" exclaimed Purefoy.

"Oh! yes; I know. The 'New-castle' is all very well, but it is not everything. For my part I would rather be Captain of the Boats than get a dozen 'New-castles.' But I do not like to see you work so awfully hard. Why, the work you do here would get you three or four B.A.'s at Oxford."

Purefoy laughed, and said,

"It is very kind of you to take so much interest in me; but I know what I can do without hurting myself."

"All right," said Butler Burke; "it is nothing much to me; only don't over do it, that is all."

And he left the room, wishing his cousin would be "a little more like other fellows."

Burke was a believer in muscular Christianity, after the creed of Kingsley, and he could not understand his cousin's being so fond of the house and his books.

"But never mind," he added, "I'll see if I cannot bring him out next half. He can play at football, I hope, if he can't row."

When the day appointed for the water party arrived, all the boys who had been invited went down to the rafts. A whole holiday had been chosen for the occasion, and the boys were, through Mr. Wynne's intercession, excused church and absence.

They had some boats celebrated rather for their size

than their speed, which was not very great at the best of times, but the arms which were to propel them through the water belonged to young and ardent boys, who were elated at the prospect before them, and ready to work "double tides,"—simply because they worked with the grain instead of against it.

The boys embarked about twelve o'clock in the morning. The weather was everything they could wish. The sky was blue, flecked here and there with white, and the heat was rather too intense if anything.

Mrs. Wynne and some friends of hers travelled to the spot overland in a carriage. Mr. Wynne went in the first boat, and Lascelles had the command of the second.

Butler Burke and Purefoy were together, but they had not much chance of conversing with one another, for Burke was condemned to hard labour. In other words, he had to pull the bow oar; and Purefoy sat by the side of his tutor very much as a Venetian senator might have sat in his gondola during the palmy days of the Republic.

There was nothing much to interest the boys until they passed Monkey Island and reached Maidenhead. Just before they got to the lock, Butler Burke thought he would chaff Purefoy.

"I think you might do something, Purefoy," he said, as he bent over his stretcher.

"I am doing something," said Purefoy: "I am looking after you, and seeing that you work properly."

"Oh! that is nothing."

"Well, what do you want me to do?"

"Oh! come and pull for a little while; I think I have had a pretty good spell at it."

"I don't think Purefoy can be better employed than, as he says, in looking after you," said Mr. Wynne, looking at Burke.

"Why, sir?" cried Burke.

"You require the assistance of leading-strings now and then, you know," replied his tutor, significantly.

"Please, sir," said Burke.

"If you are tired, I'll come and take an oar," said Purefoy.

"Will you? Come along then," replied Butler Burke, taking him at his word.

The boat was near the lock now, and the boys ceased pulling, to shout out, "Lock," as hard as they could, in order to arouse the dormant faculties of the lock-keeper; for lock-keepers are usually only susceptible to the voices of bargees, whose lungs have been

lately strengthened by an almost unhealthy indulgence in puppy-dog pie.

Purefoy took his cousin's place out of pure good nature.

Burke was not sorry to be relieved, because the sun was very powerful. He had at first only intended to have some fun with Purefoy, but as he expressed himself willing to take his oar, he let him have it.

Purefoy had some misgivings as to his proficiency in aquatic pastimes, but he bravely determined to do his best. What that was we shall see presently.

The lock-keeper's tympanums at last proved themselves to be mortal, and in obedience to the noisy summons of the boys, the lock gates swung slowly open, and the imprisoned water began to stream through with many a gurgle and bubble. At last one was wide open, and the captain of the boat said,

"Row on all."

As Purefoy was bow, his keeping stroke was not of very much consequence. He rowed as well as he could, and as there were only a hundred yards or so to go, his performance passed without public criticism. When they were near the lock, and the boat had acquired an impetus, the captain, cried "Ship," and everybody, with the exception of Purefoy, shipped their oars cleanly and well. Purefoy first put his oar one way and then another, and at last got totally

bewildered. When the boat was half in the lock, his oar was held straight up in the air.

"Ship your oar, Purefoy," said Mr. Wynne, who was watching him.

Purefoy endeavoured to do so, but in his extreme anxiousness to acquit himself favourably, he, to a certain extent, lost his head, and allowed his oar to catch in a crack in the lock gate. All his efforts did not suffice to extricate it in time, and as the boat was going rather quickly, the inevitable consequence was that the blade snapped like a piece of cane, and Purefoy sat with the stump of the oar in his hand, while the other piece remained sticking in the wood of the lock gate, as a standing triumph of his skill.

Purefoy looked so disconsolate, and so annoyed; but everybody laughed.

Mr. Wynne could not help joining in the merriment.

"Come over here, Purefoy," he said. "Never mind; accidents will happen to the best oar. We must send Butler Burke back again."

"But there is nothing to row with, sir," replied Butler Burke, who thought that he had escaped any more hard work.

"Oh! but there is, though," said Mr. Wynne. "I

provided against just such a contingency as has happened. Look in the bottom of the boat and tell me what you see."

Burke looked, and saw another oar, which he contrived to extricate; and as he took his seat once more, the laugh was against him.

At Cookham Lock they stopped a few minutes to taste the ginger beer for which the place is famous; then they rowed on gaily again until they came to the place where Mr. Wynne had been asked by Wetherall to land.

As the keel of the boat grated upon the pebbles, Wetherall himself came up to welcome them. After he had shaken hands with Mr. Wynne, he led him and his party through a gate and past a clump of trees, where his visitors were much surprised to see a tent erected in the neighbourhood of a leafy covert.

"That is very kind of you," exclaimed Mr. Wynne. "I did not expect that."

Wetherall made no reply, but looked very pleased, and led the way inside the tent.

On the ground were several cans of cream, and two or three large baskets of strawberries. When Wetherall saw Mr. Wynne's eyes light upon them, he said, deprecatingly,

"I thought you wouldn't mind; we have such lots of strawberries here."

Mr. Wynne shook his hand, and went outside again to superintend the disembarkation of the provisions, which was satisfactorily accomplished, as everybody had an interest in doing it well.

Shortly afterwards Mrs. Wynne and her friends arrived, having crossed the river at Maidenhead, and come along the towing-path at the bank, which saved a very considerable round.

The cloth was soon laid, the viands displayed, and the serious part of the excursion began. It was not a noisy or a demonstrative party. Nobody talked loudly, nobody sang songs, nobody proposed healths or toasts; but every one enjoyed himself in a quiet, gentlemanly manner. After dinner the boys dispersed to amuse themselves for an hour, and Burke and Chudleigh went together. They walked listlessly along by the side of a hedge for some time. There was a sort of enclosure before them, which contained some ricks of corn. Burke thought it would be very nice to lie down at the foot of one of them, out of the heat of the sun. He proposed it to Chudleigh, who made no objection.

"I managed to bag a bottle of champagne,"

said Butler Burke; "and we can drink it quietly under these ricks."

"All right," replied Chudleigh, by no means displeased at the prospect.

Burke half undid his jacket, which he had buttoned up, and showed the bottle to Chudleigh. But as he held it up for him to look at, he suddenly started back.

"What is the matter?" asked Chudleigh, in alarm.

Butler Burke threw down the bottle, and clasped his left hand round the sleeve of his right arm.

"I've got the beggar!" he exclaimed. "Why, it's a beastly wasp! he's stung me; but I've got him—I think."

Burke bared his arm in confirmation of this assertion, and pulled out a dead wasp which he had crushed, revealing at the same time a red spot strongly inflamed, and indicative of a severe sting. Butler Burke looked round him. There were numerous wasps flying about.

"I think there's a nest," he said.

"I'm sure of it," replied Chudleigh. "Let's burn them."

"Burn them!" said Burke. "How?"

"Oh, I'll tell you! I have done it scores of times in the country. Haven't you?"

"I don't live in the country, you know. I only go there now and then."

"Oh! I see. But I'll tell you."

"I should like to do it very much," said Burke, "if it can be done."

"This is how to do it. I never put anything over my face—any muslin or that. I just get a truss of straw or a bundle of hay—flax is the best—and light it, and lay it over the hole; that makes a smoke, and smothers all the wasps that come up, and scorches the wings of those who are coming home. Of course you get a sting now and then, but you don't mind that in the fun of taking the nest; at least, I don't. Then I dig up the nest with a spade, always keeping a lot of lighted straw over the hole, to scorch their wings and keep them off me, and sometimes, in a good nest, you will get several pounds of comb."

"Honey in it?" queried Butler Burke.

"Honey! no. You must be an ass. Wasps don't have honey," said Chudleigh.

"How should I know?" replied Burke. "What do they have?"

"Why, nothing but grubs, things to fish with, that's all."

"Oh!" said Butler Burke.

"Shall we take this one?" asked Chudleigh.

"Yes, I vote we do. I'm not afraid of them," answered Burke bravely.

"Well, then, let us find the hole first," said Chudleigh, proceeding to look for it.

It was not a very difficult task to discover it, for it appeared to be a very strong nest, and numbers of wasps were flying about in all directions.

"Look out," said Chudleigh; "you will be stung again, else."

Butler Burke retreated to a judicious distance, and Chudleigh carefully reconnoitred the spot.

Joining Burke, he said,

"It's all right. I have found the hole. But we shall want some straw. I have a light in my pocket, you know. I smoke, and one of my Vesuvians will do capitally to light it with."

Butler Burke looked wistfully towards the ricks. Chudleigh followed his glance, and said,

"Let us have some of that—a handful of straw will not be missed out of the rick."

"No," replied Burke, "I don't think it will."

They advanced together towards the ricks, climbed the paling, and pulled three or four armfuls out of the nearest, which turned out to be a rick of wheat.

"Suppose we have some wine before we begin?" suggested Butler Burke.

"That is just what I was going to propose myself," answered Chudleigh.

Burke undid the cork and took the first draught out of the bottle, then he handed it to his companion. School-boys do not stand upon ceremony. This, with what they had previously imbibed, made them feel as if they could face a legion of wasps.

Seizing the corn-straw they walked back to the wasps' nest, which was not far off. Chudleigh struck a light and set fire to the straw directly afterwards, throwing it over the hole. A dense smoke arose, which was shortly followed by a bright flame. A great number of wasps were sacrificed, and those that survived and who had instinct enough to know what was going on grew very savage. Each boy kept a wisp of straw in his hand to defend himself against the attacks of vagrant members of the family, into whose territory they were carrying fire, if not sword.

"I say," cried Chudleigh, "we have no spade. Well, I know what to do. I will pull up a hedge-stake while you go and get a little more straw."

Burke immediately went off, and presently returned with his arms full. Chudleigh, in the meantime, had provided himself with a stake.

"Let us toss up who shall dig them up," said Chudleigh, who with some former experiences fresh in

his mind, knew that it was a dangerous thing to attack wasps, even with a spade and a little sulphur.

Burke tossed up a shilling. Chudleigh called "Heads!"

It was head, and Burke seized the hedge-stake.

Chudleigh lighted a large bundle of straw, and handed it to Burke, who advanced to the hole over which the straw was still smouldering. He held the lighted straw in one hand and the stake in the other.

"Stick it well in the hole," cried Chudleigh, "and then turn the earth up. If any wasps come near you switch them off with the lighted straw you have in your hand."

"All right," said Butler Burke, who advanced steadily to the work of destruction. The wasps were hovering about in crowds, and before he got to the hole he was stung once on the hand and once on the cheek. But full of vinous courage, he went on and stuck the stake into the ground, whirling the burning straw round to keep the venomous insects off.

But he met with two unexpected disappointments, one was, that the smoke, besides blinding the wasps, almost choked himself; and the second was, that the ground was so hard and tough, that all his efforts did not suffice to move it. His straw was burning out. It was all they had. With a great effort, Burke succeeded

in turning up the earth. A mass of comb fell upon the ground, and a number of wasps were liberated. There was not enough fire to kill them, and they attacked Butler Burke furiously. He did his best to keep them at a distance, but he did not succeed very well. They even went towards Chudleigh and stung him. He ran away to a greater distance, shouting to Burke to follow.

Burke, perfectly mad with the stings he had received, rushed he knew not whither. He held the burning straw in his hand, but that only partially kept them off. Suddenly he backed up against the palings which surrounded the ricks. The shock jerked the burning straw from his hand, and it fell against one of the ricks. Burke sank upon the ground quite frantic with pain, and tore up the grass with his hands and teeth.

Chudleigh turned round when he had got to what he considered a safe distance, and was very much alarmed to see a dense smoke arising from one of the ricks. For a moment or so he could not make it out. Then the truth flashed across him, and he rushed forward, but before he could reach the palings, a bright flame made its appearance, which speedily increased.

Chudleigh dashed at the fire, and tried to knock it out with his feet, but its dimensions were too formid-

able for his feeble efforts. Giving it up in despair, he got over the palings, and went up to Butler Burke.

"Get up, Burke!" he exclaimed. "What's the row? The whole place is on fire."

Butler Burke only moaned.

Chudleigh dragged him away from the heat of the flames, and then gazed at the terrible conflagration in a fascinated manner. He could not take his eyes off it.

"By Jove!" he murmured to himself, "we havo got ourselves into a nice row, I'll bet."

Butler Burke at last sat up on his elbow, and also watched the blaze mournfully, but with a great deal of interest. If it had been night the spectacle would have been magnificent.

The smoke attracted the attention of the rest of Mr. Wynne's party, who quickly rushed towards it from all parts. A slight wind was stirring, which wafted the flames away from the other ricks, and they as yet had not caught fire.

Mr. Wynne and Wetherall were the first to arrive upon the spot.

"What in Heaven's name is the meaning of this?" he exclaimed, addressing Chudleigh.

Chudleigh replied with great candour, not in the least trying to screen himself,

"Butler Burke and myself, sir, tried to take a wasps' nest, and I am sorry to say we have set the rick on fire. Burke is very much stung, and can hardly speak."

Mr. Wynne made no comment upon this, but looked at Wetherall, who said,

"The ricks belong to me. It is fortunate that only one has as yet caught fire. I have placed them some distance apart, as you see; it is theory of mine. But let us see what we can do."

"Yes," replied Mr. Wynne. "This is hardly the time for talking."

"I think," said Wetherall, "if half a dozen boys were to bring as many oars from the boats, and push the rick on the side which is not yet on fire, they might turn it over; and such a weight falling on the flames would perhaps extinguish them, or at any rate enable us to save something from the burning."

"Capital!" cried Mr. Wynne.

And he instantly started some boys off for the requisite number of oars. When they arrived the experiment was tried, and it proved eminently successful.

The burning rick swayed for a time to and fro, and at last it fell over on the side which was blazing so fiercely.

It fell more easily than it would otherwise have done, because a great part of it had been consumed, and it was comparatively hollow. Had it not been so, their efforts would not have been of much use.

When the rick fell, the boys seized all the sheaves of corn which were not smoked or burnt, and took them some distance off. The rest, which were alight, were beaten down with the oars, and in time the mischief caused by Butler Burke was rectified as far as possible, and all further apprehension allayed.

"I really do not know what to say to you, Wetherall, about this," said Mr. Wynne, seriously, as he took his arm on their way back to the boats. "One of my boys——"

"Don't say a word," replied Wetherall. "I dare-say we can arrange it ourselves. What is the name of your firebrand?"

Mr. Wynne smiled, and replied, "Burke—Butler Burke."

"Very well, then, leave us alone, and we shall settle it very amicably I am sure."

Chudleigh took Burke back to the tent and bathed his stings with vinegar, which relieved him very much.

Wetherall sought Burke, and kindly said to him,

"Don't worry yourself about that little bon-

fire. It was an accident, and there is not much harm done."

Butler Burke pressed his hand. He was too ill to speak.

They made Burke a sort of bed at the bottom of the boat, and soon afterwards the party returned to College.

Wetherall behaved so well, and in such a gentlemanly manner, that every one went back in high spirits, and more than one song broke the stillness of the night air.

In a couple of days Butler Burke was well again, and the pain of the stings went away. But he made a mental resolve that he would never take a wasps' nest again as long as he lived.

Chudleigh often used to come up to him and lay hold of him suddenly, exclaiming,

"I say, old fellow, look out for wasps!"

Burke would grin feebly, but he evidently did not consider it much of a joke.

CHAPTER XXII.

BEECH MANOR.

Summer half now drew to a close. Election Saturday had come and gone, and the boys were preparing for the holidays. The Eton and Harrow match had taken place, and only the Eton and Westminster Eights had to contend together to bring the season to a close.

Burke was much pleased with Eton; he had got on better than he had expected. It is true that he had been a little bullied and knocked about, through circumstances over which he had no control, rather than through his own demerits, but as everything had come right in the end he was as happy as the day was long, and this was a great thing to have achieved. He had the good opinion of his tutor, and he was liked by all the boys with whom he was acquainted.

Butler Burke at last bade adieu, for a brief time, to what he had already learnt to call dear old Eton, and turned his footsteps homewards. It was arranged

that he should go home for a week first of all, and then proceed to Beech Manor, the home of Mrs. Chorley and her daughter.

His family were delighted to see him again, and welcomed him most warmly, and they parted with him with regret when he left them to proceed to Beech Manor.

Here he was indeed a welcome and a favoured guest. The greatest kindness was shown him, and the utmost attention paid him; and he found Constance so good and amiable that, boy as he was, he fell deeply and hopelessly in love with her. When standing by her side in the little village church, and reading out of the same book with her, he felt happier than he had ever done in his life before.

One day a drive into the country was proposed, and Butler Burke was asked to drive the pony carriage which Mrs. Chorley usually went out in in fine weather. Burke declared that he should be extremely happy, and they started soon after breakfast.

Burke was not much of a hand at driving, but to direct a pony along a country road is not a very difficult task. If he had to pass any vehicle that took up more room than it ought to, and he seemed to hesitate as to how the manœuvre should be accomplished, Constance would laughingly take

the reins out of his hand, and surmount the difficulty for him.

"Do you like the country?" asked Constance of Butler Burke.

"Yes, very much."

"And driving too?"

"With you," he replied gallantly.

He spoke in a low voice, and Mrs. Chorley did not appear to notice this little piece of child love-making.

"Oh! you must not," said Constance, turning away her eyes.

"Why not?" he asked.

"Because it is not proper."

"What have I said?" replied Butler Burke, blundering as only boys do blunder.

"There, never mind," said the young lady. "Look after your pony's knees, or else you will have mamma scolding you."

Burke raised the whip and lashed his "cattle" rather savagely, and they proceeded in silence until they reached a rather stiff hill. Then Mrs. Chorley dismounted, saying she would walk up. Burke also got down, and led the pony. Constance remained in the carriage. They had not gone far before a cow behind a hedge began to low in a tone of voice that suggested hoarseness if not probable congestion of the

lungs. The pony took fright at such an unearthly noise, and reared up.

Burke imprudently struck it on the nose with the whip. It then turned round and began to descend the hill at a rapid pace. Butler Burke rushed forward, put his feet upon the steps of the carriage, calling to Miss Chorley to jump, as he did so. She was a courageous girl, and did as he told her. Burke was balancing himself on the step of the carriage as she sprang into his arms.

The pony was going quickly, Mrs. Chorley was screaming, for she knew that Burke had done a foolhardy if a courageous act. Constance threw herself into Butler Burke's arms. His intention was to jump down and run forwards a little, so as to accommodate his descent to the motion of the pony carriage.

But Constance's weight was so great that he fell backwards with her in his arms. Fortunately for both of them, the pony had not kept to the middle of the road, but had gone nearly to the extreme edge, which was covered with a soft turf.

Butler Burke fell heavily upon this, but he was not much hurt.

There had been some rain the night before, and the ground was not hard.

Constance was more shaken than injured. Her

mother rushed forward to assist her to her feet, and then they turned their attention to Butler Burke. He was a little stunned, but he soon came to again.

The look that Constance bent upon him recompensed him for all the risk he had run.

When he had recovered, Mrs. Chorley said,

"You are quite a hero, Mr. Burke; I never saw anything like it. Why, Constance might have been dashed to pieces if it had not been for you."

At the bottom of the hill they found the pony quietly cropping the grass. They got into the carriage again and returned to Beech Manor; and Burke was transported with delight to see that Constance's eyes were now and then fixed upon him, with a look of deep devotion, as if she regarded him as her deliverer from some great peril. Young birds are apt to think more of a look, or a sigh, than old birds who have been through the wood.

The time Butler Burke spent at Beech Manor passed very swiftly and very pleasantly. He had saved Constance from a danger. It might have been but a slight one, but they endeavoured to magnify the service he had done her. Butler Burke was very happy. But everything must come to an end sooner or later, and with many regrets he took his leave and returned to his father's house.

"Am I still one of your heroes?" he ventured to ask, as he left Beech Manor.

"Ah!" replied Constance playfully; "that will depend upon how you behave in future."

Shaking her hand with genuine feeling, while the tears sprang to his eyes, he felt, for the first time in his life, the terrible misery of parting, as he uttered the words "Good bye!"

CHAPTER XXIII.

"PLUCK AND PLAY."

When Butler Burke returned to school after the holidays, he found that he liked Eton better than ever. All the places seemed familiar to him. The end of September happened to be unusually mild, and the boys were allowed to bathe and boat for a week or ten days. But after this time these summer luxuries were interdicted by a mandate given under the hand and seal of the head master, and the amusements peculiar to winter usurped their place. The river seemed deserted, and hardly anybody ever went near the Brocas Meadows. Goodman, and Searle, and Tolladay drew up their boats, and covered them over with tarpaulin or canvas, and stowed them away in their respective sheds; and everything aquatic prepared to hybernate. Football was the recognised game which engrossed everybody's thoughts.

Butler Burke, of course, was so young, and had been at Eton such a little time, that his taking any pro-

minent part in his tutor's Elevens was hardly to be expected; but he looked forward to the game with the greatest eagerness and the keenest zest.

Every public schoolboy likes football, and the Eton game I may be forgiven for saying is certainly the best that is ever played. Rugby men are loud in their praises of their own particular way of playing, and their game obtains at the Universities; but give me, for real enjoyment and all-engrossing interest, a good game of football at Eton, either at the wall or in the open field.

There are some species of black mail which a schoolboy has a great aversion to paying, and when a man comes round to your room and asks you to put into "the window," or some equally obnoxious tax, you very naturally kick at the suggestion; but hardly any one objects to pay his football money, which, of course, varies at different houses, but which, whatever the amount may be, provides you with a capital ball to play with, every day well blown and properly looked after, and a good glass of beer or hot spiced ale when you have finished playing; and if you happen to be more than usually thirsty you know that you can have "seconds" if you choose.

Mr. Wynne's house was unusually strong in football players, and his whole House Eleven was reckoned

the strongest in College. There were some capital players, too, amongst his Lower boys, but the Lower boy Eleven lost one of its best men when Chorley left.

After a little preliminary practice it was found that Butler Burke had a promising idea of football. He possessed good wind, and was a very good "kick off;" and he could "bully" a ball as well as any one. He was a little too heavy for "flying man," but he made a decent "side post," and now and then he officiated as "corner." When the Lower Boy Eleven was made up, much to his surprise and delight, he was chosen Second Captain; and he worked hard to keep up the reputation he had won, for football, like everything else, requires plenty of practice and assiduity. But with Burke it was a labour of love, for he took kindly to all athletic exercises. He had joined the fencing school, as it was a nice amusement on winter evenings; and he fenced so well that Angelo told him he would stand a chance of getting the "foils" some day. Burke made his room a little better this half. He bought some more pictures, and started a squirrel, which became a great pet of his.

Purefoy played at football occasionally, only his coming to the Field was the exception—not the rule. He did not exactly play badly, when he did attempt it, but you could see that he did not care much about it.

He was evidently making a concession to the prejudices of his companions, or taking exercise which he thought might be beneficial to his health, for he worked very hard, and he knew that too much application was a bad thing, and highly injurious and prejudicial. Like all slight boys he could run very well, and for that reason, though much against his wish and inclination, Turner the captain put him in the Lower Boy Eleven.

"If he does not play well enough we can always change him," he said; "but I like men who can run and cut about the place. I have seen lots of goals taken in that way—more than most people would think for; andif the beggar will only leave off sapping for a little now and then, I think we shall make something of him."

"Well," replied Butler Burke, to whom the foregoing remarks were addressed, "I daresay you know best, but I don't think Purefoy is a good sort of man to put in. He is my cousin, and I like him very much, but he would be better employed in translating Hesiod than in playing football."

"I am not often mistaken," replied Turner; "but if you insist upon it, Burke, we will put him out, and stick some other fellow in his place."

"Not at all; you are captain of the Eleven," said Burke.

"Yes, I know; but I am very glad of your suggestions. What shall we do?"

"You seem to have taken a fancy to him, and so we had better keep him," answered Burke, convinced against his will.

"All right; then his name shall stand. Get the fellows down to the Field after twelve, and lick any one who shirks, will you?" said Turner. "I want to get the men in good fettle for our match with Joyce's."

"When do we play them?" asked Butler Burke.

"They wish it to be this day week. I said I had no objection, and so I suppose it will come off on that day."

"I think we shall lick them," said Burke.

"So do I," replied Turner; "but I want to keep our men well up to their work."

Purefoy did not at all like being put in the Eleven, and he protested against it, but without avail. He was obliged to put the best face he could on the matter, and submit.

At last the day arrived. It was one of the first matches of the season. Joyce's were cocks of College, and Wynne's had challenged them. The match created a good deal of expectation, and not only the boys of the respective houses, but a great many more looked out for it, and determined to be present.

The ground selected was neutral. Neither house had played regularly upon it before. It was in the large meadow past the Mathematical School, and leading to Cuckoo Weir. A drizzling rain set in early in the morning, which continued till after twelve. The ground was wet and sloppy; but that did not diminish the number of spectators, which amounted to two or three hundred; for a good Lower Boys' match is sure at all times to be an attraction.

Butler Burke made his appearance in a Jersey, which was decidedly "loud;" and some of the lookers-on exclaimed,

"By Jove! that's a loud shirt playing in Wynne's."

Turner had got his men into very good order, considering the short time they had had for practice; and although some of them were new hands, and had never kicked a ball before the beginning of the half, he was pretty well satisfied, and pitched the goal sticks with assurance, and looking confident of victory.

Joyce's won the toss, and kicked off. Butler Burke very cleverly stopped the ball, and bullying it artistically carried it away with considerable activity. By dodging a little to the left, he contrived to elude the vigilance of the flying man. Every one expected a goal, and the spectators cried,

"Well played, Wynne's!"

The captain of Joyce's called out to the goal-keeper to look out. Turner followed Butler Burke at a short distance, in order to back him up should he miss the ball. Close behind Turner were a number of boys belonging to both houses. The goal-keeper stood at his post like a sentinel on the ramparts when an attack is expected.

When Butler Burke had arrived nearly close enough to take a "cool kick," the goal-keeper rushed forward, and charged him with all his force. The ball was stopped, and rolled a little on one side. Butler Burke could not resist the impetus of the goal-keeper's attack, and falling backwards, fell on his back. His adversary received a shin in the encounter, the traces of which he would carry for some time. The goal-keeper now ran towards the ball, and was just about to kick it, when Turner came up, and their feet struck the ball simultaneously. Turner's kick happened to be the strongest and most vigorous, from the force he was going at, and the consequence was that the ball twisted round, and appeared just as if it were going through the goal-sticks. Both boys ran after it, and the excitement was intense. The ball swerved a little on one side owing to having struck a stone, or through some inequality of the ground, and passed within an inch of the goal-stick.

Turner and the goal-keeper now redoubled their exertions, and at the distance it was impossible to say who had the advantage. At last they reached the ball, apparently both at the same time. They rolled over one another in their desperate efforts to touch it. The anxiety of the boys to know who had been successful was intense; and a shout arose when Turner sprang like Antæus from the ground with the ball in his hand, crying, as well as his shortness of breath would allow him,

"A 'ruge,' I touched it!"

This was an important step in the game, for next to a goal, a ruge is the best thing you can have. A ruge may lead to a goal, and it was fondly hoped that it would in this instance.

The right leg of the goal-keeper's white flannel breeches were stained a little with blood, which showed the force with which Butler Burke must have encountered him. The two elevens now gathered round the goal, and the Captain took up his position in front of it at a distance of from a yard to a yard and a half from it. His side then formed round him according to his directions, until they formed a semicircle, or a kind of horse-shoe. Wynne's then formed in their turn, and completed the circle, only leaving a small opening for Turner to run in at. The ball was placed at the feet of the Captain of Joyce's, and

Turner stood a few yards off waiting till everything was in readiness.

"Are you ready?" he said.

The answer being in the affirmative, he ran in, and directly his foot touched the ball a severe struggle began. Joyce's tried with all their strength to drive the ball away from the goal, while Turner's eleven endeavoured to drive it between the sticks. The battle was stubbornly contested.

The two Elevens swayed backwards and forwards and the game went on with varying fortune. At one moment it seemed as if the ball must go through the goal sticks; at another it very nearly got out of the crowd, when some expectant outsider would have carried it down the field. Suddenly, Joyce's Eleven raised an outcry, and in indignant voices shouted,

"Shin him, shin him! he's crawling."

The boys who were looking on also joined in the cry, and "Shin him!" resounded on all sides.

The boy who had raised this storm was Butler Burke, who, determined to get a goal if it was to be done by human means, had gone down on his hands and knees, and had caught the ball between the latter, and was, as his adversaries had complained, crawling along with it. He received some severe kicks, but in the excitement of the moment the pain arising from them did not inconvenience him; indeed, it was hardly felt.

The Captain of Joyce's saw that if something was not done, Butler Burke, whose legs seemed to be made of iron, so little did shinning affect him, would have the ball in goals before long; so he threw himself on Burke as if he had stumbled over him accidentally, and the boys who were backing him up losing their balance, fell over him. This sudden declension overthrew the equilibrium of Turner's eleven, and they, too, fell. Butler Burke was nearly smothered. Every one was rolling over every one, and the greatest confusion arose. Butler Burke took advantage of this, and with a desperate effort drew himself clear of the crowd, and making a spring landed himself with the ball still between his knees, between the goal sticks. A tremendous shout arose, and "Well played Wynne's" was heard on all sides. The boys rose to their feet and looked around them. Turner went up to Burke, who was sitting on the ground ruefully examining his shins. He was a mass of bruises. Turner patted him on the back, and as his side came up one by one and congratulated him on his pluck and play, he forgot everything in the pride of his triumph. Two or three fellows were still gathered round the spot where the ruge had taken place. They formed a small knot, and others were every moment giving it an accession of strength. These spoke to one another in whispers. Butler Burke looked up and wondered what was the matter.

CHAPTER XXIV.

A BROKEN LEG.

The ground around the place where the struggle had been hottest was one mass of mud, and as the rain had been falling rather heavily all the time, it had been churned into a puddle. The forest of umbrellas which concealed the hats of the lookers-on began to move, and it was evident that something had happened. Butler Burke got up and walked to where the crowd was collected. Turner was already there.

"What's the row, Turner?" Butler Burke asked.

"'Pon my word, I can't make out. Some fellow hurt, though, I'm afraid. That ruge we got was rather hot while it lasted."

Burke was excited and alarmed, he hardly knew why; he had a presentiment that something dreadful had happened to some friend of his own. Going up to the boys who were still crowding round thicker than ever, he pulled one by the arm and repeated the question he had put to Turner. The answer was short and decisive,

"Some fellow's broke his leg."

At hearing this, Burke elbowed his way through the throng, and by dint of exertion stood in the first rank. A cloud of steam arose from the damp shirts of the boys, which almost obscured the body of a boy which lay upon the wet grass; he was very quiet and still, and motionless. His face was pale, very pale, and his mouth twitched a little nervously now and then, which showed that he was in pain. Butler Burke gazed upon this boy with the keenest interest, and suddenly dropping down on one knee, he seized his hand and cried in the bitterest accents, "Purefoy!"

It was indeed Purefoy.

Turner and the Captain of Joyce's seeing how matters stood, determined to send for a stretcher without any further delay. Accordingly they spoke to some boys who were quick runners, and in a few seconds four boys detached themselves from the others, and with their elbows set well in at their sides, set off at a swift trot in the direction of College.

Butler Burke was so affected that he could not speak. He could only grasp Purefoy's hand, and look almost tearfully at the poor pale face before him.

Turner came through the ring, and said in an authoritative voice,

"Stand on one side there!" And seconded with the

exertions of the Captain of Joyce's, he vigorously pushed the spectators on one side, saying,

"Give the man some air, will you? Can't you see you are stifling him?"

The Captain of Joyce's then pulled up one of the goal sticks, and by dint of hitting some on the shoulders and some on the shins, or wherever he best could, he managed to keep the fellows back, and give the sufferer what he was very much in need of—a little fresh air.

"Are you much hurt, Purefoy?" asked Turner, in a voice as tender as any girl's.

"A good deal, I'm afraid," replied Purefoy, in a faint voice.

"Where is it?" said Turner.

"In my right leg. I'm afraid the bone is broken in more than one place."

Butler Burke, on hearing this, flew into an ungovernable passion with Turner.

"Hang you, Turner!" he exclaimed; "I told you not to put him in. If it had not been for you this would not have happened."

Turner, without any notice of Burke's angry remarks, continued his conversation with Purefoy. After that Burke relapsed into silence, and a great sob, half of sorrow and half of rage, broke from him.

"Keep up your pluck, old fellow!" said Turner; "we will soon take you back to College. Perhaps you are not much hurt after all."

The boys who were standing round began to indulge in stories bearing upon the present case.

"I remember," said one, "when Campion broke his leg he was awfully ill for a long time, and I think he never got over it altogether."

"You know," said another, "that Robarts was always lame after he broke his; but that was a compound fracture."

These remarks were distinctly audible to Butler Burke, who, putting Purefoy's hand gently upon the ground, rose to his feet and went straight up to the boys who were talking together about the dangerous effects of breaking one's leg.

"Shut up!" said Butler Burke, addressing them curtly and rudely.

"Shut up; what for?"

"Don't you see, you fool, that *he* will hear you?" replied Burke, between his teeth.

"Oh! I didn't think of that; very sorry, I am sure," was the answer from the boy, who at once saw the force of Butler Burke's objection, and the necessity for not alarming Purefoy by any dismal account of last year's accidents.

After a time, which seemed an age to Burke, the four runners were descried returning at a distance. It was noticed that they carried something between them which, as they approached nearer, was discovered to be a window-shutter, or something analogous to it. Of course the match was over for that day at least, and by common consent most of the fellows were returning to College. Some, and indeed the majority, wanted to see Purefoy taken to his tutor's; but a few had agreed, directly Purefoy had been taken from the Field to have a "kick about."

When the stretcher arrived, Purefoy, who groaned a good deal, was carefully lifted on to it. Butler Burke, with great care, placed his coat under the wounded limb, to make it ride easier, preferring to go home through the rain without anything on his shoulders rather than his friend should suffer any pain when it was in his power to alleviate it.

Purefoy's cap had fallen off, and his hair was wet and dabbled with mud, but the pallor of his face was painful to look at. His fortitude was exemplary, and Burke thought him heroic. The fact was that a numbing sensation had taken possession of him. Now and then when he was moved or jolted a sharp pain would fly through his frame and make his face flush and his teeth clench, but this

agony was not perpetual, it was only fleeting and recurrent. Turner volunteered to be one of the bearers, and the Captain of Joyce's took his place in front, by Turner's side. A boy of good intentions, but who appeared hardly strong enough for the occasion, was going to take possession of one of the rear corners, when Butler Burke pushed him roughly on one side, and made the third.

The fourth had already been supplied by Chudleigh, who had stepped out of the rank of spectators in order to do what he could. Burke even felt jealous of him, and growled savagely like a bear, wishing that he was a second Atlas, so that his shoulders might be broad enough to bear the whole of the burden.

As the melancholy procession set out it resembled very nearly an Irish funeral, barring the howling inseparable from such occasions, for the stretcher was surrounded on all sides by boys. A long line stretched away in the distance in front; there were boys on each side, and the rear was occupied by fifty or a hundred, walking arm-in-arm, discussing the events of the morning, or solitarily brooding over the possibility of their own legs being broken in some future game. The burden of their conversation was—

"Wynne's played beastly well. They've beaten Joyce's, I suppose, and now they are cocks of College."

"I don't know about that," would be the reply. "I think they will have to play over again. That fellow, Burke, though, got that goal uncommonly well."

"Yes; but I would not have been him for something: they must have shinned him awfully."

This very transparent proposition having passed without contradiction or argument, the conversation would possibly turn into some other channel.

College was nearly deserted, it was so wet, and most fellows were sitting comfortably in their rooms over their fires, reading, or taking advantage of a wet day to finish a Copy of Verses or knock off a Theme.

When Purefoy arrived at his tutor's, Mr. Wynne was sitting in his Pupil-room, correcting fourth form verses. The door of the Pupil-room was open, and faced the passage through which the sufferer was approaching. Hearing the noise, Mr. Wynne looked up, and fixed his eyes wonderingly upon the stretcher, and the pallid, motionless form upon it. He instantly comprehended the scene at a glance; he had witnessed it before, when he was a Colleger.

In a match at the Wall, a particular friend of his had had his leg broken, while bravely trying to

keep a ball out of calx, and he had never been able to forget the gloomy spectacle of the stretcher as it ascended the College stairs in Lower School Passage and stood at the entrance to Long Chamber.

Mr. Wynne got hurriedly down from his desk, strode along the Pupil-room floor, and met Purefoy as he was borne into the house.

"What's all this, and who is it?" he asked, quietly, addressing Turner.

But before the latter could reply, Butler Burke said impetuously,

"Purefoy, sir, who has had his leg broken in our Lower Boy match with Joyce's, to-day."

"Take him up to his room at once; I will follow you in a second," answered Mr. Wynne, who walked to the butler's pantry, and said to the underfootman, "Run up to Mr. Ellison's as quickly as you can, and tell him to bring splints with him, and everything necessary for a broken leg. Lose no time, and if you should see a fly, take it. If Mr. Ellison is not in, go to Mr. Soley's; but bring some one with you."

The man put on his cap, and instantly started off on his errand.

When Mr. Wynne got upstairs he found that the boys had carefully lifted Purefoy off the stretcher,

and laid him on his bed. Mr. Wynne ordered all the boys out of the room except the four who had brought him back to College, and then going to the bedside, spoke to him. But no answer was returned: Purefoy had fainted. Mr. Wynne sent for some brandy, which Mrs. Wynne brought up herself.

"Poor boy!" she said; "I am indeed sorry. Purefoy, too, of all others. I thought he was not fond of anything athletic: he is not strong enough to play with you strong boys."

"I told them so," said Burke, crying with vexation.

Mr. Wynne poured a little of the spirit down Purefoy's throat, and in a short time he opened his eyes, but appeared too ill to speak or answer any questions; so Mr. Wynne delicately requested Turner and Chudleigh and the Captain of Joyce's to leave the room, saying that his cousin would be good enough to do any little thing that might be wanted; and after thanking them for their kindness, he added that he would not keep them from their companions any longer. They took the hint given them so politely, and left the room, after bowing to Mrs. Wynne. Butler Burke looked up gratefully to his tutor for allowing him the privilege of being near his cousin. When the doctor came, he made a careful examination of the broken leg.

While this was going on, Butler Burke thought he had never felt so anxious in his life before. Would his unfortunate cousin be a cripple for life, he wondered.

"Well, Ellison," said Mr. Wynne; "what do you make of it?"

"Only a common fracture, I am happy to say," replied the doctor. "I was afraid, at first, that the limb was broken in two places, but I find, on examination, that there is only a simple fracture in one. I will splinter the leg up at once, I think; and I will answer for it that in six weeks he will be as strong and as well as ever."

"Hurrah!" said Burke, oblivious of his tutor's presence. "By Jove! Hurrah!"

CHAPTER XXV.

H. R. H.

Purefoy's recovery was as speedy as the doctor had predicted. During his confinement to the house, Butler Burke spent a great part of his time with him, and Purefoy, when his cousin was not with him, pursued his studies to his own satisfaction. Those who were also competitors for the "Newcastle" rather rejoiced at Purefoy's illness, as they thought that it lessened his chance; but they did not know his indomitable courage, his perseverance, or his power of application. Butler Burke had become very friendly with the Earl of Horsham since his Lordship had backed him up in his fight with Chorley. They often went out together; and they had agreed to have a boat together at Goodman's next summer half, which was a great proof of friendship. Now Purefoy was so ill, Burke was more with Horsham than ever, for he had sometimes formerly accompanied his cousin in

his country rambles. One day at absence, the Earl of Horsham said to Burke—

"What are you going to do after four; this is a whole holiday, you know?"

"Yes, it is," replied Burke.

"And short church, too," added Horsham.

"That's jolly!"

"Well, so it is. I hate long church."

"What are you going to do, though?"

"Nothing particular," replied Burke; "i you are going anywhere, I am your man."

"The fact is," said Horsham, "I have been asked up to the Castle this afternoon, and I was asked to bring any fellow I liked with me."

"Oh! indeed," said Burke.

"So," Horsham continued, "if you would like to come I shall be glad to take you."

"You are very kind, old fellow. I should like it excessively. How shall you go?"

"Oh! just as I am," replied the Earl of Horsham.

"I mean shall you put on a coloured tie?"

"No, I think not. I don't see why one should; and yet I don't know, perhaps it would be better; a white tie looks so like a flunkey. It would be sure to make Wales laugh."

"All right, then; we will both change. Shall I

come to your tutor's, or will you come to mine?" said Burke.

"You come to mine, there's a good fellow, and then we can buckle-to and walk up town together."

Butler Burke agreed to this; and after chapel he went to his tutor's, and put a coloured tie and a collar in his pocket, and went to his friend Horsham's room. Horsham was already dressed, and waiting for him.

"Come along; let me give you a hand," he said.

"No, thanks," replied Burke, "I can manage."

They both wore Eton blue neckties, confined by a ring. When they arrived opposite the Christopher, Horsham said—

"Come into the X and have a glass of sherry, will you?"

Butler Burke made no objection; and after looking round to see that no master was watching them, they passed under the portico and entered the bar. The urbane young lady who officiated as barmaid shook her glossy ringlets as she recognised his Lordship, who was a frequent customer of theirs, and with her countenance wreathed in smiles, took down a bottle, and with the grace of Hebe, gave them the wine they asked for. After drinking it, they resumed their walk, and in time reached the Castle. Horsham,

whose mother was one of the ladies-in-waiting on her Majesty, conducted Burke straight to the entrance to the private apartments, when they were instantly admitted. The servant who opened the door told his Lordship that the Countess of Horsham had gone out in a carriage with the Queen, but that her Ladyship had left a message to the effect that if he would go into the garden he would find the young Princes either on the terrace or on the slopes. The Countess, the man added, would most likely return in about half an hour. Horsham, followed by Butler Burke, made his way to the terrace, and in the parterre where the band plays on Sunday, they saw the Prince of Wales and Prince Alfred. They were standing near the fountain, talking together. Butler Burke knew the Prince of Wales well enough by sight, for he had often seen him drive through College; and besides that, his Royal Highness had attended the lectures which were given in the Mathematical School. Horsham and Butler Burke walked up to the Princes. The former was acquainted with them, as he had often seen them before; but, of course, Burke was not. The Princes saw them coming, but did not advance to meet them.

"How do you do?" said the Prince of Wales, leaning against a statue, and holding out his hand to

Horsham. His brother did the same thing, only his greeting was a little warmer. The Princes both looked at Burke, which Horsham perceiving, exclaimed—

"My friend, Mr. Butler Burke; the Prince of Wales, Prince Alfred."

Butler Burke bowed.

The Prince of Wales gave him a nod, but Prince Alfred held out his hand and said—

"How are you? Glad to see you at the Castle."

"I know which I shall like best," thought Butler Burke.

"Well, Horsham," said the Prince of Wales, "have you been flogged lately?"

"Not very lately. Have you?" replied Horsham.

Prince Alfred smiled. Wales made no answer, but looked superciliously at his guest.

"The Queen has gone out, I think," said Horsham.

"Yes," replied H. R. H., "I believe she has. She has not gone far, though. I think she will be home soon."

The boys then walked about the grounds, strolling carelessly along until they reached the battlements and stood by one of the small cannon on the terrace looking over the broad expanse of the Home Park.

"I have got such a splendid horse!" said the

Prince of Wales. "Would you like to come to the stables and have a look at him?"

Both Horsham and Burke expressed their willingness to do so, but as they were going along, the Princes said rather suddenly—

"If you will give us your hats, we will take them into the Castle and get them brushed for you."

Neither Horsham nor Butler Burke expected anything, and they gave up their hats. Horsham took his off and gave it to the Prince of Wales, and Butler Burke gave his to Prince Alfred. When the Princes had possession of the hats, they said—

"Wait here a minute or two, and we will bring them back to you."

Both the boys thought it was an odd thing to do, but they said nothing. Presently they heard a loud, ringing laugh, and saw the Princes kicking their hats gaily along the terrace.

"By Jove! that's too bad. That's going a little too far!" cried Horsham, in a rage.

Butler Burke felt annoyed, but he did not lose his temper; he only laughed. The Prince of Wales seemed to enjoy the joke amazingly, every now and then he took up the Earl of Horsham's hat in his hands, and gave it a flying kick up in the air, catching it again on his foot as it descended. Horsham

got redder in the face every moment. At last he started off at a run after his Royal Highness. The Prince, who heard him coming, gave the hat one parting kick and endeavoured to escape into the Castle through an open door. But the Earl of Horsham was a little too quick for him. He followed him closely, and just as he reached the threshold Horsham overtook him, and in his turn succeeded in knocking the Prince's hat off. His Royal Highness redoubled his exertions to get away, which he succeeded in doing; and as he entered the Castle, he slammed the door behind him in Horsham's face. Prince Alfred finding his exit cut off, picked up Butler Burke's hat, and taking it to him, said—

"I only did it for fun, you know."

Burke smiled and said—

"All right. You see it's not a bad hat. It has stood it pretty well."

Horsham picked up the Prince of Wales's hat, and rejoined them. Prince Alfred said—

"You just caught Bertie beautifully. I thought at first you wouldn't."

"Did you hurt him?" asked Burke.

"I don't think so," replied Horsham. "I knocked his hat off, and serve him right too. Why should he kick mine about more than anybody else. If any

fellow had done it in College, and I could lick him, why, you may take my word for it, I would."

"Well, we are not going to fight over it, are we?" asked Prince Alfred; and looking up at Burke, he added—"If you want to quarrel with me, I am quite ready, you know. Only, as I said before, I only did it in fun."

Burke held out his hand and said—

"I am not a bit angry about it now. I was at first, but you were so jolly over it, that it doesn't matter a bit. In fact, I think Horsham was a little too hasty."

"Not a bit," replied Horsham. "I don't see it."

Prince Alfred shook Burke's proffered hand, and said,

"Then we are friendly again."

"Perfectly so," replied Butler Burke.

Suddenly Horsham exclaimed,

"Here's the Queen!"

Her Majesty advanced towards the three boys. She had left the Castle through the door the Prince had just gone through. Wales did not appear. The Earl of Horsham and Butler Burke went to meet the Queen, and taking off their hats, made a low bow. It was not etiquette to speak to royalty until they were first spoken to, so they waited until her Majesty addressed them.

"We are glad to see you, Lord Horsham, and your friend," the Queen said, kindly; "but I am sorry to hear that the Prince of Wales behaved so rudely to you. It will give you a poor idea, I am afraid, of regal hospitality."

"I am afraid, your Majesty, that I have been very hasty," said Lord Horsham, looking down upon the ground.

"Not at all," replied the Queen. "Do not apologize; the Prince ought to do so to you. We are not at all sorry you took the law into your own hands. The Prince will learn that he cannot do as he likes, simply because he is Prince of Wales."

"Your Majesty is very kind to say so," answered Horsham, raising his eyes once more.

"And did you, sir, rebuke Prince Alfred in the same ready manner?" said the Queen, addressing Butler Burke.

"No, your Majesty. The Prince and myself are excellent friends, I am happy to say," replied Butler Burke.

"I told him I only did it for fun," exclaimed Prince Alfred, deprecatingly.

The Queen smiled, and said—

"Will your friend and yourself come into the Castle, my Lord? I should like to see you reconciled

to his Royal Highness before you leave. The Countess will no doubt be glad to see you."

The boys bowed, and followed the Queen, who took Prince Alfred's hand, and led the way into the Castle. The small door led them into a handsomely-furnished chamber. The Prince of Wales was sitting in an arm-chair, but he rose as the party entered with a smile upon his face.

"Come here, Prince," said the Queen, addressing him, "and make it up with your young friend."

Wales walked up to Horsham, laughingly; but Horsham sprang forward, and exclaimed with a grace peculiar to him—

"Can you forgive my hastiness? You must confess you provoked me."

The Prince could not help laughing aloud, and he replied—

"I was very much in the wrong, but I hope you wont say anything more about it; and the next time we fall out about anything, I hope you will not run so quickly as you did to-day."

"That is right," said the Queen. "Now we will leave you to talk it over amongst yourselves. Your mother shall be told that you are here, Lord Horsham."

And the Queen left the apartment.

"Here's your hat, Prince!" exclaimed Horsham; "you see I have used it a little better than you did mine."

"Oh! I did not mean anything; you know it was only fun," replied his Royal Highness, good-naturedly. "You don't mind, do you?"

Horsham assured the Prince, with great cordiality, that he had ceased to think about the matter; and they conversed very amicably until the Countess of Horsham came into the room.

When the Countess entered she shook hands with her son, who introduced Butler Burke. A servant almost at the same moment brought some champagne, which the boys drank with considerable satisfaction, for champagne is the natural beverage of an Etonian. After that the Princes wished their guests good-bye, expressing a hope that they might see them again, and retired.

"What have you been doing, Horsham?" exclaimed his mother. "Some story is already all over the Castle. The Duchess of Batholl came into my apartments a moment ago, and gave me a confused account of some fracas between yourself and the Prince. It is very odd you must bring your schoolboy habits with you wherever you go."

The Countess looked very much annoyed; but when

she heard her son's account of everything that had taken place, and how it all ended, with what the Queen herself had said, she was satisfied; and the boys returned to College in time for lock-up.

CHAPTER XXVI.

A COLLEGE HIDING.

NEITHER Butler Burke nor the Earl of Horsham talked much about their adventure at the Castle. They did not think it would be either delicate or proper to do so. Burke certainly told his cousin, who was much amused, and Purefoy laughed heartily at the recital, for the first time since he broke his leg.

"Licking Princes is certainly a new way of passing one's time," said Purefoy. "But Albert Edward did not behave badly, after all. Horsham is about his size; so that if they had decided their quarrel with their fists, as you did yours with Chorley, the contest would have been an equal one; but of course such a thing was out of the question."

"Do you know, I don't like the name of Albert," said Butler Burke. "I hope they will call the Prince Edward the Seventh when he ascends the throne. It would be so jolly to have an Edward the Seventh; and all the Edwards have been good fellows."

Butler Burke, after he had finished his conversation with his cousin, went into the school-yard. He was just in time to see the men who were in sixth form going into Upper-school to speeches. The dress they wore was peculiar. They were in evening dress, but they wore knee-breeches and silk stockings, with old-fashioned buckle-shoes. One boy, especially, attracted Butler Burke's attention. He was a Colleger, or what the Oppidans generally denominate a "Tug." The etymon of this word is wrapped in oblivion; but as the word in its entirety is Tug-mutton, perhaps a scarcity of provisions, once upon a time in College, gave rise to the nickname. This hypothesis is strengthened by the fact of mutton being, according to popular rumour, the provender which is usually set upon the tables of Hall. The part of the College inhabited by the Collegers, or those boys on the foundation, is called Tuggery. The boy in question was a big, thickset boy, or rather young man, with rather a shaggy head of hair. One of his stockings had fallen down a little, and was consequently in creases. This had attracted Burke's notice in the first instance. Looking up he perceived that the wearer was a man with whose face he was acquainted. His name was Dacres, but he had acquired the appellation of "Ravenous;" why or wherefore, it would be useless

to discuss, as the name itself is sufficiently suggestive. In the annual matches of Collegers and Oppidans, "Ravenous" was greatly chaffed. It was considered great fun to say, "R, R, R, avenous," laying a stress upon the first letter; and, on the present occasion, Butler Burke indulged in that innocent amusement. When Burke began, others who were standing by took up the chorus, and "Ravenous" resounded on all sides.

Dacres looked very angrily at Butler Burke, but to stop and thrash him then was out of the question, so he passed on, walking as quickly as he could to avoid the persecution.

"You wont have any pudding to-day, Ravenous, if you don't speak well," said Butler Burke. In return for which piece of facetiousness he received a look which, gorgon-like, ought to have frozen him. But he took no notice of it, and before speeches were over forgot all about it.

He was afterwards loitering about the school-yard, looking at the fellows who were playing fives, when he was suddenly seized by a couple of Collegers, and dragged towards Lower School-passage. Some boys who were standing about witnessed this abduction, as it may be called, and followed wonderingly.

Butler Burke struggled fiercely with his captors,

but without avail. One of them was Dacres. As Burke looked up and recognised him, he knew that he was "in for it." He exerted all his strength, and succeeded in tearing the Tugs' gowns from their backs, but they picked them up again, threw them on their arms, and steadily pursued their way. Butler Burke bit their arms and kicked their legs, but without improving his position in the slightest degree. At last they entered Lower School-passage, and here Burke lay down on the flags, refusing to move another step, but the superior strength of Dacres and his friend soon showed him the folly and uselessness of resisting, and he was dragged along till they came to the staircase, up which he was bodily carried. A crowd of Lower boys stood at the bottom watching the strange scene. Great indignation was expressed at the idea of Collegers taking an Oppidan by force of arms into Tuggery; but the Oppidans were powerless to prevent it. When Ravenous got his victim upstairs, he opened the door of Long Chamber, and ordered all the boys away who happened to be in it. Then he closed the door and sat down upon a bed. All this time his friend held Butler Burke securely.

"Bring him here," said Dacres.

Burke was accordingly brought to him, and he said,

"You called me Ravenous. Now I object to be called Ravenous."

"I didn't mean anything," said Burke. "It was only chaff."

"I don't care for that; I am determined to put a stop to it," replied Dacres.

Butler Burke regarded him as much as to say—

"I doubt very much if you can."

"Did you ever hear of a College hiding?" said Dacres.

Burke admitted that he had.

"Very well, then; that is exactly what I am going to give you."

Burke wished himself at the bottom of the sea; but what could he do?

"You may leave go of him now," said Dacres, addressing his friend; "he can't get away."

Going to a corner of the room he produced a stick about as thick as his little finger. When Butler Burke felt himself free, although he knew his liberty was only to be of short duration, and although he was fully aware that it depended upon the pleasure of the two Collegers, he determined to make an effort to save himself from the threatened castigation. With the rapidity of thought he rushed to one of the windows looking into Weston's yard, and dashing his elbow through it, sent the glass flying in all directions. There were several oppidans standing in the

yard; and those who were congregated in Lower School-passage ran out on hearing the falling glass.

"Help!" cried Burke; "come up into Long Chamber! Ravenous is going to lick me!"

Two fellows happened to be passing by, one of whom was Lascelles, who recognised Burke's voice.

"Lascelles! Lascelles!" cried Burke; "come and rescue me! Ravenous is going to lick me!"

Dacres rushed after Burke when he saw him make for the window; but so rapid were Burke's movements, that he could not succeed in dragging him away from the window until he had fully aroused the attention of those below. Lascelles saw him taken away from the window, and he said to his friend—

"Make haste, the Tugs are going to thrash an oppidan. Will you come up and see what we can do to prevent it?"

His friend, who had been Captain of the Eleven last summer half, and was very intimate with Lascelles, expressed his willingness; and Lascelles said to the Lower boys who were standing round—

"The Tugs are licking an oppidan—suppose we go and lick them!"

Followed by about forty boys of all sizes, Lascelles led the way up the staircase, and paused before the entrance to Long Chamber. The door was closed, and

Lascelles tried in vain to open it. The oppidans could hear the stick descending on Butler Burke's shoulders, and the sound excited them to exertion. Lascelles put his back against the wall, then raised his foot, and charged the door with all his force. The lock gave way, and the oppidans rushed into the room. Going straight up to Ravenous, Lascelles with one blow of his fist knocked him down, and laid him at the feet of the boy he was thrashing. When he got up, he knocked him down again. As he rose to his feet a third time, he looked stupidly around him. Lascelles' way of treating him was the only sort of *argumentum ad hominem* which he was able to understand.

"Have you had enough?" said Lascelles.

Dacres made no answer. Lascelles picked up the stick, and said to Butler Burke—

"Now you leather him;" at the same time giving him the weapon.

Lascelles seized Ravenous by the collar of his coat, and held him while Butler Burke hit him as hard as he was able. The partial thrashing which he had himself received only made him the more anxious for revenge on Ravenous.

"Lam into him!" said Lascelles.

At last Burke gave out from sheer exhaustion; and throwing down the stick, said—

"I can't give him any more."

Just at this moment a noise was heard outside Long Chamber, and, turning round, Lascelles perceived a number of Collegers without their gowns.

"By Jove!" he muttered, "we are in for a row. Run downstairs, you fellows," he cried, addressing the little fellows who stood near, "and tell all the big fellows you meet that there is a row in Tuggery. Tell them to come up. Go to the door in a body, and some of you will get down. You are not afraid of a few Tugs I should think."

Thus exhorted, the boys went towards the door. The assembled Tugs greeted them with kicks and blows, and a struggle began. Some of the oppidans got away, and succeeded in reaching Lower School-passage. These told the news to every one they met, and soon a crowd was flocking into Lower School-passage, on their way to Long Chamber. Lascelles and the Captain of the Eleven had their work cut out for them. When reinforcements of oppidans arrived, they cut their way through the Collegers who lined the stairs, and joined Lascelles and his friend, who were getting roughly handled. A general fight now took place, and with varying success. The Collegers kept pouring in from the long galleries in swarms, and the oppidans were out-numbered.

Lascelles told his friends to keep close together; and the oppidans retreated in a body. Lascelles was very careful not to leave a single oppidan behind. By dint of great exertions the oppidans reached the top of the staircase. Ravenous did not take any part in the fight. The blows he had received had quieted him effectually. Just as Lascelles began to descend the staircase, a voice, the sound of which all knew, exclaimed—

"Silence!"

It was heard above the clamour, and had a magical effect.

CHAPTER XXVII.

WINDSOR FAIR.

No wonder that clear, ringing voice had a magical effect, for it was the voice of the Head Master of Eton. The Doctor had no occasion to repeat his command. Addressing the oppidans, he said—

"Follow me. Come upstairs again. I must investigate this."

He pushed his way through the crowd of boys, who made way for him, and entered Long Chamber. The Collegers followed him as well as the oppidans, and the room was soon as full as it conveniently could be. Lascelles was the first who was examined. He told his tale plainly and briefly. Dacres also told his version of the story. Then Butler Burke was sent for. As he heard his name called, he made his way to the front, and told the Head Master what he had done to provoke Dacres, and how he had been dragged into Long Chamber.

The Doctor then went to the top of the stairs,

without saying a word. When he arrived there, he exclaimed—

"Pass down!"

And taking out his pocket-book, he demanded every name, and entered it as the boy went downstairs, saying, as he did so—

"Wait in the school-yard!"

After every one had descended, the Doctor followed the last boy down the stairs and went into the school-yard, where the recent combatants were awaiting his arrival. The oppidans were standing by themselves, talking the matter over excitedly. Lascelles and Butler Burke were great lions. The Collegers were also congregated together.

When the Doctor appeared, the voices were hushed, and the rival houses of Capulet and Montague listened to a short speech with which the Doctor treated them.

"You have been guilty of a disgraceful riot," he said, "and one that I cannot pass over without punishment. Do you suppose for one moment that I can tolerate the College being turned into a bear-garden? I consider that you oppidans have behaved as badly as the Collegers. I see no distinction between you; nor shall I make any allowance for one side in preference to the other in giving the punish-

ment I am about to award. Every boy whose name I have put down in my book will bring me a hundred lines of Homer, carefully written out, every day at one o'clock, until I suspend the order. Now go; and if I hear any more of such unseemly proceedings, I shall most certainly flog the offenders, even if the whole school should be engaged in it. Now go."

The Collegers and oppidans received this address in sullen silence, and the Collegers returned to their rooms, leaving the oppidans in possession of the school-yard. Then there was a proposal to break the windows of Long Chamber, as soon as the Head Master had been seen to enter his house once more. The idea flew about like wildfire. Stones were seized, a volley was thrown, and then another, and another; and in five minutes not a pane of glass remained to keep the wind out. Then the oppidans retired in triumph to their houses. After a week the punishment was remitted, as far as the Collegers were concerned, but it was continued to the oppidans, because they had broken the windows of Long Chamber; but after the lapse of a fortnight the Doctor suspended it for the oppidans also. But he declared solemnly that if any more disturbances took place, he would flog the offenders. Dacres did not consider it prudent to meddle any further with Butler Burke, and that young

gentleman carefully avoided the spot where Tugs most do congregate, and so the matter stood for some weeks.

It was about the middle of football half, and Windsor Fair was at that time a great attraction to those boys who were not afraid of being switched if caught out of bounds. It generally happened that the most adventurous escaped detection, whilst those who went with fear and trembling were infallibly the prey of some master wandering about like an unclean beast in search of something to devour.

The timid boy, excited by the tales of his friends respecting the manliness of the thing and the glories of the fair, would perhaps thread its mazy intricacies for a short time, while his heart was palpitating too painfully for him to enjoy himself. Prompted by a demon that only addressed him in order to induce him to destroy himself, he would perhaps purchase sixpennyworth of crackers; or, thinking the investment too large, and consequently too dangerous, he would, with innate modesty, point to a mass, arranged picturesquely and temptingly upon a table, and demand its market value. On receiving a response to the effect that its equivalent in current coin of the realm was exactly "tuppence," the coveted fireworks would transfer themselves, or be transferred by a species of

sleight-of-hand, to the pocket of the purchaser. Presently one would probably be thrown furtively at an unprotected lamp-post. The explosion of the projectile would of course add infinitely to the anxiety of the projector, and his dismay be completed when the hand of a master, irrespective of persons, falls lightly on his shoulders, and an inexorable voice exclaims, in tones that go direct to the most sensitive part of the human frame—

"What's your name, you boy?" "Very well; go back to College."

But the end is not yet.

Butler Burke determined to go up to the fair, and he proceeded as far as the Town Hall with the most perfect security. Under the Colonnade he halted to investigate the contents of the stalls of itinerant traders; and after paying a couple of pennies to see the Georgian Giantess, who lived in a caravan in the market-place, he ran round to Bachelor's Acre, and having a little money in his pocket, indulged in the puerile pastime of throwing sticks at cocoa-nuts stuck on the ends of long poles. When satiated with his ill-luck, he turned round and went a short distance further.

"Roulette, my lord, and no peelers!" exclaimed a man at his elbow.

Burke hesitated a moment, but only a moment, and

entered the booth. For a short time he was a passive spectator; for, struck with the novelty of the scene, his eyes wandered restlessly around the tent. In the centre there was an ordinary roulette-table, around which were grouped five or six Eton boys, and perhaps as many townspeople. They were not speculating largely, for pennies seemed the utmost they chose to risk—and fortunately for them, as they almost invariably lost. In time, Butler Burke turned from surrounding objects to the table, on which his eyes soon became riveted: for ten minutes he carefully watched the game.

"You gets hequal on white and red, and twelve times your stakes on the Prince o' Wales's feathers," said the man, supposed to be the croupier of this miniature hell. "Make your game, gents, make your game, and no reservation."

The revolving index had spun round thirty times without touching the Prince of Wales's feathers, which circumstance struck Burke forcibly; and having thirty shillings in his pocket, he determined to risk it. He first put a penny on the feathers.

"Red!" exclaimed the croupier.

He then risked twopence with a similar result; this he doubled, and was again unsuccessful; then he doubled that, and losing a fourth time, he doubled

again; but he lost for the fifth time. Burke was playing scientifically, and he was not to be deterred from continuing by losing; he therefore put down five shillings and fourpence, which was carefully gathered up by the man at the wheel as he cried—

"White wins; the rest is nowhere!"

This loss necessitated the display of ten shillings and eightpence, which sum was soon displayed upon the board. The other people were so interested in Burke's attempt to break the bank, that they desisted from playing, and became spectators.

Swiftly, at first, the index moved round, gradually decreasing in intensity, until its slowness became painful. The excitement was very great, for they were all persons accustomed to deal with small sums of money, and Butler Burke stood to win twelve times his stakes, which would amount to exactly (ten shillings and eightpence multiplied by twelve) six pounds eight shillings.

Burke looked on carelessly, as if he was supremely indifferent to the result, although he very well knew it to be his last effort, as the state of his exchequer would not permit him to venture again.

Slowly, slowly, the machine goes round, indolently wavering over the feathers; then gliding round to rouge, sweeping over white, and hesitating again

in the region of the feathers. At last, as if with a desperate struggle, it drags its slow length along, and nods benignantly over the pictorial representation of the Prince of Wales's insignia, where it finally comes to an anchor.

"I'll thank you for my money," said Burke to the croupier, who appeared slightly concerned at his loss.

But that individual, after giving a peculiar whistle, which was evidently a signal to his accomplice outside, replied—

"Give us time to count your fortun', guv'nor."

Whilst pretending to fumble in a little bag, which seemed to be the receptacle of his illicit gains, his friend of the doorway rushed in, crying—

"Police! police!" And he held up the canvass at one side for the people to go out at, of which mode of egress most of them availed themselves.

Burke, indignant at being choused out of his winnings by such a barefaced subterfuge, saw that main force would be useless, and had recourse to cunning; so he appeared to be in great consternation, and ran about the booth as if looking for a hole to crawl out at. When he had contrived to get directly behind the croupier, he said—

"How am I to get out?"

"'Ere! I'll let you out," replied the man, putting down his bag, and lifting up the canvass.

Springing up from the crouching position he had assumed, to delude the man into the belief that he was going to avail himself of the egress he offered him, Butler Burke seized the bag of money and leaped like a deer over the table. Without hesitating an instant, he charged the man at the door, who, from the impetuosity of the attack, which was more effectual on account of its unexpectedness, recoiled, allowing Burke to escape with the plunder. Once out of the booth, he ran at the top of his speed until he got into the market-place, where he mingled in the crowd, feeling comparatively safe; but he speedily threaded it, and ran down the hill and over Windsor Bridge to College. He knew very well that the roulette people were exercising an illegal trade and dare not pursue him; nevertheless, he made up his mind to discover some means of returning any money that he might have taken beyond what he was entitled to. Once at home, he lost no time in going to his room, where he proceeded to examine the spoil; taking the bag from his pocket, he untied the strings, and emptied the contents upon the table. The total, after careful enumeration, amounted to five pounds, eighteen shillings, and sixpence.

Butler Burke had fairly won more than six pounds, and he felt that he could conscientiously keep the money contained in the bag. He had played for it, and he had succeeded in winning, and he congratulated himself upon his good fortune. When he told Purefoy, he said—

"I should not advise you to go up to the fair again, Butts. Those fellows would kill you if they could get hold of you."

"Oh! I am not afraid of them," replied Butler Burke.

"Well, I am only advising you for your own good; I know what ruffians these roulette men are popularly supposed to be."

"All right," said Burke. "Don't alarm yourself about me, old fellow; I am not a chicken."

Purefoy shook his head as his volatile cousin left the room, and turned over on his pillow to read about the Siege of Troy. He was recovering so rapidly and so well, that the doctor told him he might get up in a day or two, which he was much pleased at, as may easily be imagined.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE FLOOD.

Eton is, amongst other things, subject to floods. When heavy rains take place up the river the volume of water is much increased as it reaches Maidenhead; and the stream rushes down past Monkey Island, and over the Weir a little below Surly Hall, until it overflows its banks near the railway-bridge, sending an immense body of water over the Brocas Meadows. The flood usually brings with it the most dreaded of all complaints amongst large numbers of boys—scarlet fever; and when a case makes its appearance the greatest caution is exercised by the authorities. The boys in the house where the epidemic has broken out are at once sent home, and those who are unhappily affected, are sent to the Sanatorium or Hospital of the College, which is a commodious building, without much pretension to architectural excellence, standing in a salubrious situation, a mile or two from the College. As winter half came to a close heavy rains took place,

and a flood, almost encircling Eton College, was the result. The Playing Fields were submerged, and the water actually came up from the meadows about the new church, almost as far as the Mathematical School. Butler Burke was much pleased with the idea of a flood, and, with many other boys, went down every day to the margin of the water at the end of Keat's-lane to see if the flood was likely to increase or diminish, and he drove sticks in the ground and cut notches in them, and made a sort of Nilometer out of them. Much to his delight, the flood increased, and full of the instinct of mischief, he hoped that the water would come up as far as Coleridge's, so that the boys would have to go to Mathematics in boats.

"Fancy going to Mathematics in a punt," he observed to Purefoy, who accompanied him one day after twelve to look at the flood.

"It would be amusing, certainly," replied Purefoy. "What would Stephen Hawtrey do?"

"Well, I suppose he would have a sort of state barge like the Lord Mayor and the other aldermanic swells," said Burke, with a laugh.

"And the other masters would go with him, eh?"

"Yes; no doubt. And Talbot would punt them over."

"Or else they would cock up a bridge for the fellows to walk over," said Purefoy.

"That would be a *pons asinorum*, wouldn't it?" answered Burke.

"Well, really that is a question I must leave to you. You might think it so while crossing it," replied Purefoy, laughing.

Purefoy did not stay long. A glance at the water was quite enough for him, and he went back to his tutor's to work out a simple equation. Burke remained looking on at the flood, whose waters had appeared to be stationary for the last twelve hours. It, however, gave no indication of subsiding. There were several other boys talking over the marvel, for a flood does not occur every year, and a great many who had been some time at Eton looked on the spectacle for the first time. Burke was regarding something in the distance, which appeared to be rapidly approaching the spot were he was standing.

"By Jove!" he cried, "that's Talbot. What does he want here, I wonder?"

Talbot was a waterman, and wore the blue coat and badge, which showed that he was in the service of the College.

He was in a punt, which he pushed rapidly along. After a time the bottom of his punt grated harshly

upon the stones of which the road was composed, and with a spring he alighted on the dry ground amongst the boys. He was instantly besieged with questions.

"Well, Talbot, how's the flood?" "Is it rising?" "Is it going down?" "How's Cookoo Weir?" "Has anybody been drowned?" "Will it come up to the Mathematical School?" "What a lark if it comes up into College!—We shall have to go to school in skiffs."

Talbot made no reply to these questions, but turning to Butler Burke, whom he knew, he said—

"I am going to the head master's, sir, with a message. Will you look after the punt for me?"

"All right, Talbot," replied Burke.

"You wont let them young gentlemen as haven't passed get inside of it, sir."

"Not I."

"I'll keep them out," added Butler Burke.

Talbot said that he shouldn't be long, and walked off in the direction of the head master's house. When he was gone, Butler Burke thought he would like to get in and punt about for a few minutes.

"I can easily come back when I see Talbot coming," he reasoned. "I have a great mind to, 'pon my word."

"Get in, Burke," said some little fellow, "and see how deep the water is."

Actuated by some sudden impulse, Burke stepped into the water, and in another moment was on board.

"Take me." "Take me with you!" resounded on all sides.

"No; I shan't take any one," answered Butler Burke.

Laying hold of the pole, he pushed himself off without much difficulty. The punt shot out rapidly, and in a short time Burke found himself drifting over a hedge into a meadow.

"I think it's time to go back now," he muttered.

But when he attempted to go back he found that he had got into a sort of current, which rendered it extremely difficult to do so. He exerted all his strength; but the pole only sufficed to send him a short distance towards the wished for spot at every effort. Suddenly it broke, and Burke, who had been pushing against it with all his force, fell heavily into the water. He rose instantly; the punt was drifting slowly away from him. With a few vigorous strokes he reached it, and grasped its side. After that he was soon once more standing inside it, wet and dripping, cold and frightened. A piece of the broken

punt pole drifted by. Leaning over, he picked it up. It was not of much use, but it was something. The loud voice of Talbot was now heard shouting to him to return. But he was powerless to do so. He could only sit still and watch the movements of the current, which were only perceptible in their action upon the punt. He was drifting rapidly towards the Brocas. The flood was then retiring—he could not doubt it. This retrograde movement would bring him to the river. He hoped most fervently that he would not run against any trees, or any broken pollards with their summits submerged. He regretted his folly in getting into the punt, but regrets were, as he perceived only too well, of no avail. He sat himself down on the well of the punt, and resigned himself to his fate. He kept as good a look out as he could, and kept a good hold on the piece of the broken pole, which was not of much use; but it was better than nothing. If he approached anything very dangerous he could push off with it, and avoid a collision. He neared the river slowly but surely, and at last he was drawn into the stream. Just above the rafts the Thames was swollen and turbulent. Its waters were muddy and clay-coloured, but the stream hissed and bubbled, and boiled along with great rapidity.

"I hope to God I shall not strike against Windsor bridge," he said, as the perspiration broke from every pore.

The bridge was in sight, the rafts were passed one by one, Tolladay's, Goodman's, Searle's. Butler Burke was perceived. There were some people standing on the last raft. Burke waved the broken punt-pole. His hat had flowed away with the tide when he fell overboard. Hoarse cries were heard from the bridge, where the people stopped to look on, instinctively feeling that there was something wrong. A boat put off from Searle's. Butler Burke shouted for help. The punt neared Windsor Bridge more closely than ever.

"Mind the bridge! mind the bridge!" shouted twenty voices.

Burke did not need this intimation. The velocity of the stream increased tenfold, and Butler Burke stood up with the broken pole in his hand. A moment of breathless suspense, and he shot the bridge!

As he appeared unhurt on the other side, a great cry arose, and the spectators thought that the danger was over; but they were mistaken. Another obstacle likely to prove more difficult to surmount rose into

existence. The Weir was close at hand, and before that was reached the Cobbler had to be passed.

The Cobbler is a long island which divides the Lock Cut from the Weir. It is very narrow, and the beginning of it is shored up with timber. There was every reason to believe that Burke would be cast against this. He was very pale, but his lips were firmly compressed, and his teeth clenched. The punt was going straight towards the Cobbler. Another interval of breathless suspense, and it dashed up against the wood, jerking Burke head-foremost into the water. His head struck against something—what he could not say—probably a piece of floating wood; he felt confused from the force of the blow, and paddled feebly with his arms to keep himself afloat. He was in the vortex of the Weir, and went along with the stream at a prodigious rate. With desperate efforts he managed to keep on the right-hand side, near the Cobbler, and in a few seconds he was swept over the Weir, and found himself in comparatively smooth water. He had fallen into a little bay formed by an angle of the master's bathing-place. He had just sufficient strength left to crawl up the steps and lie down upon the grass, where he fainted.

CHAPTER XXIX.

ILLNESS.

Burke was taken back to his tutor's by the boatmen who pushed off from Searle's Raft, and who had picked him up insensible. He was put to bed when he arrived, for he seemed to be very ill. After four his friends came to see him, but he did not seem to recognise them. The doctor was sent for, and expected every moment. His tutor shook his head. Mr. Wynne brought him a tumbler of brandy-and-water, which he drank eagerly; this the doctor on his arrival condemned. After this, Chudleigh came into the room to have a look at him. When he entered Butler Burke was sitting up in bed, his eyes were rolling, and he was apparently delirious. As he saw Chudleigh he struck out his arm and moved his fingers about as if trying to grasp something, exclaiming as he did so—

"They're spinning, they're spinning."

"What's the matter?" said Chudleigh, who didn't half like it.

"They're at it!" replied Butler Burke, in a terrified tone, almost sibilant in its sound, which was a little above a whisper.

"Where is it?" asked Chudleigh, thinking it better to humour his strange insanity.

"In my head—in my head," replied Burke, touching his forehead with one hand.

"What is it like?" said Chudleigh, pursuing his inquiries.

"Five thousand shuttles moving at once," said Butler Burke, writhing as if in great pain. "Oh! it's one huge web."

Chudleigh ran out of the room to fetch Purefoy, whom he fortunately found in his room.

"I say, Purefoy," he exclaimed, "I don't know what the row is with Butler Burke, but ——"

"But what?" asked Purefoy.

"Well, come and see for yourself," replied Chudleigh.

Purefoy silently got up and followed Chudleigh to Butler Burke's room. They shut the door on entering, and placed a chair against it to keep the fellows out. In a few words Chudleigh explained the matter to Purefoy, telling him all that had taken place. Purefoy approached the sufferer. Butler Burke was grasping the counterpane in his hands.

and in his convulsive efforts seemed to be trying to tear it asunder. After a while he fell down on the bed exhausted.

Purefoy raised him gently in his arms, and placing him in the centre of the bed, covered him over with the clothes.

Big drops of perspiration hung on his forehead; his cheeks were blanched, his lips livid, and his bloodshot eyes gazed listlessly about the room.

"Can you speak now?" asked Purefoy, kindly.

Butler Burke nervously extended one hand, and seizing Purefoy by the arm, drew him nearer, and whispered in a breathless voice—

"They were spinning, but they are quieter now."

"What were spinning?" said Purefoy.

"Quiet now," replied Butler Burke, with an almost idiotic softness in his tone. "Churchyards are quiet. I shall be quiet when I am there. Is there quiet anywhere else? No; no quiet—no quiet; none."

"What were spinning?" again demanded Purefoy, although the tears started to his eyes as he saw the unhappy condition of the cousin he loved so well.

"Spinning! Oh, yes; of course. It was the spiders," answered Burke. "But don't," he added, with a look of entreaty; "please, don't tell them I said so, or they'll begin again."

"What, in the name of Heaven's the matter with you?" said Purefoy, much alarmed.

"Now!" cried Butler Burke, drawing him towards him with his trembling hands. But suddenly he let go his cousin's arm, only to again grasp it almost immediately; his fingers pressed nervously against the flesh, and Purefoy felt the pain acutely. "I dare not tell you," said Butler Burke, between his teeth, "and yet you ought to know."

"Yes, yes, tell me," said Purefoy, anxiously.

"It's—it's——"

Purefoy waited a few moments without speaking, when Butler Burke sprang up—placed his hand upon his cousin's shoulder, and with an hysterical sob, tried to speak.

The effort was fruitless; utterly exhausted, he fell back on the pillows insensible.

Butler Burke was long in recovering. His delirium lasted some days. He had caught the scarlet fever, and the blow he had received near the Cobbler when the punt struck had made him light-headed. He was removed to the Sanatorium, and when he was convalescent he went to Tours, in the south of France, with his mother. Purefoy found him there,

and the cousins often talked about and laughed over the many adventures which had happened to them at the old school before his illness, and of which Burke could say, "*Quorum pars magna fui.*"

As Purefoy left the Continent to return to Eton at the beginning of jumping half, Mrs. Butler Burke said to him—

"You will take this letter to Mr. Wynne, and say that your cousin is not well enough yet to return, but that the doctors hope in a month or two he will be able to do so."

"Yes, dear Mrs. Burke, I will take your message," replied Purefoy; "but I hope it will not be long before the dear old boy is with us again."

And thus a gap occurred in Butler Burke's career Eton.

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