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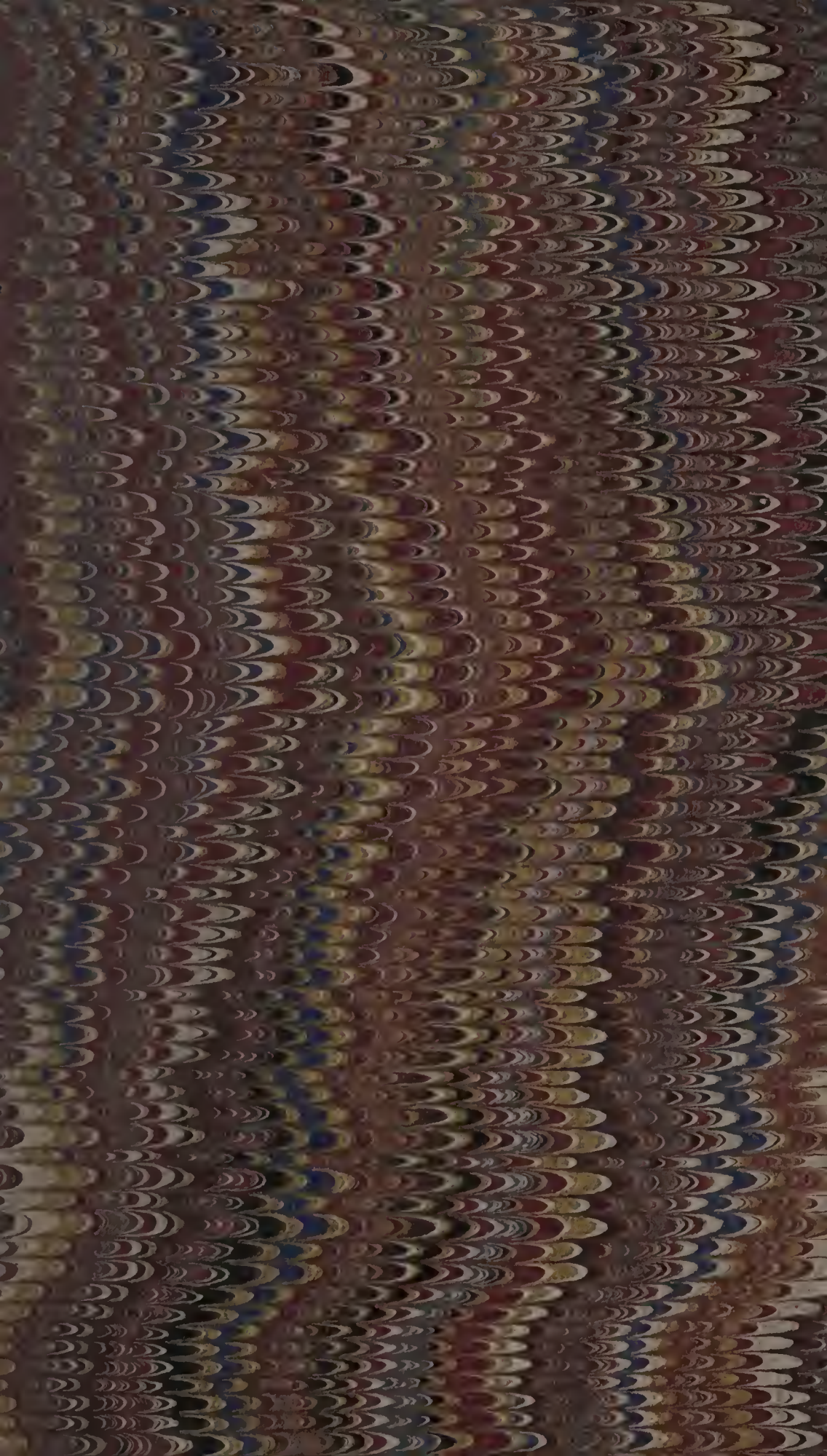
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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.



HARROW RECOLLECTIONS.

BY

AN OLD HARROVIAN.

S. Daryl
Harrow

“Oh mihi præteritos referat si Jupiter annos.”

5543



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PREFACE.



IN vain have I searched the pages of the “Complete Letter Writer” in the hope of gaining inspiration and information therefrom to assist me in the selection of a few appropriate phrases wherewith to appeal to my readers for consideration and indulgence. A stereotyped form, however, would scarcely be suited to the occasion, and the suppliant thinks it best to make his petition in the simplest of language and with the most profound humility; for though naturally of a sanguine temperament, he is fully alive to the very many imperfections and drawbacks that may be found in the following pages, more particularly of a literary character. He has, however, sought as much as possible to

confine himself to authentic facts, and hopes on that score to be pardoned other shortcomings. Possessing neither the pen nor the imagination of a Tom Brown, he is prepared with resignation to be termed as of that class of authors "*qui linum denario scribunt;*" and so long as his veracity is not impugned, he cares little or nothing. But to return to the first person—the third, though epigrammatic, being somewhat inconvenient—my object in these Recollections has been to recall, as far as that treacherous rascal memory enables me, various matters connected with the routine of life at Harrow, which I hope may not prove uninteresting.

Of course I cannot vouch for things being now in precisely the same condition as they were in my time. Since then the school republic has seen a change: Dr. Vaughan has surrendered the dictatorship; and the Rev. Montagu Butler, an old Harrovian and pupil of his, reigns in his stead.

New brooms always sweep clean — so 'tis said ; but with the exception of a manifesto for the confiscation of trouser pockets, the present Head Master has adhered in principle to the policy of his predecessor : “ *Le Roi est mort, vive le Roi !* ” and though he whose name will ever remain inseparably connected with Harrow has ceased to direct its destinies, his successor has essayed well and successfully to gain the good opinion and regard of his youthful and therefore naturally troublesome subjects.

As I before observed, there may be certain matters mentioned in the following pages that no longer exist : racquet-fagging, for instance, has I believe been abolished ; but I do not think that to have excised or altered them would have improved the character of my little book. I am content to stand or fall by it as it now goes forth, believing that faultiness in a literary point of view will be forgotten in the worth and interest of the subject. Whatever its defects—though I have not asked his permission—I dedi-

cate it to my old tutor and friend Henry Edward Hutton, in remembrance of those happy days spent as his pupil at the Old Vicarage, and as a small but sincere tribute to one who, while never forgetting that he was the Master, always remembered to show himself a Friend.

SIDNEY DARYL.

April 16th, 1867.



A Monthly Magazine.

HARROW RECOLLECTIONS.



CHAPTER I.

LEAVING HOME.

How well do I recollect the sensation I experienced, when at the age of thirteen and a half, my guardian—I had no father or mother—announced to me that my name was down for Harrow, and that at the commencement of the ensuing year I was to embark on my public school career. I must confess that at first the communication made me feel a little serious. Stories without end had been told me of bullying and thrashing; of great hulking fellows torturing inoffensive little boys for mere cruelty's sake; in fact, at Doctor Tickleback's academy, where I had hitherto pursued my educational course, the most horrible anticipations and prophecies as to my future fate were ventured. But I had learned to look upon the Tickleback world as one to falsehood framed, and though its gloomy presentiments for a time disturbed me, they gradually died out, leaving very little effect behind. I have since by

experience learnt their value, and if I may be permitted to express an opinion in a matter of comparison, Harrow is to Tickleback's what heaven is said to be to a certain unmentionable locality. I spent nearly ten years of my boyhood between the two, and I know where the happiest days were passed.

The time arrived. In what month, in what year it matters not; suffice it, that at some period during the last thirty years I was deposited by a mid-day train at the Harrow Station, with a hat-box, portmanteau, and two carpet-bags, not forgetting a crisp £10 Bank of England note in my pocket, which my guardian had given me the night before, after a delightful dinner at his club. It was a bright, sharp January morning, such a one as braces up nerve and muscle, and stretches the legs into such rapid strides, that miles appear but so many yards. Some people imagine that tears and red eyes are the essential accompaniments of "Black Monday"—by the way this was a Thursday; for my part all I can say is, that on this eventful occasion I gave way to no such weakness; nor among any of the other new boys, that came by the same train as myself, did I see anything of the kind. It was rather with a smiling face that I made my way to my "Tutor's" up the hill, past the chapel—there was no Vaughan Library then—over ground

then so new—now every inch familiar—till I reached the door of what was to be my school home for some time to come. It is the custom that new boys should arrive early, in order to get them comfortably settled before the rest make their appearance, which is generally at the very last moment allowed—and in most cases their parents accompany them. With me, however, that was impossible; and my guardian having been detained in London by pressing business, I was shown into my tutor's study alone. From that day is dated a friendship that years have only tended to strengthen. The master and pupil it is no longer; but the heart of neither one or the other has ever changed, though the boy has become a man, and the teacher's hair grown grey.

He welcomed me warmly, pressed my hand kindly, gave me many practical, useful hints—he had been a Harrow boy himself—and then dismissed me to settle myself in my room and get my things about me. I found everything very comfortable, and soon felt quite at home, my only anxiety being to see the other two boys who were to be my companions in occupation. Here, perhaps, it may not be uninteresting in me to digress for a moment, to give a short description of what may be more particularly called the domestic arrangements, as to the boarding

and lodging of the school. Each of the masters, with but one or two exceptions, receives pupils into his own house, either in a smaller or larger number: for instance, at the Head Master's there are some sixty or seventy boys under the one roof; while, at an under master's, there perhaps may not be more than five or six. Hence arises the distinction by which the first are known as "large," the second as "small" houses. The latter are supposed to afford greater advantages in point of comfort and attention from the tutor; and in most of them each boy is able to have a room to himself, or at most to share it with a single companion. Consequently, the charge at a small house is very much higher than at a large one. I am not at all sure that what is gained in the respects above mentioned is not counterbalanced by the loss of the "roughing it," which is a necessary part of the living in the large house, and which I presume is the best, if not the only means, of inducing that manliness and power to take care of oneself, of which a public-school education is said to be the promoter. Still, there may be some boys, who, for physical reasons, would be unfit to pass through it, and for them the small houses are the proper residence. Attached to each house is a pupil-room, in which "private reading," and Latin verse, and prose composition, to say nothing of surreptitious les-

sons in carving on the desks and walls, is the order of the day. Adjoining this there is generally a yard, where an anomalous description of cricket and a still more peculiar version of racquets, with a "*spat*" and an India-rubber ball, are the staple sources of amusement. In those which are more extensive a mild kind of football is a favourite recreation in the short intervals between school in the winter quarter. Then as to hours, which by the way are adapted to each particular class. The school bell rings first at a quarter to seven to get up, at a quarter-past to warn the sluggard that he has only fifteen minutes to wash and dress in. At half-past seven prayers are read in the fourth-form room, for all classes below the remove, by the Head Master; those for the upper forms by their respective masters, in their respective rooms. Breakfast at nine, dinner at one, tea at six, supper at nine, bed at ten or half-past, and then "*tollies*" out for the night. On half-holidays, Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday in the summer quarter, there is a bill (calling the names over) at two, four, and six; in the winter at two and four only. Lock-up is regulated according to the time of year. There is always one, generally two, whole holidays during the quarter; thus an opportunity is afforded to those going for their "*excate*" to get away on Friday night and stay till Monday. Only one

“*exeat*” is allowed during the quarter, unless under extraordinary circumstances, and the strictest precautions are taken to prevent any boy going to town without permission. The ticket-clerk at the station is forbidden to issue a ticket to one of the school, without his presenting a printed paper giving him leave, signed by the master of his form, and countersigned by his tutor.

On Sundays there is chapel before breakfast, at which the Communion Service is read; at eleven, morning prayer, Litany, and sermon; and in the evening, prayers and sermon, always preached by the Head Master. Those in the morning are preached by the masters in turn, while the lessons are read by two of the monitors. The choir is chosen from the school, and, as compensation for their having to lose some of their Saturday half-holidays in practising, they are allowed an extra “*exeat*.” With reference to other matters I shall leave them for the present, and return to myself, the room, the three beds, and my two companions—who by this time had arrived—and whom I found to be somewhat older than myself, and consequently a little inclined to carry matters with a high hand. But why should I object to their patting me on the back? So I let them do it to their hearts’ content, and we soon became the best of friends. The next day at ten o’clock all the

new boys were ordered into "*Speech-room*," where an examination in Latin, arithmetic, and French was made, in order to find what class each one was fitted for, and the following morning we were "gazetted" accordingly, preparatory to commencing work on the Monday in right good earnest. If I recollect aright, there was no compulsory football that Saturday afternoon, so another new boy, whom I will call Jack, and myself strolled through the town to make ourselves better acquainted with it. I wonder how many times I was asked my name! "What's your name, you fellow?" is the stereotyped phrase used. I got so tired of repeating mine, that at last I thought I would vary it, and so rung the changes on Brown and Smith, and if I hadn't attempted Robinson, all would have gone well. But I did, and the consequence was that my interrogator, instead of passing on as the others had without taking any further notice, pulled up and cross-examined me, quite in Old Bailey fashion; and to such good purpose that I admitted my fault, for which praiseworthy candour I received a kick, and an "if you try that on with anybody else you'll get into trouble," with which moral and physical correction he moved away. It is considered highly necessary that new boys should be kept in their proper position, and made fully aware of their inferiority, so they in their turn

are not permitted to ask any other boy his name until their third quarter. This may seem all very childish ; but however trifling it is, there can be no doubt that, being part of an excellent system, there is some good in it which at first sight we do not perceive, and which ultimately influences the boy's career. For it should be remembered that a very important (some think the most important) element in a public-school education is that in its mimic world, a certain condition of society, certain rules, certain "*etiquette*" prevails, and each member is bound to recognize and give in to these if he wish to lead a peaceful life. At a large place like Harrow, where there are some five hundred boys of all ages, from thirteen to twenty, this must of necessity be the case ; indeed were it otherwise, it can easily be imagined that such a republic would be in a perpetual state of revolution. Probably to this cause may be attributed the institution of the monitors, the existence of fagging, and the investiture of the former with large powers, even to the length of using the cane, when it is rendered necessary by any outrageous breach of decorum, such as gross brutality or cowardly bullying, or obstinate disobedience to the well-known rules as to cricket, or racquet-fagging, or abstinence from compulsory football, on all of which subjects I shall have something to say.

CHAPTER II.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS.

ACCOMMODATING oneself to the habits of a new position is a process at all stages and in all periods of life peculiarly unpleasant. Its thousand exigencies, and hitherto unknown requirements, are in nowise relieved by the troublesome feeling of shyness and modesty that a very large proportion of persons suffer from, and which always attends their introduction into a new sphere or fresh scene of action. Few, oddly enough, ever in reality understand bashfulness in others, however retiring they themselves may be, and they invariably attribute the flushed check, the trembling hand, or the quivering voice, to a wrong cause. I take upon myself to digress so far, because I know how much depends upon a boy taking a determined position at the commencement of his life at a public school. Probably if he make this resolve and put it into force, he will find it bring about many hard blows and sneers and sharp words; but all these will be overcome in time. Imperceptibly a feeling of respect will be engendered among those

with whom he associates ; he will find that his plucky, honest-hearted schoolfellows will learn to appreciate his motives and his policy, while the cowardly sneak and the unprincipled bully will not be very long in taking his measure and transferring their torments and polite attentions to some more suitable subject. What such as these hate more than anything else is being opposed and resisted. Everybody must give in to them, and let them have their own way, and a bold front put on at the outset is sure to discomfit and beat them. I do not for one moment intend to convey the idea that I am an advocate for ill-suited bumptiousness or self-conceited boasting in a new boy ; but what I do say distinctly is this, that when once he has set his foot within the precincts of a public school, he should learn to be a man in every sense of the word—to think for himself, to judge for himself, and above all to put up with any trials and worries he may get with good grace and without grumbling. He should remember that it is a compliment and an encouragement to a bully to let him see that he is successful in making another unhappy and uncomfortable, and he is certain at every available opportunity to repeat his annoyances. On the other hand, if you treat him with contempt, he will sneak off like a frightened cur with his tail between his legs.

Here let me say that very few representatives of the old "genus" bully, of whom we have been accustomed to read in school tales and stories, now survive; indeed, as far as I myself am concerned, I do not recollect coming across one. In the literary eccentricities to which I have referred, he used to be a great, bull-headed, blundering lout, with more muscle than brains, and stupidity than courage; his cruelties and oppression partook greatly of the extravagant, as far as brutality was concerned, and he even went the length of risking the life of his wretched victim. But now my gentleman is rather of the superfine school; he plays a part closely analogous to that of the polished villain of a St. James's comedy; he is a perfect Joseph Surface in shell jackets and pegtops without pockets, I must add, for the present Head Master has prohibited such luxuries. One of his favourite methods of annoyance is to attract the notice of the whole form, in which you both may be, to some error of inexperience or apparent bashfulness on your part, and then to excite ridicule and amusement at your expense. If you happen to blush, he whispers in your ear "smoker," which, being literally interpreted in the Harrow vernacular, meaneth "blusher." Now, under such circumstances, it is by no means agreeable to have a self-evident failing made

more conspicuous than need be ; and unless you have plenty of self-control, you will wriggle about uncomfortably in your seat, or, if you are construing, make a sad bungle of “*edo, est,*” and “*sum, es, est.*” “*Extra school,*” says the master, and you sit down with a gurgling in your throat, and a strong sensation of revenge in your bosom, in which a desire to strangle your tormentor then and there plays a by no means insignificant part. But enough of bullies and their performances : let us turn to the more serious consideration of settling down.

Monday came, and then I felt myself fully launched in my new career. What the exact work was I had then to do, at this period of time I only vaguely remember, but I am strongly disposed to think that it was “*Mathematics,*” a branch of education that I never have appreciated and never shall take to, simply for the reason that figures are not in my line. Many and many wretched hours of disappointment and punishment has my ignorance of the science of numbers entailed, and even now the sight of a decimal fraction brings my heart into my mouth. I know I have many fellow-sufferers from the same complaint, and all I can say is—“*lor, how I pities they !*” Still they may think themselves lucky that it never fell to their lot to spend the morning in that class-room at Harrow that over-

looks the vicarage garden. My recollections of it are anything but pleasant, for I never went into it without getting into trouble with the master who always presided there, and generally came out with a flea in my ear, and the delicious prospect of spending my next half-holiday cooling my heels outside the aforesaid master's door. Oh, Euclid, Colenso, and all you other demons, you have much to answer for and compensate; so if you have no objection, I'll take a cheque on account at once.

As I shall have to mention my tutor frequently, let me call him Mr. Mortimer. As to his personal appearance, neither you nor I, reader, have any business to inquire; as to his goodness and kindness, I have spoken before, and shall many times do so again before these papers are finished. He was a firm and ardent believer in that system originated by Dr. Arnold at Rugby, and transplanted by Dr. Vaughan to Harrow, which has its foundation in all that is just and right—which encourages sympathy between boy and master, and engenders trust on the one hand and confidence on the other. Mr. Mortimer did not look upon the boys in his house as so many animals that he had to supply with meat and drink at so much a head; he treated each and every one of us as he would a friend stopping with him on a visit, was ever anxious to hear

what we had been doing, joined in our games in the yard, and, above all, was always ready to hear what we had to say, if we had got into trouble in school, and to give us advice as to what we should do. Many a time have I gone to him, boiling over with indignation at the real injustice of some punishment that had been imposed upon me, but I have never left him without being quieted down, either by a promise to speak to the master who had given it me, or by having it pointed out that in a large community it does happen sometimes that people suffer for the errors of others. Speaking of this recalls to my mind a forcible illustration, that shows how myself and the rest of my house got into difficulties for something we had never done.

The master whose residence was opposite ours one morning had a stone thrown through his study window. Why or wherefore to this day I never have been able to discover, but he thought fit to charge us at Mr. Mortimer's with the offence, and demanded that we should be punished, for there had been a great deal of stone-throwing going on, and notice had been sent round by the Head Master that the next culprit that came before him would be severely dealt with. Mr. Mortimer sent for us, and asked whoever did it to come forward and honourably avow his guilt. None moved, and

why? Because honestly and sincerely not one of us had had a hand in the matter, and now, as then, I firmly believe that we were all innocent. The matter was, of course, reported to Dr. Vaughan, and the upshot was that we were all summoned to a private hearing in "speech-room." I remember what took place as well as if it were yesterday—the Doctor's grave face as he impressed upon us the necessity of speaking the truth and surrendering the culprit. No one moved. He asked us what we had to say; we all cried aloud that we had not done it—it was not one of us. The master whose window had been broken was convinced that the stone came from our garden, and then we first heard of a policeman who declared that he saw it fly across the road from that direction. We had no evidence to contradict this, no power to cross-examine this constable, who, as after-experience would have taught us, is always sure to turn up at the last minute to put in the bit of testimony that is wanted. The result may be easily conceived. "Very well," said the Doctor, "if the boy who did throw the stone doesn't give himself up at once, all must be punished. I know that in that case the innocent will have to suffer, but as I have told you often in chapel, in communities large or small, such does sometimes unfortunately happen." I do not mean that those were

his exact words, but what he did say was to that effect. We were all punished by having to bring fifty lines every half-holiday at three and five to the Doctor's house to the end of the quarter. I never can and never shall feel that we merited so severe a sentence, but I would not complain of Dr. Vaughan, who was always as just as he was indulgent.

Once in the swing of work, time passed quickly enough. Jack and I, who were in the same form, got on very well together, and at the end of the second week, found ourselves first and second in marks. Mr. Mortimer was very pleased, and praised us both a great deal more than we deserved. But our lofty position of course had its drawbacks. We had to bear no end of chaff and hard words, and even kicks. One amiable youth, who rejoiced in the dignity of "cock" of the form, sent me flying down the old school steps one morning; but as luck would have it, the biter was bit, for I was driven like a thunder-bolt into the arms of one of the monitors, and brought him down with me. My persecutor tried to make off; but it was useless, he had been spotted, and I had the pleasure of standing by and seeing him get one of the jolliest thrashings that ever fell to a bully's share. I will do him the credit to say he didn't howl much, but, to judge from the movement of his features, he

was not enjoying himself particularly. I need scarcely say that he did not trouble me with his attentions again. But, as I was observing, our progress at first got us into trouble. "Oh, you *Swat!*" met us at every turn, and if we happened to make a mistake, there was great rejoicing. And yet the real truth was, that neither Jack nor myself did "*Swat*"; we prepared ourselves for what had been set, but not a line more; and if we had worked three times as hard, it wouldn't have done either of us any harm. It was in "*repetition,*" that we generally made a hit, and for this reason, because the first book of Horace's Odes, which our form was then going through, was known to both of us by heart, and all we had to do was to read it over, and then we were ready. Each boy had to go up to the master's desk when called upon, and pretty pranks some of the idle ones used to play, taking their book up with them, and "*cribbing*" as best they could. I have seen terrible discoveries; one fellow especially was always being found out; but then he made it a regular practice, and would no more have thought of learning a dozen lines of Latin, than putting cold water in his mouth, and sitting on the hob till it boiled.

Poor old Slipshod! I always pitied him from my heart, for all the time we were at Harrow

together I never recollect his having a clear half-holiday.

“Come down to footer, Skipper?” “Can’t, old man! got twenty-five at three and five,” was the usual invitation and answer; and so he used to spend the better part of his afternoon at Fuller’s.

“Who’s Fuller?” I hear some one ask. A very rational inquiry, my dear young gentleman, and I’ll tell you with the greatest possible pleasure. Fuller’s is to Harrow what Gunter’s is to the fashionables of Belgravia; without Fuller’s, Harrow would have been a wilderness, a desolation; life there would have been worthless, and strawberry-cream and lemon-water unknown. Do not let any ignorant person make a mistake; this great establishment is none of your twopenny-halfpenny gingerbread concerns, none of your penny ice and sawdusty sponge-cake delusions; a stupendous business is that of Fuller, a commercial enterprise as mighty as any other in the United Kingdom. Here the pocket-money, that somehow or other always wants to find its way out of the hand at the beginning of a quarter, may be invested in every delicacy that the school-boy appetite can appreciate, from “Trifle” to bull’s-eyes. Fuller’s is the Harrow “tuck” shop, one of those repositories of good things catable where you can get anything you ask for, except

Bath buns.* In the morning, steak-pie, chicken, tongue, in fact almost everything one could name, is to be found waiting for those who like to buy and take it into their house, to add to what is provided them for breakfast; for you are allowed to do this.

Such a rush and scramble. "Brawn, Miss Fuller!" "Potted ham, Miss Fuller!" "Six of steak-pie, Miss Fuller!" such are some of the cries that you may hear above the tumult of their voices. How the good-natured person invoked ever managed to supply her customers with the articles they asked for has always been a mystery to me; but, sure enough, she always did, and, what's more extraordinary, managed to get down in her book correctly the names of all those who didn't pay. She certainly was a marvellous woman, and I hope she will let me here pay my tribute of admiration and respect. How many ices, how many plates of gooseberry, apple, cranberry, or any other pie—in fact, how much I have spent within the walls of Fuller, history can only hereafter tell; at the same time no one can ever say that I wasted my opportunities, or allowed a moment to be unoccupied." But we must not linger over the sweets

* I should also mention that penny buns are not to be got. These two exceptions are made, because the aristocratic appetites of the customers have no taste for such vulgar indigestibles.

any longer, or we shall run up our account to an unconscionable length, and be unable to meet all our creditors.

I found that the two boys who shared my room with me improved very much on acquaintance, and soon began to take to me, and I naturally reciprocated their advances, and we soon became the best of friends. As to the other boys in the house, there was only one of whom I need make mention, as, except to speak generally, I shall not have to mention any of the others.

George Warner I will call him—and the first thing that made us friends was a quarrel which ended in blows, and terminated in a fight, in which I gave him a sound thrashing. I hope this will not be thought egotistical, my saying that I was the victor, but I believe the hard knocks we gave one another made us better friends ever after. If you want to have a fight at Harrow, you are allowed to, but only in the presence of the school on the piece of waste ground between the racquet-courts and the school-yard. Now Warner and I did not care about this publicity, so we adjourned to the bottom of the garden attached to Mr. Mortimer's house, and one fine morning, just after breakfast, settled our little differences. Poor George, a pretty figure I made you look, and I didn't get off without some unpleasant marks; but I never regretted either the

one or the other. Of course our tutor knew perfectly well what we had been up to when we came in to dinner, trying to look very innocent, but George's puffed face, and an ominous swelling over my left eye, could not fail to reveal everything. Mr. Mortimer called us into his study, and there and then addressing us told us that we could only secure his pardon by shaking hands and being good friends. This we were both only too delighted to do. Poor George! I little thought then that, ere another two years were over, you would be quietly sleeping in your grave out on the Lincolnshire moorlands. When I went home with you one summer vacation, and was introduced to your father and mother at the old rectory, and met with such a warm and hearty welcome, all was so bright and happy in the present, that I did not see the black cloud that was hanging over and darkening your future. But it gathered in and in, and there was none that could avert the storm. How well I remember that night, when with aching heart and streaming eyes I lay on my bed in the room that we had lately shared together, and heard the slow, mournful tolling of the bell that was wont to summon us to school, whose muffled notes told me you were gone. Long time has passed since then: I have been buffeted and knocked about in the battle of life, sorrows have

scathed me, bitter griefs have wounded me to the soul, but the memory of those hours, and the solemn warning they brought with them, will never be forgotten. How his father and mother grieved and mourned for him, few know. A few weeks since I went down to see them, and though years are gone since George Warner died at Harrow, their grief for their lost darling is as fresh and poignant as ever. His mother—bless her soft kind face and voice—took me by the hand and led me out through a side-gate from the rectory garden, in among the graves in the churchyard, and we stood together looking at the jessamine and flowers climbing up the tombstone, whereon was written—“To the Memory of GEORGE WARNER, who died at Harrow, aged 16.” Not another syllable: no biblical quotation, no panegyric on the dead boy, but only what I have said. I am not ashamed to own that my eyes filled with tears, and I heard a soft voice say—“You were his friend, he loved you as a brother; come to us when you will, you will ever be as a son.” Those words will not be forgotten in the heart of him to whom they were addressed—they are stored away in a secret corner, but they carry with them a tender influence, that in all the fights and trials of the future will never be forgotten.

Shall I tell you how George Warner died?

On a bright summer's half-holiday, when his schoolmates were watching a closely-contested match between the Zingari and the Eleven, down on the cricket-ground—through the open window the shouts and applause were ever and anon borne upon the soft breeze, and, as he heard them, George, poor lad! turned his big grey eyes on me so sadly, but they spoke worlds. He was a good cricketer; in due time, had he lived, he must have been in the Eleven; but the hand that was then in mine was blue and transparent, and the poor frame to which it belonged wasted to a shadow. George and I were alone. He asked me to get him some lemonade from the table, but as I rose to do so he held me firmly. I turned round, and gazed on him eagerly. There was a ghastly pallor on his face; the black rings round his eyes grew darker and darker. I was paralyzed. Gradually he drew himself up into a sitting position, and for a moment his features assumed an expression so horrible that, as I think of it now, it makes me shudder. Then slowly over his whole countenance a soft, gentle look stole like daybreak over the morning sea. Then he quietly fell back upon his pillow, murmuring, "Father — mother — good bye!" and George Warner's short account in the world was made up in the books of the Eternal. And as his spirit went forth, the bell began to clang loudly

for bill, and one of our house looked in through the door, and asked how Warner was; then, as he guessed all, his young face became gloomy, and as he went off to tell Mr. Mortimer the sad news, I heard him whisper to himself, "Poor Warner—poor Warner!"

Life and death so close, so inseparably bound up in one another! What a slight division 'twixt the shell jacket and the winding-sheet!

CHAPTER III.

FAGGING.

OF all the fears that present themselves to the mind of the boy who is going to a public school, none has such unpleasant anticipations as fagging. He has sat at the dinner-table at home, and listened in silent horror to the highly-coloured stories of mendacious elderly gentlemen, who prefer to sacrifice truth rather than that their tales should want for piquancy, and has gone to bed in a condition of nerves more easily imagined than described. He will, however, eventually find that all his alarms are groundless, and that the actual thing, when looked full in the face, is not half so bad as all the talk and description of it beforehand. No doubt cruelties—and very barbarous ones, too—have been perpetrated under the pretence of fagging; the Winchester affair, and a certain unpleasantly notorious case at Harrow, are examples of this: in fact, there are very few of the old-established public schools that have not an undesirable recollection of this kind in their history. But all such are matters of the past; boys, like men, have become more enlightened and larger in their ideas; they are not the thoughtless, unthinking set they used to be

in years gone by ; they have begun to learn the value of reflection. The increasing intelligence and assumption of manliness in the rising generation has over and over again provoked the good-natured criticism of their seniors. It was one of John Leech's favourite subjects, but it has always been regarded more in a friendly spirit than otherwise, and, except where it has exceeded the fair limits of ordinary progress, been rather aided than checked. And why should it not be so ? Our boys are the stuff from which our men are made, and when once the tree has begun growing, surely it is the excess of folly to check its heightening and spreading. It is to the earlier formation of character that the modification of the fagging system is mainly due. By the time a boy is able to fag, he has had a fair drilling himself : he has learned the full value of kindness, consideration, and courtesy in carrying it out, and knows by that means he will get all he wants done with cheerfulness and alacrity, instead of scowling looks and sulky obedience. In fact, fagging exists more in the name than anything else ; year after year it takes a milder form, and in course of time will almost, if not entirely, disappear.

I will now endeavour as far as possible to describe the fagging system, as carried out at Harrow, and will commence by saying that the

Monitors and the whole of the sixth form, with such members of the upper fifth as happen to be heads of houses, are entitled by the school code to fag all the rest of the boys from the first shell downwards; the fifth form and the remove being exempted, for the manifest reason that their position entitles them to the exception. They occupy the intermediate position between fagging and being fagged. The uninitiated visitor to Harrow will probably, if he pay it a visit when the school is there, be astonished if not alarmed in passing a master's house, to hear a loud and prolonged cry of "*boy!*" In some instances he might be led to imagine that the owner of the voice was preparing himself for a grand vocal effort at a concert or something of that kind, by the "*forte*" and "*piano*" expression with which he varies his tones at intervals. But he would be wrong in his surmise; it is nothing more nor less than the way in which the house fag is summoned. The house fag is the boy whose turn it is to stay at home and be in readiness for the call of such of the sixth form as may remain in. Perhaps he may be wanted to run to "*Fuller's*" for lemonade, or to "*Crossley and Clarke's*" for a book, or down to the cricket-ground to find out how the match is going on, and to come back and report full particulars. No doubt it is rather a bore to stay up in the town on a fine summer's half-

holiday; but, after all, it only comes once in a way, and has its advantages as well as its drawbacks. As for each boy's own particular fag or fags, as the case may be, their labours are of the simplest kind; to see after their master's breakfast—for the sixth form mostly have theirs in their own rooms—and wait at “Fuller's” for such delicacies as may have been ordered, of which, by the way, they not infrequently get a share, to say nothing of the crumpets and buttered toast which they have had to prepare. Of course, there are other small duties they are called upon to perform; to take messages if necessary, and such-like trifling matters; but as to boot-cleaning and dirty work of that kind, as far as my experience goes, it is not included in the demands made on them. Still, if it were, it really is, after all, no very great hardship, and a boy must indeed be a soft, spoony fellow to cut up rusty on that score. If he will only make up his mind to do what he has to do in good part, he need not have the slightest fear that it will pass unappreciated, and he will be almost sure to find that whoever he fags for will stand him a good friend when he is in want of one. He cannot too highly estimate the advantage of making himself popular with his master: if he wants to get off house-fagging for a day, or to be excused from going down to football, or any such-like indulgences,

his claims for liberty will not be forgotten. And then, again, if anybody tries to bully him, he will inevitably find in him a protector. And a very useful thing indeed that is sometimes, for however plucky and self-reliant a boy may be, there are occasions when he stands in need of assistance, and in the muscular line too. In the large houses a good deal of practical joking goes on, of course, and sometimes it travels beyond the limits of a joke, and degenerates into a personal attack; for there are sure to be some few cowardly spirits who will always unite to torment a youngster. For instance, in one house it was a very favourite amusement of these gentry to take advantage of a new boy being asleep to make a sort of cradle of his blankets, and tie him into it, and then sling him by the sheet over the balustrade, and leave him dangling at an unpleasant altitude over the stone hall. And a pretty mess they made of it one night, for, somehow or other, they did not secure the apparatus properly, and their unfortunate victim, a poor, weakly little fellow, very nearly met his death on the hard flags—that is to say, he would have if he had not held on like grim death to the end of the sheet, and shouted at the top of his lungs for help. Fortunately he was rescued without incurring any further damage than a severe fright; but his cowardly assailants were treated

to a most glorious thrashing at the hands of the head of the house, who it was thought was the best person to deal with them.

At this point it is not out of place to consider the monitorial system at Harrow, which at one time attracted a good deal of unenviable notoriety, by a most flagrant abuse of its privileges by a certain individual who shall be nameless. A no less celebrated person than the lamented Lord Palmerston had a somewhat warm and prolonged discussion as to its merits with Dr. Vaughan. But the latter fully vindicated its use, and pointed out to the general satisfaction the benefits it conferred, and to such good purpose that the governors of the school unanimously determined to retain it as part of the Harrow educational routine. Undoubtedly the monitors are invested with very large and extensive powers; while the masters superintend all matters relating to the studies and teaching of the boys, they attend almost exclusively to what may be termed the social and domestic. The regulation of fagging is in their hands; all gross cases of bullying or excess of authority in those entitled to exercise it come under their consideration; in short, they act as a kind of police, to see that nothing is done derogatory or lowering to the dignity of the school. But as the trust placed in them is large, so are they expected to

fulfil it with propriety, and are responsible to the Head Master for any omission or excess. They may be said to go bail with him for the rest of the school. It is most satisfactory, on looking back, to say that, during a long course of time, they have never abused or overstepped the confidence reposed in them, and have gone on year by year incontestably asserting their right to occupy the position they do. A great deal originally was urged against the wisdom of allowing them to use the cane; but I fancy few of those who once argued in that way would take the same line now, and I remember an occurrence illustrative of the system, which is not altogether uninteresting. Two boys had been guilty of the most unpardonable barbarity to a cat; one of them had shot it, and the other cut off its tail while it was alive. The matter was duly reported to the Head Master, and he at once determined to expel both of them. On the earnest entreaty of their tutor he, however, consented to forego the extreme measure, on the understanding that the monitors would take the matter into their hands, and punish them severely. No one knew what they would do, but one half-holiday, early in the day, a notice was posted on the school-gates, which required all the school to give their attendance in the fourth-form room directly after "two bill." Of course this caused a great deal of ex-

citement, and speculation was rife as to what would happen—some still adhering to the idea that a public expulsion would take place. At the appointed time all who had been summoned were assembled in their places, and when the master, who had been calling bill, left the room, all the monitors walked slowly in; one placed himself at the door, and the others dispersed themselves about, the head of the school alone remaining in the middle of the room. The cane he held in his hand pretty clearly proclaimed what was coming. In a few words he announced the Head Master's resolve, and the determination of the monitors to give the two offenders a public thrashing, and he then called them out by name. They did not delay to stand forth, probably only too glad to get off so cheaply, but stepped down from one of the back benches, looking very much ashamed of themselves. I shall never forget the scene—to use a hackneyed phrase, there was such silence you might have heard a pin drop. Every breath seemed held for a moment. Fine, strong, manly fellows they both were, famous in the cricket and football field, and ordinarily good-tempered and kindly in disposition. To this day I have never been able to understand what induced them to be guilty of such a cold-blooded brutality to a dumb creature. Still there they stood awaiting their punishment.

The head of the school looked pale and anxious : he fully appreciated his responsibility, and, naturally enough, did not like the job. But he laid on with the full strength of that muscular frame which made him such an awkward opponent in the cricket and football field, and as each blow resounded on the culprits' shoulders, those who heard it knew that he was doing his duty without flinching. As for the culprits, they bore their thrashing with courage, but one of them could not resist a few tears of shame at his degraded position forcing their way out. I am certain that the scene had a great moral effect on those present ; it was a subject of conversation long after, but was always spoken of with respect. As for the two who were punished, time showed them to be neither cowards nor brutes : they have long since regained the position which for the while they lost ; but perhaps it is not too much to say that that thrashing in the fourth-form room at Harrow was not lost upon either.

It can easily be understood that, in a large house, where there are some sixty or seventy boys, there should be some one perpetually amongst them having full authority to keep order. Consequently, the senior monitor at the Head Master's, for instance, occupies a position involving great responsibility and anxiety, for on his head

falls all the blame if there be any uproar or disturbance. It does sometimes happen in a large house that the head of it is a sixth-form or even an upper fifth-form boy; in that case, *ex officio*, he becomes invested with the same powers as if he were a monitor. I remember an instance of this. A good-natured, easy-going fellow, fond of letting things have pretty much their own way, owing to the sudden departure of the then head of the house, found himself elevated, quite unexpectedly, into that position. To tell the honest truth, he was quite unfitted for it, and told his tutor so; but he would not hear of his shirking it, thought it would be a good opportunity for making him bestir himself, and dismissed him with the comforting assurance that he should hold him responsible in future, and would be much displeased if things did not go on as quietly as heretofore. There was no help for it; dignity, unsought and undesired, had come of its own accord, as is very often the case, and there was nothing to be done but to make the best of it. As ill-fate would have it, the whole of the house fully understood their man, and they made up their minds to lead him a pretty dance, and at any rate to try to see if they could not get the upper hand for once. They were not long in commencing the struggle. The first evening they locked him in his room, and took advantage

of his incarceration to celebrate a wild and riotous festival in the dining-hall and passage, of course setting some one on the watch, and when they got the word "*care,*" bundled off to their bedrooms, and were *fast asleep* when their tutor came round to find out what was the matter. They had taken the precaution to unlock the door of the head of the house's room before this, and on his head fell all the blame. "But they locked my door, sir," urged he. "Then you shouldn't have let them," was the answer; "and mind, if this occurs again, I shall be very seriously displeased."

This was pleasant; but our friend soon consoled himself, and was resolved to take strict measures in future. At length came the last Saturday of the quarter, and preparation had been made for a more than usually boisterous evening. The head of the house, however, had heard of this, indirectly, in the morning. Quietly he resolved in his own mind what to do, and when all were in the hall at tea, he locked his room door, put the key into his pocket, and quietly made his way up to the dormitory in which the feast was to take place. He listened with a grim smile on his face to the noise that was going on down below, and the assaults made on his door, and waited patiently and attentively till he heard the inmates of the room he was

in coming up, when he quietly shut himself into a large cupboard in the corner of the room. In they came, making a tremendous noise, five in all, shouting and laughing, and exclaiming what capital fun it was. And then they began recalling previous attacks, and who had figured in them, and, after chattering away, made a pretence of going to bed, and put out the candle. Slowly the head of the house came unheard out of the cupboard, and walked quietly up to the door, which he locked noiselessly, and then, passing to the chimney-piece, struck a match, and lighted the candle. The amazement and consternation of all was ludicrous in the extreme—they were regularly taken aback.

“Now,” said the head of the house, “I have heard from your own lips that you were the worst among those who have been getting me into trouble with the tutor about the rows in the house. I am locked in here with you, and though there are five of you, I mean to give you all a sound thrashing!”

And sure enough he did, too, and they did not dare to raise a finger against him, for they knew that if they did they would bring all the monitors down on them in double-quick time, and only get twice as roughly dealt with. The next quarter, though the same fellow remained

head of the house, there was no attempt at a disturbance of any kind from beginning to end.

On another occasion I shall have something further to say on the subject of fagging as applied to football and cricket.

CHAPTER IV.

CRICKET-FAGGING, ETC.

CRICKET-FAGGING is the next branch of the system, and a very useful one too. I believe to that is mainly owing the excellence the Harrow boys attain to in the noble game, for there is no humbug about it—you do not stand by and do nothing; you have to look after yourself and four or five balls at one and the same time, and unless you keep your eyes pretty wide open, the chances are you will have your teeth sent down your throat, or some other reminder of an equally pleasant description.

A lovely bang between the eyes, which sent me to grass quite senseless, and very nearly did for me altogether, was my first experience of cricket-fagging, but it gave me a lesson that I never forgot afterwards. The way in which the cricket-fagging is organized is in this wise: at the beginning of cricket quarter, a certain number of fellows from the Lower School—say, four—are selected, and dubbed “slave-drivers,” which means that it is their duty every evening to send down a sufficient number of fags to field out for such members of the Eleven or the sixth form as may be practising. They enter your

name in a small book they keep for the purpose, to which they refer on the ground to see if all they have ordered have put in an appearance. If any one cuts, they report him to the Captain of the Eleven, who may or may not give him a thrashing, as the offence may require. If the same thing has been done before by the same fellow, he probably does ; otherwise, he dismisses him with a lecture, and begs that it may not occur again, as it will then be his painful duty, &c., &c.

I myself was always partial to cricket-fagging, being passionately devoted from infancy to the sight of a bat and ball ; and, being able to bowl round-arm a little, found myself promoted to the distinguished office of bowler to a sixth-form fellow. And oh ! the ecstasy and delight when I did happen to get a wicket, and the intense longing to have Spencer Ponsonby or Bob Grimston near at hand to see the exploit, in order that he might take favourable notice, and suggest giving me a chance. What Harrow owes to those two kind nurses of its young cricketers, history alone can tell : the hours, the days they have spent looking on and studying every fault and defect in their play, and teaching them how to remedy it. I do not believe there really ever was an independent captain of a Harrow Eleven ; he submitted always without a murmur to Grim-

ston and Ponsonby, and I doubt whether one, through the successive generations of captains, ever regretted having done so. But of them more at another time, and also of cricket, not forgetting to mention here that two boys are told off every half-holiday to score for the sixth-form game, which is a species of fagging I do not think any one could object to.

Racquet-fagging next comes under consideration, and that is the slowest of all—wretched, dreary, miserable work, without a redeeming feature of any kind or description. There you have to go and stand with your back against a wall, very often getting your toes trodden on, and being pitched into for blundering in the way. All the business you have to perform is to go round and pick up the balls that have been knocked out of court. Sometimes, though, you come in for a game. For example, one day I went down to the court after bill to fag, and found a sixth-form fellow “knocking up,” with no one to play with. “Come on, young ’un, and have a game,” he said, good-naturedly, an offer I hastened to accept. He thought he was going to beat me easily, but he had reckoned on his chickens a little too soon, and to his intense astonishment I finished off the victor game ball to nine. We went on playing, but I was equally successful each time, and at last, with a laugh,

he said, "It's no use, you're too good for me, young 'un," a compliment which I, of course, would not accept. To that game I was indebted for the privilege of playing in the double ties, through which I was fortunate enough to remain up to the last, when myself and partner were over matched altogether and beaten in a canter. But as to racquet-fagging, it really is a thing to escape if possible—not from its hardship, but its excessive dulness and stupidity.

And besides all that, as a general rule, the play you have to look on at is not of the highest order, for really good players would rather have fags out of the way altogether; somehow or other they are sure to spoil a good stroke if it is to be done. Occasionally, however, there are very interesting matches, especially those for the champion racquet, which contest has brought out such fine players as V. E. and R. D. Walker, Ainslie, Plowden, and Maitland. Then a large crowd of spectators assemble, and there is no lack of applause, and some rare close fights have taken place. Old boys come down and look on, and make more noise than the young ones, as somehow or other they always do whenever they have the opportunity, and not infrequently chair the victor up the school steps into the yard to Sam's room. Who's Sam? some one asks. One of the most important items of the Harrow sys-

tem. Sam Hoare rejoices in the title of "*custos.*" He keeps all the keys of every imaginable room and place belonging to the school, and, extraordinary to relate, never mislays them. A right, jovial, cheery chap is Sam, full of life and vigour, always ready and willing to lend a hand in promoting every sport and game. And a by no means bad cricketer is he. I have seen him, when playing for the town against the school, make some ugly scores, and, stout though he is getting, run like a lamplighter. When the boys come back, or go away, Sam superintends the boxes and luggage with an amount of accuracy calculated to excite astonishment in the minds of ordinary mortals. As to his punctuality, it is truly marvellous; he has the regulation of the ringing the school-bell, which is performed by his understrapper, who rejoices in the name of Noggs. Probably in due course, when Sam retires, Noggs will be promoted to the place of "*custos.*" It is only to be hoped that he will emulate the virtues and high character of his predecessor. A queer place is Sam's room, full of bats and stumps and racquets, jackets thrown in this corner, tail-coats lying in that; in fact, everything in a state of glorious confusion delightful to behold. In the midst of all this Sam rules with a rod of iron; occasionally, if the preservation of the public peace requires it, re-

sorting to an old stump, with which he lays about him with hearty goodwill, and unpleasantly raps fingers that are poking into corners where they have no business. A very favourite rendezvous is this same room, especially in the winter afternoons, and very long and important debates take place there on such weighty matters as the choice of the Eleven, or the drawing of the racquet ties, and such-like matters. Sam is a model of punctuality; but then he is bound to be so, for he has to regulate the ringing of the bell for school, for the various bills, and for lock-up, and he has to come round and announce to the different forms when any alteration has been made in the time for all to be in-doors. As I said before, Sam is assisted in his laborious duties by the aforesaid Noggs, who always looks very dirty except on Sunday, when he comes out as spick and span as a new pin. He it is who pulls the bell, the rope of which is regulated by Sam. I have introduced these two, because they really are part and parcel of the school, and any one who pays Harrow a visit cannot do better than enlist them to show him what there is to be seen. Sam has special charge of the chapel, to which I cordially recommend any one who has the opportunity to pay a visit. The painted windows with which it is adorned have either been presented by old boys,

or subscribed for by the different houses. One side is devoted as a special memorial in honour of old Harrovians who fell in the Crimean war, and their names are engraved on brass plates, which are fastened on the wall, underneath the painted windows. A very solemn sight it is on a Sunday evening to sit on the seats allotted to visitors, and to look down the chapel on that assemblage of young, hopeful beings, so full of life, and health, and happiness. I have never heard such honest, plain-spoken sermons as those Dr. Vaughan used to preach; every word went home to each listener, and when he had to point out some special fault or prevailing error that was rife, not a single word from his lips ever passed disregarded. "We shall never see his like again," was the utterance of many a lip on the last day of that quarter which terminated his head-mastership at Harrow. Few will ever forget the morning when he read prayers in speech-room for the last time. There was an unusual quiver in his voice, and his eyes looked dim and sad. And then, as he addressed the school in a few kindly words of farewell, and bade all keep up the high character it had hitherto maintained, he fairly broke down, and hurried in almost inaudible tones to a conclusion. Then, as we passed out, he held out his hand to bid each of us individually adieu. There was a

kind, earnest feeling in the grasp he gave each of us; it seemed to speak the genuine interest of the heart, and to tell us that there was at least one warm friend, who looked with deep regard to the future of us all. Dear, kind Doctor, ever patient and forgiving, merciful to those who least deserved it, confident in the honour and truth of his boys as a body, and yet stern and unbending when necessity required it, your days at Harrow will always occupy the proudest position in the history of John Lyon's school. How you raised the members from under a hundred even up to five, how you made it famous far and wide, and how generously you spent your income, aye, even to prodigality, in enriching and enhancing its attractions: are these things not well known to all your old pupils, though you sought to conceal them? Among all those on the list of past Head Masters, none can ever occupy so distinguished and isolated a position of honour as that of Charles John Vaughan, D.D.

And now, my boys, and dear anxious mammas, if any of the latter take the trouble to read these papers, just a few words before I conclude the present one. From what I have said in the course of it, are you any longer under the impression that fagging is such a dreadful thing? Don't you think that some mischievous person or other has laid on the paint of falsehood a great deal too

thick, and that a little of the gilding of truth is an advantage? Those who have had plenty of experience of the roughs and the smooths of public school life will appreciate my motive in writing thus. As a general rule, the stories that some people attempt to write, in which they endeavour to give a faithful portrait of school life, are so strained and unnatural, and flavoured with such gross exaggerations, that any one at all versed in such matters will throw them down in disgust. Let any number of boys who have been at any of the great schools be asked what they think of fagging, and whether it is so harsh and brutal, and, to be sporting for once, I would lay long odds that they would give a universal opinion in favour of it. We never hear now of any case of cruelty or bullying arising out of the fagging system. As it has grown in years, so has it learned to correct its abuses, and prevent the possibility of fault or complaint being made against it. The real secret is, that boys now go prepared to put up with such trifling inconveniences and unpleasantness as it may cause; they know perfectly well that it is part and parcel of the course they have to go through, and make up their minds to grin and bear it like "bricks." That's the right spirit to look at it in: if you show at the commencement of your first quarter that you are discontented and cross-

grained; that you don't like toasting another fellow's muffins or making his tea; or that you object to being sent upon errands, and to carrying hot rump-steak in a dish full of gravy from "Fuller's" to the room of the fellow you fag for, wherever that may be; I say, if you show that you object to all these things, the chances are that you will create a dislike against you, and find that confounded dignity of yours rubbed up in anything but a gratifying manner. Slip that aforesaid dignity of yours into your pocket, my boy; remember that better men than you have put up with all these things before you. Byron, as likely as not, carried a dish of eggs and bacon for his master's breakfast; dear old Pam possibly burned his fingers making coffee for his, and I dare swear blacked his boots too; Sir Robert Peel, Sidney Herbert, scores on scores of great names might be mentioned, who have passed through the same course of "fagging" as you will have to do. Aye there is much wisdom in the system; it levels all for a while; the marquis in his own right may carry letters for the merchant's son, and the heir to an earldom make buttered toast for a half-pay captain's only boy. Reflective minds cannot fail to see a great moral principle involved in all this, that vindicates to the full the retention of fagging as an institution at our public schools.

CHAPTER V.

FOOTBALL QUARTER.

WHAT a pity it is that the football rules of the various public schools are so at variance with one another in the most important particulars of the game. At present there is little chance of any alteration being made, for, with true conservative pertinacity, each school prefers to stick to its own original laws, despite the laudable exertions made by some who would like to see this insuperable obstacle to matches between the great public schools removed. Much talk took place at one time, and a meeting was held in London, at which, I believe, representatives from all the recognised foundation establishments were present; but it brought about nothing except several letters to the newspapers, and a host of impracticable suggestions, with which enthusiasts and lunatics are ready to deluge the public on every topic at every opportunity. Football as played at Harrow is, perhaps, not so fierce as the Rugby game, though very much depends upon the interest of the combat. In the ordinary school game, in which all boys from the second fifth-form down to the lowest are obliged to go and play, there are so many engaged and so little

actually to fight for, that it occasionally gets somewhat tame. There are two games provided—the big game and the small—between which the boys fairly divide themselves, the older and stronger ones going to the first, the younger and weaker to the second. The former is regulated and looked after by the monitors and sixth form, the latter by a certain number of boys who are appointed by the head of the school at the beginning of the quarter, and who, as in cricket-fagging, rejoice in the agreeable title of slave-drivers. Their duty is to see that all keep well up to the ball, and none are allowed to straggle. “Follow up, you fellow, follow up!” is their cry; and follow you must, or you will be sent to base, a by no means agreeable position on a cold November afternoon, to say nothing of being looked upon as a terrible “duffer” to get into such trouble. Then, again, if you come down late, you stand good chance of being called over the coals, unless you manage to escape the usually lynx-eye of the slave-driver, who never has any pity for shirkers.

I wish it to be clearly understood that every boy is compelled to go down to “footer,” as it is called, twice a week. If he were down on Tuesday, on Thursday he can plead “down last time,” but he must put in an appearance on Saturday. I can hear some one ask “But how, in a school where there are some five hundred,

can you find out whether each boy has or has not been down?" Well, this is the way in which it is managed. After four o'clock bell, the head of the school and one of the other monitors take up their position outside the fourth-form room-door, at the top of the school-steps, and as each boy passes between them he has to say whether he has or has not been down. If he says "no," or offers an excuse, he has to stand by and explain, and if he has cut it altogether, he runs a fair chance of being "sent for" and getting his jacket warmed. In that case it is not altogether improbable that he resorts to a lie to cover his fault; but even then he runs a great risk, and if he happens to be found out, so much the worse for him. This, however, occurs in very few cases indeed; there is a great deal too much honourable spirit pervading the school in these matters, and the instances of a falsehood being told for so small a reason, in my experience, were very few and far between. There was one boy who was always doing it; in fact, he made a regular practice of it, and was rather proud of his feat than otherwise. Time after time did he strenuously declare he "*had*" been down, and time after time was it proved beyond all reasonable doubt that he had never been near the footer-field. He was caned so many times that, at last, the captain of

the school could stand it no longer. One day Smith major was sent for, and presented himself at the appointed place at the appointed time. The following conversation took place :—

“ Well, Smith,” said the head of the school ;
“ always coming here now.”

“ I’m very sorry,” was the answer. “ It certainly is a melancholy fact that here I am again.”

“ And here you are likely to be again a great many times, unless you make up your mind to give up cutting footer, and telling the bangs you do about it.”

“ Well, I suppose I shall ; but couldn’t you do me a favour—let two or three thrashings stand over, and give me them all at once ? It would be ever so much more convenient.”

The cool cheek of this proposal sent the head of the school into a roar of laughter, but Smith major’s audacity saved him. After a few moments’ consideration, he was addressed as follows :—

“ I see, Smith, it’s no use punishing you, it hasn’t the slightest effect, and so I give up all hope of trying to lick you into obedience. But mark this, and think of it when you get back to your own room. Wouldn’t you be a better and healthier fellow if you were to take more exercise, and make a good many more friends,

by joining in the games, than by spending all your half-holidays eating ice and trifle at Fuller's? Take my advice; I'm a good bit older than you, and I speak from experience. For the future, I shall not trouble myself about you, but I should be glad to hear that you had made an alteration."

Smith major did profit by his schoolfellow's advice, and to such good purpose that he came out as a first-rate cricketer, and presently got his flannels, and finally wound up by making "Cock-score" at Lord's in the match against Eton.

May I pause here to say one word in favour of plenty of hard muscular and physical exercise? My dear boys, if you want to become strong, healthy, energetic men, learn early to join in all sports which can conduce to develop and expand the frame. Join in them regularly. Don't go and walk twenty miles or run a foot-race one day, and then do nothing for the rest of the week; don't overstrain the powers one minute, and leave them utterly unemployed at another. I knew a young, broad-shouldered, strong-muscled lad of eighteen, who, when he left school, neglected to take his regular exercise. Consequently, his *physique* became impaired and quite unfit for any serious strain to be put on it. One day, at a small country-town regatta,

in the course of a conversation among several rowing men, one of them was bragging very much of his exploits, and boasting that there was no one who could beat him. "I'll have a try," said the youngster I have mentioned; and it was then and there arranged that the match should come off at the end of the day's proceedings, as a wind-up. Mr. Braggadocio treated his youthful adversary with contempt, and reckoned on winning as a certainty. To make a long matter short, *the youngster won*, but he strained his back so severely in the last half-dozen strokes that, from that day to this, he is almost useless, and can undergo no exercise whatever. I recollect well when he was lifted out of the boat—he was quite senseless—that the blue veins in his forehead stood out like great black bars, and the muscles in his arms were swollen like pieces of rope. Poor lad! I saw him the other day, and he is a miserable wreck of his former self. I have mentioned this in passing as a warning to those who rush into strong physical effort without proper preparation. On the other hand, you may train too much; and I need only quote, in support of this, the fact that men who have rowed in the University match have, with a few rare exceptions, been anything but long-lived. These remarks apply exclusively to young men and boys; when

the frame has fully expanded and got “*set*,” greater liberties may be taken with it than when it is undergoing the process, and what would strain a lad of nineteen would not do him the slightest harm in seven or eight years’ time. Discretion is nowhere so much required as in the preparation of a racehorse; any violent dealing with him might, in short would, destroy all chance of his winning, and it is owing to this that such care and pains are taken. Everything is done slowly and gradually; his “walks” at first are gentle and limited in number; his “sweatings” few and regular, and the boy who rides him is expressly cautioned against distressing him. So is it with the human being. When he goes into training, be it for foot-racing or rowing, he should be specially careful not to hurry or expedite in the least degree the process by which he hopes to lose a certain amount of weight and gain a certain length of wind. Violent impulses of any kind or description are at all times bad, and never more so than in matters where that very awkward piece of mechanism, the human body, has to be dealt with and considered. I am afraid boys do not half take care of themselves in such matters, and I hope they will forgive me offering a word of friendly advice.

Every house at Harrow has its own distinguish-

ing cap and shirt in the football field, and each boy is bound to wear his house colour, unless he be in the school eleven, when he is of course able to wear the eleven colours if he chooses. White duck trousers and thick boots complete the costume, and then you are armed at all points and ready for the fray. I myself always played in a nondescript kind of knickerbockers, and found them far more comfortable than the lengthier inexpressibles, which, if it be at all muddy, get the most filthy sight imaginable, and flap about your ankles in a way anything but conducive either to a long or a straight kick. Black gaiters got rather the vogue at one time; but they so soon wore out with kicks, that it was thought better to go back again to "*shins.*" And precious nasty marks are left behind in the aforesaid shins by the thick boots and the heavy feet—great blue and red scrapes, that make you jump if anybody touches you, and render putting on your unmentionables an anything but pleasing operation. After a long experience I have arrived at the conclusion that there is nothing like "*Arnica.*" Heaven bless the worthy homœopathic individual who discovered that speedy restorer of comfort in the region of bruises. Rub it in well, never mind how much it smarts, and when you get up in the morning every disagreeable appearance will have vanished, and the game leg will be ready

for another game. I have seen some nasty accidents at football, kicks in other places than the shins ; one boy, I remember well, got down somehow or other in a scrimmage, and received a violent one in his stomach, which laid him up for several weeks, and ended in his having to undergo a very painful operation. It certainly must have been a terrific one, for he turned black in the face, and it took nearly an hour to restore him to sensibility. In the matches between the different houses, the fellows are rather inclined to play fierce, for there is a great deal of rivalry, and each large house thinks itself better than another. So they fight as if their very lives depended on the result, and care not whom they hurt, or how injured they themselves may be. One year there was a tremendous struggle ; the Doctor's had been Cock house at football for three preceding football seasons, and none had been able to deprive them of the distinction. But in the fourth year one of the other houses was very strong, and the final contest was to take place with them. A good deal of excitement was felt throughout the whole school as to the result, and consequently a very large audience gathered on the day appointed, down in the footer field. The betting was strongly in favour of the Doctor's ; but some of the knowing ones shook their heads wisely and said nothing, but took the odds. It

was a bright fresh December afternoon, inclined to be frosty—indeed, so much so that the ground was a trifle hard. I should state here that when there is a hard frost there is no football at Harrow. At a quarter-past two the fight began, the captain of the Doctor's eleven kicking off. It was at once apparent that both meant winning if they could; Merton's—that's what I'll call the other house—were particularly strong in running, and their game seemed to be to pump their opponents out. They fought on and on; first the ball was one way, and the next moment a fortunate kick sent it bounding away quite in the opposite direction. A quarter-past three, and yet no base on either side, and both hammering away as if for life. The captain of the Doctor's eleven began to think it high time for a strong effort to be made, and, opportunely enough, he managed to get away with the ball out of a scrimmage, and made off with it as fast as he could. He was one of the most celebrated "*dribblers*" in the school, and having a good start, he got along with it as far as Merton's base. Then ensued a glorious display of skill between him and the base-keeper, during which the opposing hosts came up and joined in, and a tremendous fight took place three yards in front of the two poles. Long was the combat continued, till the excitement of the spectators was at fever heat, as

neither party budged an inch; they only kept swinging backwards and forwards, first one way and then the other, and their feet and legs could be seen hard at it. Presently someone went down, but that made no difference; it only made those who remained on their pins go to work more vigorously than before. Now I should have said before this, that in Merton's eleven there was a very tiny boy, who was popularly known as "Tugs." Though small, he was a most accomplished cricketer and football player, and fully entitled to the distinction of being one of the representatives of the fifty boys who were in his house. In the midst of all the confusion and struggling, those looking on saw Tugs creep slowly out from the *mêlée* unobserved by the combatants, so fully occupied were they kicking one another's shins. He had got the ball in his arms, and no sooner was he on his legs than he was off with it. "Three yards!" shouted he, and before his comrades had got over their surprise he was half-way across towards the Doctor's base. And gain it he did amidst loud and general applause; and Merton's thus won the championship, and became entitled to have their name carved on the board that had been monopolized by the Doctor's house for the three preceding years.

The captain of the Doctor's eleven had good

reason to remember that match, for it was he who got down in the scrimmage, and, worst of all, had his leg broken for him. They carried him up on a hurdle, and as he passed Tugs, who was being patted on the back by every one, he cried out, "Well done, Tugs; you deserved to win, young 'un; I only wish the beastly old leg of mine hadn't given way, I'd have had a go in at you." Whether or not his breaking down had anything to do with the Doctor's losing the match I do not know; all I can say is, that the next year they redeemed their defeat, and resumed the proud position which for the nonce they had been deprived of.

Football commences directly after two o'clock bill, and continues till a quarter to four, when the bell rings for four bill. And a pretty scamper it is to get up in time and have your things changed, and all in proper time. That Harrow hill leading down to footer ground is no easy task to mount: when the weather is at all wet, you somehow or other seem to slide back as far as you have thought to have advanced. And then when there is added to this the very natural want of wind consequent on pounding about for nearly two hours as hard as you can go after the ball, it may easily be imagined that the task is by no means a light one. Welcome indeed is the glass of beer, and

the hot water in your footpan, if you have time to use it; and if not, postpone it till after bill, and you will enjoy it just as much. Does not it soothe those aching shins and tender feet, and don't you feel as if you would like to keep them both in it for the rest of the afternoon? But perhaps you also have an inclination for some soup; so, after duly attiring yourself, you perambulate off to Fuller's, and ask for a "plate of Mullagatawney, Miss Fuller," which is forthwith handed to you smoking hot, and probably in the crush, that always goes on in the celebrated establishment above-named directly after bill, you have the kindness to empty several spoonfuls down your shirt front. But what matters, so long as you manage to convey some of it in the right direction? and don't you feel ever so much better when you have managed to accomplish this feat?

They begin playing football at Harrow in October, and then it goes on till the holidays, and after the Christmas vacation it is continued for a short time, and then the races begin. A great many people complain that football is made compulsory; but, far from coinciding in their views, I believe it to be one of the very best things that could possibly happen. It makes those fellows take exercise who otherwise would not, and prevents them hanging and loitering

about the shops in the town, doing nothing, and generally getting into mischief. Further than that, it hardens and strengthens the constitution, and promotes health and good appetite. Of course there are some boys, from constitutional reasons, for whom the exertion and knocking about is ill-suited. All they have to do is to go and see the school doctor, and get a certificate from him that they are excused. This is sent in to the head of the school, and he lets them off for the quarter. Each of the monitors is entitled to let off a certain number of boys each "footer" day; but you have to be in good time with your application, or you will stand no chance. Some fellows do shirk going down most terribly: why or wherefore I never could exactly understand, but if they can sneak out of it by hook or by crook they will. One of the greatest inducements of belonging to the "*chapel choir*" was that it excused you from almost every kind of fagging, except house fagging. For my part I was very fond of "footer," and never missed going down except when times prevented me, and was not I just proud when the head of my house came to me one night and told me I might order my "*I'ez!*" by which token I knew I was to play for the house in the match the next day? I promise you I exerted myself, and endeavoured to show myself worthy

the distinction, and I think I may fairly say I was successful, for on the following Saturday I found my name up on the school gates set down as the best of the eighteen of the school selected, to play against an eighteen of Oxford and Cambridge. And a glorious match we had, and a very fierce one too; for, though our opponents were much heavier than we, "don't give an inch" was the order of the day; and budge we didn't, much to the astonishment of some of our adversaries. As for myself, I know I had a pretty black eye and a cut over the eyebrow, the scar of which remains to this day; but it served me quite right—what business had I to go grazing when all the rest kept on their legs? It's no very pleasant sensation when you feel yourself being trampled on by a lot of heavy hob-nailed boots, and if you try to protect your face with your own hands, you are sure to get some glorious rattles over the knuckles. Then some one, pitying your plight or wanting your assistance, seizes hold of you by the first portion of your anatomy that presents itself, or not unfrequently lugs you on to your feet by the hair of your head. But after all, what are these discomforts to the glorious game, which it is gratifying to find gradually becoming very popular?

My dear, anxious, tender-hearted mammas, if

there be any of you who read these pages, do not distress yourselves, or think that because your dear boy is condemned to compulsory football, any harm will happen to him. If you do, you make a great mistake. He will come back to you at the "*exeat*" time, if he have one, looking so fresh and rosy and blooming, that from that moment you will become a convert to the system that makes him take fresh air and exercise, whether he will or no. Never mind his complaints and grumblings; they will soon die out, and by-and-by he will be as sorry that he gave utterance to them, as you were to listen to them. Judge him by his looks, and if his constitution be all right, I warrant you his complexion will be as clear as his wind is. I dare say I shall be thought an egotistical enthusiast, preaching and prating in this way; but I have passed through it all, and many of my most intimate friends have done the same, and they would, every one of them, bear me out in all I say. So much for football; and now for a few words about one or two matters that it may not be out of place to consider while on the question of muscular exercise.

At one time, during my time at Harrow, smoking became very common, and, although most strictly prohibited, was carried on even in the houses themselves. It may easily be ima-

gined that the culprits, in most instances, were found to be among the boys in the lower school; those in the upper form knew better than to be guilty of so serious an offence. For it was looked upon as one of the greatest breaches of good order and discipline, and was visited with the heaviest punishment; and, in order to check it going further, it was announced that the next case that came to the Doctor's ears, the offender would be sent away. And I merely casually mention this in order to say a few words about smoking at school. No one more than myself enjoys a cigar or pipe now, but my hair is getting thin about the top, and age privileges me. Though I began smoking much earlier than need be, I can sincerely say that during the whole time I was at Harrow I never indulged in it once. It always struck me that it was running a great risk to very little purpose, and sitting down in a damp ditch, under a dripping hedge, to get half-a-dozen pulls at a dirty pipe filled with strong tobacco, and then having to swallow "*caoutchous*" by the dozen, and deluge yourself in "*eau de Cologne*" afterwards, are accompaniments to the fragrant weed I never could appreciate. And, depend upon it, you are sure to be found out; all the scent in the world will somehow or other never get rid of that insinuating odour, that hangs about the waistcoat-buttons,

and twists itself up into the roots of the hair. When you go in to dinner your tutor comes round and asks some question of the boy next you, and then you hear him suddenly break out with "Dear me, what a smell of stale tobacco!" and before you know where you are, the discovery is made. No, boys, take an old soldier's advice, have nothing to do with smoking at school, eschew it as a dangerous enemy—so it is with young brains—and wait till you are old enough to stand it. Nothing is so pernicious as for young lads to be given to pipes or cigars. It spoils their eye at cricket, makes their hands shake at racquets, and destroys all their nerve for a good rush in or a scrimmage at "footer." And when, added to all this, there is a chance of a good flogging, if not something worse, and the unhappiness of father and mother at home, when they hear of it; surely it is better to refrain. Then, again, in the matter of drinking: a great deal of that goes on, or used to, *sub rosâ*; but I am happy to remember that it was only among a select few, who certainly were pretty specimens. Somehow or other there was no mistaking them. They always seemed to have a muddled, half-sleepy look, and in form were never half-awake; and as to answering a question, never dreamt of such a thing. Their place of resort was a back-room in

a low pot-house sort of place, where alcohol of the most fiery and turpentine description was served under the name of brandy. My young gentlemen didn't care for anything less potent; nothing short of this could excite their *blasés* brains into feeling. Wine and beer were drink for men and women; but these poor, dissipated babies must have spirit, genuine raw spirit. Genuine! yes with a vengeance — such doctored filth as a Seven Dials' publican would have blushed to serve; poisonous to a degree that betrayed itself in the sunken cheek, pale as death, and the dull, glassy eyes! They would sit through the long summer afternoons, when their schoolfellows were at full swing in the cricket-field, and spend the whole time swallowing the noxious nastiness. Fine fellows they thought themselves — fine, wise fellows, smacking their thin lips after each mouthful, and talking of things and people that had better not have been named. So loud and swaggering and boasting too, how “they had dined at the ——— Arms, and got awfully screwed,” or “come home from the boat-race deuced squiffy.” Thus did they spend their leisure. But one day one of the masters got wind of their doings, and determined to catch them “*flagrante delicto.*” He found the house, knocked at the door, and demanded immediate admission. No one answered; but there was a

great scuffling of feet, and all was silent. After knocking repeatedly for some time, and receiving no answer, he obtained assistance, and an entrance was effected through the window; but the birds had flown. They had made their escape by the back-door, and over a wall; but one of them, unfortunately for himself and his comrades, kept a diary, in which he entered a daily record of his proceedings, where he had been, and whom he had met. The result was the discovery of all the offenders, and the very serious punishment of them all. Two—if I recollect aright—were sent away, and the remainder flogged most severely. For them I am sure not one of my readers, old or young, can have the slightest sympathy. To the latter I would say, with the most earnest sincerity, never be induced to join in the society of boys given to drinking. Those I have spoken of at Harrow were black sheep, in every sense of the term. All sports and contests in which the honour of the school was concerned, to them was a matter of utter indifference, and an “*excuse*,” to them, was only worth looking forward to, as a time at which they might gratify their animal passions unchecked and openly. I do not want to sermonize, but to a boy who thinks of going to a public school, let me say this—be prepared for temptations to go wrong without end. They

will meet you at every step, compass you at every turn ; but it is then that you can show what sort of stuff you are made of, whether your moral principle can be relied upon. It is in this respect that the system you are under is so admirable : it makes you depend on yourself ; to ask yourself, not any one else, what to do ; and when you have made up your mind to one course, to carry it out, despite annoyance and opposition. Above all things, be as pure in mind as any lad can be in these days, when questionable conversation is so very much the vogue. Wherever you may be, set *your* face and ears against lewd and obscene jokes and jests, and shun, like the touch of a leper, any approach to acts of immorality. You will see things going on about you that will shame you, but remember—

Who does the best his circumstance allows
Does well, acts nobly : angels could no more.

CHAPTER VI.

CRICKET QUARTER.

Now I come to Cricket Quarter, and the noble game in which the Harrow boy usually attains such excellence,—a fact no doubt due to the absence of any water or river near at hand to act as a counter attraction. During the summer months the only recreation for him is to be found with the bat and ball, for the use of which ample space is afforded him in two large fields belonging to the school, where on half-holidays almost any number of games may be seen progressing in their various stages. Like as football has been incorporated with the fagging system, so is cricket, and every boy for a certain time has to undergo his share of apprenticeship, which consists in fielding out for a couple of hours in the evening, while the Eleven and Sixth Form practice is going on, and taking particular care to stop all hits that come in his direction. Should he happen to be particularly active, and make a good catch or two, it not unfrequently happens that he is let off for the rest of the evening; on the other hand, should his

fingers be greasy, or his legs stiff in moving, he will probably be requested to make several further attendances on future occasions, while sometimes more forcible expressions of disapproval will greet his clumsiness. In course of time it is astonishing how lively he becomes! Of course, however, there are some, whom all the cricket-fagging in the world could never turn into cricketers in any sense of the term, and who look upon a bat and ball as instruments of torture sent purposely to make their lives unbearable. Such as these can be recognized in a moment: they stand, when fagging, with their jackets on and their hands—not in their trousers-pockets, as I was going to say, but forgot that the present Head Master had abolished these conveniences—well, with their hands anywhere but in the position to catch or stop a ball. If one comes to them they are almost sure to miss it, and then away they go blundering after it, all the while grumbling at having to fag at all, and not finding fault with their own stupidity. But he who really cares about cricket will soon have full opportunity of showing the stuff of which he is made; he will look sharp about him, and take full advantage of the opportunity afforded to improve himself in that most essential of all qualities in a cricketer, fielding. Nothing is more difficult to learn to do properly, that is to say, with dash

and neatness. What can look worse than to see a fellow fiddling about with the ball three or four seconds, instead of picking it up clean and sending it sharp in to the wicket-keeper, almost in one movement of the arm? Naturally enough, this celerity of action can only be gained by dint of hard and continued practice, the left arm and hand, which are, of course, the most difficult to deal with, should receive their due share of attention, and running in at the ball should not be forgotten. It is in such matters as these, that the cricket-fagging system at Harrow is so advantageous; a boy may, if he apply himself to the task, make himself next to perfect in fielding, for proof of which I refer my readers to the performance of Daniel at long leg, K. E. Digby at the wicket, Buller at long-stop, and dozens of notable instances, which admirers of cricket must all remember and value accordingly. Take the first-named of these: despite the drawback of a leg which, having been once broken, was anything but strong, the amount of ground he would cover was something astonishing, and over and over again the enthusiasm of the spectators, when he has been playing in some great match at Lord's or the Oval, would be excited by the accuracy with which his long throws would go up to the wicket-keeper. And how did he learn this? Why, at Harrow, where he had had to

pass through precisely the same routine as every other boy. It would be quite unnecessary for me to enlarge further on the advantages to be derived so unmistakably from the cricket-fagging system. If it were in force at Eton, I am inclined to think that they would be able to bring up to Lord's a far stronger team in every department of the game than they have of late years. In point of hardship, it is infinitely less unpleasant than football, where a certain amount of rough treatment and ill-usage must be endured. The Etonians, however, scarcely seem to value cricket at its proper worth; occasionally a spurt is made, and a better eleven turned out in consequence; but then one victory seems to satisfy them, and instead of endeavouring to repeat it, they relapse into their former indifference, and appear to fancy that a triumph will come again as a matter of course, forgetting that their opponents are all the while working hard to retrieve their defeat.

But now of cricket quarter itself, which we will suppose is fairly advanced, and the time is fast approaching for the final choice for the Eleven to be made. A very hard position is that of the Harrow captain, let me tell you, and to occupy which any boy may well aspire. During the cricket quarter he possesses the power of an autocrat—his word is law, his mandate none dare

impugn. With him rest the arrangements of all the Eleven matches during the term; the selection of those to play in the Sixth Form game; and last, and this the most important duty, the choice of those who are to represent and uphold the honours of the school against Eton. Further than this, he has the unpleasant task of "*whopping*" those who have been sent up to him for shirking cricket-fagging. In fact, he has the thorough and entire supervision of everything in the cricket department just in the same way as the head of the school has in the matter of football. There, therefore, rests with him considerable responsibility, and his time is fully occupied with the cares and necessities of his office. It used to be a curious sight to see some eight or nine boys waiting outside his door after breakfast, trembling and shaking at the prospect of having their jackets "*warmed*." Some captains were particularly severe in this respect, and used seldom, if ever, to let the culprit off; others were inclined to give one more chance, an opportunity of which advantage was eagerly taken. For a long cane, wielded by an arm that has done good service in bowling, does not lose any of its stinging properties, and excites considerable reflection as to whether it would not perhaps be as well to obey the slave-driver next time.

A great deal has been said about the peculiar qualities of the Harrow cricket-ground, and its assimilation to Lord's, and no doubt there is much truth in the criticisms that have been passed upon it. It is essentially a difficult ground, the reason of which is obvious when I explain that it is on the side of a hill. Added to this, it lies very low as regards the town, being in fact just at the bottom of the ascent on which it is situated. Admitting all this, it seems to me a ridiculous argument to urge that, because the Harrow boys are accustomed to practise under difficulties, they gain by this means an undue advantage over their annual opponents. If the playing-fields at Eton have everything that can be desired in the way of a cricket-ground, so much the more reason that those using them should be able to become good bats, bowlers, and fields, and perfect themselves in the game by means of the superior advantages they possess. At the same time a good deal of nonsense has been written with reference to the Harrow ground, making it out to be nothing much better than a hayfield, which is simply foolish. If the real cause of Harrow success in cricket were looked for, it would be found in the energy and perseverance in the game by those who have represented its interests from time to time, and their individual endeavours to make themselves

masters of it in every branch. If I remember aright, Fitz——, in his most amusing “*Jerks in from Short Leg,*” says that at Eton the fashion is for the hopes of the whole school to be centered in one hero, who is expected to get all the runs, and, I may add, catch and bowl everybody out into the bargain; while at Harrow each boy in his own behalf is chosen for his own deserts, and is looked to to perform his part with the bat and in the field. I am not writing on the subject with a particle of prejudice—I am saying what I honestly believe to be the real cause of the falling off in Eton cricket. Goodness me! the royal school has turned out some magnificent players in its time—may it not justly be proud of its Lytteltons, its Normans, its Lubbocks, and Trittons, and last but not least its great Mitchell? Harrow cannot point to mightier names than these! But on the last occasion can the most enthusiastic Etonian, the most devoted admirer of his school, say that the Eleven sent up to defend its colours was not the feeblest that had ever put in an appearance? and yet it was only a shade worse than the one that had figured a year before. I am not going to blink the shortcomings of my own school, and will candidly say that the Harrow Eleven was not what it ought to have been. Really the public school match of 1866 as a display of cricket was infi-

nately below the average, and I have no hesitation whatever in saying that either Rugby, Marlborough, or Shrewsbury would have been able to meet and defeat the victor. But enough on this head, though, ere leaving it, I would sincerely hope that this year Eton may come into the field with better-drilled and more experienced defenders than she has done lately.

It can be easily understood that, in order to afford all those who desire to play cricket the opportunity for doing so, some arrangement is necessary. This is done by dividing the school into a certain number of games. First of all comes the Sixth Form game, which is not, as its title would suggest, exclusively confined to the members of the Sixth Form. It is, in reality, the one in which the members of the Eleven, and those who are supposed to be the best cricketers in the schools, play. The selection of sides for it rests with the captain of the Eleven, who, every half-holiday, when no match is going on, puts up on the school gates a list—sometimes it is North *v.* South, sometimes the first Six *v.* the next Eleven, and so on. Next to this comes the Fifth Form game, which is managed by one of the boys in much the same manner. Then there is the Shell game; while in another field there is another called the Philathletic, which takes its

name from a club among the boys, of which more by-and-by. Thus it can easily be seen that for those who want to play there is ample opportunity, while, in addition, there is always plenty of space for some promiscuous games among those whose capabilities in the cricketing line are limited. Two fags are always told off for the post of scorer, both for the Sixth and Fifth Form games, an occupation by no means gratifying to individuals of an active temperament. The players in the Sixth Form game are excused from going up to Four Bill, a great advantage, which spares them being interrupted and having to rush all the way up the hill, which is a by no means inviting ascent on a hot day. All the rest have to put in an appearance, which, in point of strictness of costume, is regulated according to the severity of the master whose turn it is to call Bill. With some, cricket-shoes were allowed, but with others the most particular neatness was necessary—one I remember going the length of giving a boy fifty lines for appearing without his waistcoat. But this severity was exceptional; the masters, as a body, were very lenient in all matters relating to the sports and pastimes of the school, and would always listen to any excuse or explanation that was in the least degree plausible. The truth is, they estimate at its right value the importance of encouraging plenty of

out-door exercise for the encouragement of the "*mens sana.*"

There are always several matches played by the Eleven during cricket quarter. The Zingari annually come down, the Harlequins, the Quidnuncs, and other well-known "vagrants" generally show up and give the school an opportunity of trying its strength. On these occasions the other games are abandoned, and the boys gather themselves round the field, or on the steps of the Pavilion, and watch the contest with lively interest, the proportion of which naturally enough is in anticipation of the victory of their own side.

The choice of the Eleven in its entirety is seldom, if ever, made till within a few days of the match at Lord's, so that in the earlier contests of the quarter many of the players are on trial, which of course puts them on their metal, and makes them exert themselves in the most terrific manner. And should one of these happen to miss a catch, his despair is heart-rending to behold. There is always a general conflict of opinion in the school as to who is and who is not entitled to the distinction of being in the Eleven, so that on match-days criticisms are very freely expressed, and Brown may only have to be bowled out for 0, for some one immediately to denounce him as an impostor and a duffer, not fit to hold a candle to Thompson, jun., who ought

to have been, but is not, playing in his place. If the captain were to walk round and hear the different comparisons made, he would, by the time he had traversed the circle of judges, be completely bewildered. But, fortunately for him, he has far sounder advisers, far more acute critics to guide him in the persons of Grimston and Ponsonby, to whose opinion he may well defer. How can I sufficiently express the obligation under which Harrow, past and present, remains to them? How many summer evenings during the last—I do not know how many—years might they be found down at practice, coaching here, giving a hint there, showing which leg to put forward, and which to draw back; in fact, performing the whole duty of nurses to the youthful cricketers? How carefully would they watch the different games, looking out to find any talent that might be hiding itself under a bushel, and wanting transplanting into the Sixth Form for cultivation and encouragement? In short, how have they identified themselves with Harrow cricket in every way, and made themselves popular with each generation of players?—I do not believe there could be found one who would refuse to join me in Rip Van Winkle's words, "May they live long and prosper!"

The match is over, and a crowd is gathered round the captain of the Eleven, who is evidently

about to perform some important duty, for he is talking with much animation to one of the Zingari, who is standing beside him, who is well known for his great cricketing qualities and still greater judgment in the game. What can it be?—for every one seems in a strange state of excitement. Presently the conversation ceases, and the captain calls for Roller, maj., who pushes his way to the front, and in a second or two more it is proclaimed that Roller, maj., has got his cap and is in the Eleven. How proud and elated he is with his distinction, as he walks away, escorted by his own particular friends and admirers, who congratulate him with thumps on the back and squeezings of the hand, very gratifying in point of warmth, but somewhat painful. Then Miss Fuller's energies will most likely be called into requisition, in order duly to celebrate the auspicious event, which is not only considered a great honour to the boy himself, but also to his house, whose proceedings for the remainder of the evening will be as riotous and disorderly as the importance of the occasion demands. Heigho! these things happen but once in a man's lifetime, and in a few short years that smiling lad, with his white and blue striped cap, the insignia of his newly-acquired dignity, will have exchanged it for the soldier's shako, or the barrister's wig, and be thinking of far more serious matter than

“shooters” and “leg bailers;” yet for the nonce his feeling of pride and satisfaction is very natural and very commendable too, and he may be assured that he will always look back with pleasure and self-complacency to the days when a blue and white cap could excite in his breast such strong emotion. He is not far wrong in thinking that those at home will be glad to hear of the honour he has achieved, and the governor will fully assure him of this when he sees him at Lord’s, by the smile on his face and the gratified twinkle in his eye. Indeed, it is a great thing to have been in the Harrow Eleven, as those who have will bear testimony.

I have forgotten to mention the matches that take place between the different houses, which are, as it may be easily understood, highly exciting, and create considerable interest. They are necessarily accompanied by a great deal of chaff, and the play is criticised in tones audible to all parties.

It is generally rather late in the quarter before the final tie is reached, and as by that time most of those engaged have had plenty of practice, the contest is often a very even one, and the struggle for supremacy provokingly close. The reward for the winners is simple enough, the name of their house with the year of its victory is cut on the cricket championship board in the

Philathletic Club-room, where all the memorials of success in cricket, football, and like matters are preserved. Trifling though it may seem, this is a distinction for which many a hard bruise and awkward rap is suffered with equanimity !

CHAPTER VII.

MISCELLANEOUS AMUSEMENTS.

BESIDES cricket, football, and racquets, there are of course other promiscuous amusements and games, more or less generally indulged in, which are the fashion at seasons duly suitable for their enjoyment. Hare and hounds, which is permitted at Rugby, and so graphically described in the immortal pages of "Tom Brown," is a dead letter at Harrow. When the present Head Master came into office first, he was persuaded to permit it on trial; but he was soon of the same mind on the subject as Doctor Vaughan had been. Complaints, verbal and epistolary, came pouring in from the farmers in every direction, describing in the most heartrending terms how their hedges were desolated, and their young wheats ruthlessly trampled down, and compensation was demanded in language that could not be mistaken. The result of all this was that the "hunting" season was brought to an unceremonious conclusion, not, however, before there had been one or two most remarkable performances of I do not know how many miles in an astoundingly short period of time, which, being

repeated from mouth to mouth, at length came to be believed. I remember, though, a really good run in which I assisted, in conjunction with some twenty others, most of whom had spent the previous evening in tearing up every piece of waste paper they could lay their hands on into little bits, for the accommodation of the "hares," who, in consideration of the labour they were to undergo on the morrow, were allowed to look on in dignified idleness. From that evening, by the way, I date the disappearance of a Pott's "Euclid," which I believe firmly was surreptitiously disposed of during my temporary absence from the room, and I have a faint recollection of a piece of paper fluttering on the end of a stinging-nettle, which I caught sight of as I ran past, with something very like the figure of an angle upon it. However to the more immediate business, which promised fair, with a southerly wind and a steady rain, in the early morning. After two o'clock bill, however, it had cleared up, and the "field" duly assembled in the church-yard, evidently prepared for a long and dirty run, which, by the way, had to be accomplished in two hours, our presence at four bill being indispensable. The two hares had started some ten minutes before, and were no doubt taking full advantage of their opportunity to make tracks. At length the quarter

of an hour's law was up, and the welcome order given to start, and away we went; the practised hands taking it very steadily, and keeping the wind in anticipation of the final burst. It was not very long before we were in the midst of the field, going pretty much together, though the depth of the furrows and the heaviness of the soil caused a good deal of stumbling; in fact, if I remember aright, one or two did come down, a feat which was repeated by a good many more over the high hedge that bounded the further end of the field. Our experienced whip informed us that we were making for either Hanwell or Uxbridge, he was not quite sure which, though an ordinary observer, impartially regarding our heated faces and muddy clothes, would have had very little difficulty in settling in his own mind which of the two *ought* to have been our destination. By this time we were traversing a fine field of mangolds, that, in the most considerate manner imaginable, washed the mud off our boots, leaving us somewhat damp after the operation. But this was nothing to what was to follow. Some three or four miles had been accomplished, at this distance of time I cannot speak exactly, when, the length of a field a-head, might be seen two horses, with a man on the leader, trudging along as if dragging something behind them. Good gracious, was it possible?

No ; they could not have been so foolhardy ! To make a long matter short, we very soon came to a check on the banks of the canal, which the two hares, to all appearances, had boldly crossed, for on the other side the trail of paper might be seen. This was a poser, and no bridge for a mile or more either way. There was no help for it ; either in and over or the chase must be abandoned. The gallant whip treated the latter notion with scorn, and, without another word, set a good example by going in bodily and striking out like a man. We all followed him but two, who remained only to be unmercifully chaffed for funking. We were however delayed by a *contretemps* that very nearly proved fatal. One of the hounds, when only half way across, shouted out something about the cramp, and sure enough by the time we had turned round his head had gone underneath, while a disreputably-looking straw hat, much the worse for wear, was all that remained to mark the spot of his disappearance. Again was our gallant whip to the fore, and in he went, this time with a dive, and presently returned with the aforesaid hound, whom he safely landed. Fortunately in two or three minutes he was all right again ; but it was considered unadvisable for him to continue in chase, so he was sent home in charge of the two who had refused the water, they walking on

one side of the canal, and he on the other.* Owing to this occurrence we had been delayed some ten minutes, and it was necessary now to make up for lost time. So away we went at a rattling pace, which, after a mile and a half, resulted in some five or six tailing off, which number was gradually increased as our operations extended. Looking back upon my performance on that day, it now presents an appearance of impossibility that almost makes me doubt whether I have not been dreaming. Nevertheless, I have not been courting the fancy for inspiration, but out of an old diary in which from time to time memoranda were jotted down, this is taken. Thus much of interval for taking breath, and then on, on, over three fields so wet and clayey that they must have been a terrible sorrow to their owner. We were going unpleasantly near a farm-house—how could our two hares have been so imprudent?—for it was just as likely as not that we should meet with a warm reception. The anticipation was fully realized; the farmer and a couple of his men suddenly jumped up from behind a hedge, armed with pitchforks, and forthwith called upon us to

* I ought to mention that the costume worn on these occasions is of the slightest description, and even when thoroughly wet would not carry much water.

surrender; but as the language used was anything but classical or parliamentary, and the parties not particularly prepossessing in appearance, we kept on, being ourselves pursued in turn by the three rustics, whose lasting properties, we calculated, were not of an extensive character. In addition to which they kept calling out all sorts of threats, an exhaustive process that must eventually tell upon them. The farmer himself made one more terrific effort, leaving his subordinates in difficulties at a ditch and a hedge, over which he somehow or other managed to stumble. Then came another, when he had so far improved his position that he was within a couple of feet of me. Over I went; but his strength was well nigh spent; giving an awful thrust at me with his pitchfork, as he too came over, he missed me; but, alas! a terrible retribution fell upon him for his cowardly attempt to do me an injury; he fell with great force right on to the end of one of the prongs. What injury he sustained I never learned till some time afterwards, when I was informed that he had had a very ugly wound in the neck; but, upon my life, I cannot help saying that I think it served him right. No doubt it was very annoying to see a lot of boys scrambling through his hedges, and trampling down his turnips, but he would have done far better to leave a

dangerous weapon like a pitchfork at home in the cow-yard. By the time all this happened the field was reduced to eight, and we were just skirting the outside of Uxbridge. What would I not have given to stop for a glass of beer, a feeling in which most if not all my companions joined. But it was no use ; for, as it was, we had scarcely time to enable us to be back for bill, and the punishment for absence was very severe, and to one or two in the company, who had previously been up to the doctor for the same offence, promised a very painful alternative. Our hares had been too good for us ; they had given us too much sport, and there did not seem any likelihood of our catching them. By this time their noses were evidently set in the direction of home, and, to our great astonishment and amusement, we found that, after describing a circle, we came back to precisely the same line of country we had followed coming, though this was not till after we had crossed the canal once again, though this time by a bridge. Nearly two miles more to go to save our bacon, for we could hear the school-bell ringing the summons to bill, so that there were only some ten minutes. Wild were the efforts to increase the pace, and at length, like a band of Garibaldians before they had received their uniforms, we rushed through the streets of Harrow, some three minutes after the

two hares, who thus escaped us after having given us such terrific hard work. The master who was calling bill somewhat objected to our appearance, but let us off with fifty lines a-piecc, at which we considered ourselves very lucky. The oddest part of the whole thing was that the two who had refused the water, and their companion, and those who had tailed off, never turned up at all to bill, and received a punishment in proportion accordingly, which I fancy was somewhat aggravated by it having got abroad that they were out indulging in the forbidden sport of hare-and-hounds.

In default of other inducements to exercise, many of the boys used to take what were called "runs," which in reality meant walks to some place within reasonable distance. Southall, Hanwell, and Ealing, in one direction, and Elstree, Watford, and Stanmore, in the other, were among the most popular. It never was quite clear to me whether any of these were strictly speaking out of bounds, though I believe the railway-bridge was supposed to be the line of demarcation one way, and the canal the other. At any rate, no one appeared to entertain any very serious fear of the consequences in the event of discovery. Much harm could not be done in the limited space of the two hours between bill, during which twelve miles more or less had to

be accomplished. Once, on the occasion of the University race, a party of us ran over to Kew, where we had a sumptuous breakfast at the "Star and Garter," and then took a boat and pulled up to witness the great event. On this occasion, however, fortunately for us, our tutor was of the company, and gave us leave from bill. I ought here to mention that when names are called over, a tick is put to those who are absent, and a list made out by the monitor of the week, which is handed to the school monitor—a boy chosen weekly from the lower shell and fourth forms—and it is his duty to go round to the various tutors, to find out from them whether the boys in their house have been absentees with or without leave. If the master has given permission, he signs his name by the side of that of his pupil on the list, and nothing more is heard or said; if otherwise, the result is usually an interview with the Head Master, and punishment, more or less severe, follows as a matter of course. There is always a good deal of amusement in the forms when the school monitor comes round and informs the master that So-and-so is to go to the Head Master at six o'clock. All sorts of playful suggestions are made as to the fate awaiting him, and the most hypocritical sympathy is offered, the only effect of which is to increase the number of shivers that by-and-by will shoot

down his backbone when the awful moment arrives.

There is, however, a very important item in the sports and games of Harrow that remains to be mentioned, namely the races, which take place when football is over and before cricket commences, and which excite a good deal of interest, not only in but outside the school. Wonderful is the training gone into by ambitious youths, who long for the triumphant pewter, and go through all sorts of extremities to gain length of wind and speediness of action. Fuller's is for a time eschewed, ices are abandoned, and cranberry pie refused with determination; all these juvenile indiscretions are avoided, and the mind is entirely occupied in removing so much unnecessary weight from the corpulent body. A certain fellow, who shall be nameless, being first favourite for the champion hurdle-race, must needs go into violent practice, the result of which was that one fine afternoon he was brought up on a hurdle with his leg broken, to say nothing of a nasty dislocation of the shoulder; so he was obliged to be "scratched," much to the mortification of certain sporting youths, who had, unlike their more cautious brethren of the turf, backed the favourite against the field. The races at Harrow used to last for some considerable time, as there were

a large number of events that had to be decided, for which the extensive array of entries rendered it necessary that there should be several heats. There were the champion hurdle and flat races, champion jumping, the two hundred yards champion, and so on, *ad libitum*. Then there were different races for different forms, both over hurdle and the flat, long jumping, pole jumping, and such like. All these took place in the football field, where a course was duly selected and arranged; the monitors and members of the Philathletic keeping the course clear. Sometimes a more than usual amount of excitement was aroused, especially when the champion flat and hurdle races were coming off, on the result of which there was a tremendous outlay of Saturday pocket money, to say nothing of certain old boys who came down, and in the most flagrantly open manner laid astonishingly long odds that they knew they were perfectly certain to lose.

I often laugh as I think of the select few who used to belong to the sporting set; they certainly were the most amusing collection of babies. Then I could scarcely appreciate them for what they were worth; the utter nonsense they used to talk; the extraordinary theories by which an apt pupil would be certain to win. If the child is father to the man, as we are taught to believe, they will afford pretty subjects for plunder

to the enlightened and unscrupulous members of the ring, who are especially fond of plucking young chickens of their feathers, of which we are just now getting a notable instance in the person of a certain youthful scion of the aristocracy, whose proclivities at Eton have only enlarged since his departure thence, and apprenticeship at the University.

There was one boy at Harrow dreadfully given to speculation of this kind, though he did not confine himself to school races and contests, but wandered into the more extensive sphere of betting on the principal horse-races at Newmarket, Doncaster, and Epsom. About the period of the Derby he was notably ill at ease; his lessons were neglected, and he was perpetually to be seen hanging about some corner of the school-yard, contemplating a small pocket-book, in which were entered his various investments of capital. He was a great man in his way; he knew George Fordham, or Ned Challoner, or some other jockey celebrity, who had told him that Pumpnickel was sure to win this, or Scavenger was a certainty for that. In fact, his acquaintance with the sporting fraternity was taken to be conclusive proof of his title to a very considerable amount of respect from his less enlightened schoolfellows. But, alas, for the noble youth! somehow or other his calculations got

into a mess, and his arithmetic failed him ; after a certain great race he was woefully on the wrong side, so much so that, in order to supply the deficiency, he helped himself to some money that did not belong to him, and satisfactorily ruined himself for the remainder of his life. Terrible was the retribution, and so it must remain to his dying day. I can, and presuming on old acquaintance dare, here offer a piece of advice. My dear boys, take my word for it, you had far better refrain from anything to do with backing or laying the odds against horses, boys, or anything else. It only excites an unwholesome, unnatural feeling, that will unsettle you during your school days, both in work and play time, and when you grow up lead you into all kinds of extravagances that do not even redeem themselves by giving any return in the way of pleasure for the money that has been wasted. Once acquire a love for that kind of thing, and vain would be your effort to root it out ; far wiser to commence with the resolve of having nothing to do with it in any shape or form. I am sure these remarks will be accepted in the spirit they are offered ; and I think I may claim a hearing, on the ground of previous good character, in what I have said as to liberty in word and action.

On all days when the races are to take place, a card is published on which are printed the various

events that are to come off; and if the day happens to be fine, there is usually a large attendance, with a fair smattering of ladies' dresses to enliven the monotony of shell jackets and tail coats, not forgetting their objectionable companion, the tall black hat, with which is completed the costume of the Harrow boy in the year of grace, 1866. Nothing more monstrous can be conceived, and I commend the subject to the attendance of those who purpose regulations for the public schools. There are some old customs so obviously absurd and out of place, that abolition in their entirety is necessary, and this is the case with Harrow costume, which the sooner it is altered, the better. On such half-holidays as are chosen for settling the various races, the sport commences immediately after two bill, and is continued till four bill. The prizes are of various kinds, though the usual article chosen as a token of victory is a pewter, on which the fortunate gainer has his name and the race he has won, and so on, engraved. Besides this, there are several challenge cups which the winner holds until he is defeated, at the same time having the distinguished honour of his name being engraved on a board, kept for the purpose, in the Philathletic Club-room. In passing, just a word of this Club, which I have had occasion to mention several times previously. It is

composed of a certain number of the senior boys, and the election is by ballot ; the monitors, and the football and the cricket eleven, are *ex officio* members ; all the rest have to enter by vote. No one below the fifth form is eligible, which is no doubt intended to keep up the dignity of the establishment. The Philathletic, as it is shortly called, has a large room over Crossley and Clarke's, the school booksellers, where the football, cricket, and the other champion boards, so often mentioned, are kept as memorials of the glorious struggles of the past ; and a large number of ices in the summer, and cups of coffee in the winter, are disposed of during the transaction of the important matters of business that attach to membership. Much time is also spent there in writing letters, as is always the case where an unlimited supply of paper and envelopes may be found ; but at the same time, as an institution, it was of very great use, and especially in the arrangement and regulation of the races, which always passed off without any hitch or flaw, all disputes being immediately investigated and decided upon by a committee of the club.

Singularly enough, hockey is a game seldom if ever played at Harrow, in fact, in my time I do not recollect it at all ; indeed, I believe there was one old rule in existence, forbidding it altogether. There was little also in the way of fives ;

but since then some courts have been built, and the spirit of the game having been then engendered, the notion has been caught up and become popular. In close proximity to the school-yard is the milling ground, where differences of opinion are settled by that most satisfactory of school-boy means, the fists, though it will be freely admitted the ordeal through which they pass is a somewhat trying one. The encounter has to take place on a half-holiday, after two bill, according to the Monitorial Code. A very amusing occurrence once happened in connection with a fight which it was reported was to be solemnized with due ceremony at the appointed spot at the customary hour. Both of the combatants happened to be in the same house as myself, and I was therefore intimately acquainted with the entire circumstances of the case, which were shortly as follows. Undoubtedly there had been a serious quarrel between these two boys, which they were both satisfied could only be settled by muscular arrangement; but as neither of them cared about displaying themselves before the whole assembled school, they determined to call the shrubbery in their tutor's garden into requisition on the very morning of the day when it was generally expected they would give their public performance, and there all unpleasantnesses were set right to their mutual satisfaction. Be-

yond one of them having a nasty black eye, and the other a piece of sticking-plaster on his upper lip, no great damage had been done; but Mr. Mortimer knew perfectly well what they had been up to, and though not wishing to punish them severely, kept them out of school for the rest of the day, and made them stay in their rooms. Great was the excitement after bill, and immense was the assemblage gathered together for the purpose of witnessing the expected contest. As for myself, I stood by enjoying the joke. "Why don't they come?" asked one. "Oh, they're a couple of funklers," said another, who considered himself entitled to a high character for courage, on account of his general reputation as a bully, in his house. But five, ten, and then fifteen minutes passed, and no appearance of either combatant, both of whom, now the best of friends once more, were enjoying one another's society, and sucking the orange of renewed affection. The murder was out at last, and it really was worth the kick I got from the aforesaid bully for my reticence, to watch the disappointment of the multitude as they moved away, vowing vengeance against those who had failed to make a disgusting exhibition of themselves. I do not, by this, intend to convey the notion that I regard the rule of the school only permitting fighting to take place in public a bad

one; on the contrary, I believe it works for good, and induces the arrangement of many a paltry squabble. In addition to this, plenty of time is afforded for reflection, during which period the ill blood is mostly got rid of; and if the boy who is challenged fights, it is probably to vindicate his character, or assert his sturdy opposition to bullying, at the hands of some coward who has attempted to take advantage of him. There is no surer way of exposing the bully, than by making him show how he can put up with being well knocked about.

The foundation of the School Rifle Corps is a matter of later date, concerning which I am unable to say more than that, at a field-day a short time since, I saw the boys in their grey uniform faced with blue, doing their share of the day's proceedings with admirable celerity and precision. With reference to their capabilities in the way of shooting, the best proof may be found in the Wimbledon records, where they have carried off the Public Schools Prize two years running, and that with a very fair aggregate score indeed. Of course, there are a variety of other amusements for individuals, to which it would obviously be impossible for me to refer. Some are of the naturalist or botanist turn; others prefer chemistry and mechanics; all are free to indulge in their own particular

fancy, so long as it does not partake of the dangerous. Pistols and air-guns are, of course, most properly prohibited; and catapults, with which my young readers may be acquainted, are also included. Hairpins were the favourite missile employed for these last-named, and some ugly accidents were the result, a boy nearly losing the sight of his eye through one of them. After this, a general surrender was demanded, an order which, with some few exceptions, was immediately obeyed; and you were then able to walk about without the fear of being blinded at every step.

During the winter, if there is a hard frost, skating and sliding are freely indulged in on "Duck Puddle," and all kinds of novelties are invented. If there happens to be much snow, a good deal of snowballing goes on, which often resolves itself into a battle-royal between the roughs and the school. On one occasion the consequences were somewhat serious, as not only were some of the windows of the head master's house broken, but several of the boys had their heads cut open, the "*cads*" thinking it necessary to harden their projectiles by putting stones in them. For this, however, they received condign punishment, which sent some of them away rather more quickly than they had expected. What a curious thing it is that the lower

orders always end their play by losing their tempers and taking to fighting. Thus much of general amusements, which, as far as I can remember, I have enumerated.

CHAPTER VIII.

SPEECH DAY.

EVERY year, towards the end of the Midsummer quarter, takes place the great festival Speech Day, when papas and mammas and "old boys" assemble in great force to do fitting honour to the auspicious occasion. From an early hour in the morning the village, or town I suppose it should be called, is in a state of great excitement and holiday costume is to be seen everywhere. As to the proceedings, they are of a highly interesting and instructive character. The speeches themselves are not, as the title would imply, bursts of eloquence or flights of oratory. They consist of a series of recitations from ancient and modern authors, including selections from the best English dramatists, among whom, in my time, Sheridan was particularly popular. In addition to these, the prize essays and poems in Latin, Greek, and English are spoken by their respective authors, much to the admiration of paterfamilias and wonderment of dear mamma, who sits by and listens, suffused with smiles of gratified pride, trying to look as

if she perfectly understood the meaning of every word that was being uttered, and was thoroughly conversant with Greek iambics and Latin hexameters. As for sister Lucy or Laura, if that be the name of the charming creature in the mauve bonnet, she endeavours as far as possible to emulate the maternal manner, and laughs in the prettiest way imaginable as she catches inspiration from the smiles on the faces of the reverend dons and learned dignitaries, occupying the place of honour near the stage, whose faculty of humour has been tickled by some obscure Aristophanean joke that occurs in the course of a recitation from one of that facetious elderly Greek gentleman's compositions. But see, the author of the prize English poem stands forth by himself to let the assembled audience judge whether he has any claim to be looked upon as a successor to the immortal poet of Harrow, whose muse was wont to indulge its fancies as his eyes wandered over the green fields, stretching miles away in the distance from the tomb in the churchyard. By the way, little remains of that seat which Byron delighted to honour. Cockney London, with its customary vandalism, has chipped unto itself little pieces, till nearly the whole of the old monument has vanished. Juvenile poetry is, as a general rule, tame and insipid, but I remember one or two most excel-

lent efforts in the way of prize poems, which were as superior to their predecessors and successors as Tennyson is to the laureate of a country newspaper. It must have been nervous work giving forth your own composition in the face of such a packed and aristocratic audience, but you had always the advantage of knowing that it was highly appreciated, and there was little fear of want of applause when you came to a conclusion.

Of all the visitors to Speech Day no one was so regular as Lord Palmerston, who always evinced a deep and lasting interest in his old school, and availed himself of the opportunity for a few hours' relaxation from public business to revisit the place where, years gone by, he cut the name of Temple with his penknife on the wall of the old fourth-form room. He almost invariably rode down from town on his familiar grey horse, and back again into the bargain. Popular as he was everywhere, and with every class of persons, the Harrow boys always seemed determined to give him the most flattering, and therefore noisiest, assurances of their favour, and directly his face was seen at the top of the school steps, as he came out of Speech-room, a roar of cheering would greet him, that might almost have been heard at St. Paul's. It was singularly affecting to see the old man,

with his bare head and cheerful smile, bowing his acknowledgments to his youthful admirers; the past and present seemed for the moment to meet, and two generations to come together. Who can say what thoughts passed through his ever active working mind as he stood there? Perhaps the old school times came back, old forms and faces shaped themselves in the air, and took their places beside him, and he felt himself once again one of those shouting lads, full of life and spirit, little anticipating the brilliant future of fame and honour before him. Even among the throng through which he would now have to pass there might be a young life hereafter to follow in the same path he had gone, whose name would become familiar in every English home and household. Whenever Lord Palmerston came down, an extra week's holiday was the invariable result, a fact which, as it may be easily understood, made his visits highly popular. But he is gone now, and another must perform the same kind offices; still he will always be remembered, not only with admiration, but affection by those who, like himself, were lovers of the old school.

The crush to get inside Speech-room is something perfectly alarming, the entrance being of the most contracted and uncomfortable description. The extraordinary part of it is that the

occupation is left almost entirely to the fairer sex, who, as everybody knows, under such a condition of circumstances, are always equal to the occasion. They are so very polite, and smile at one another in the most pleasant and agreeable manner; but, as to giving way the third of an inch, that is quite out of the question; they rather push on with the most indomitable energy and determination, utterly regardless of consequences. As I have said before, to them and a certain number of celebrities and Dons the occupation of Speech-room on the great day is entirely surrendered, and it takes very little time to fill every nook and corner, which, when the feat has been accomplished, has the appearance of a variegated flower-garden. And some sweet pretty flowers there are, I can tell you, and some of the rarest that old mother England can produce. After the speeches are over, the visitors adjourn to the houses of the various masters, where luncheon is provided. At the Head Master's the more distinguished guests are entertained, and some speechifying takes place. By the time all this is over there is a performance of music on the organ in the chapel, which, of course, attracts a large number of listeners, who besides have an opportunity of examining the beauties of this really unique little building. By-and-by it becomes time to go home, and the

town soon relapses into its former state of quiet and repose. For, although it has a school of five hundred boys within its limits, it is at all times singularly peaceful, except, of course, during the time when the bell is ringing for bill, and the various houses empty themselves of their inmates.

But what about bathing? I fancy I hear some one ask. How do Harrow boys manage to learn to swim? Well, then, be it known that, on the further side of football field, about three-quarters of a mile from the town, exists a certain institution known as "Duck-puddle." The name is not encouraging; it is suggestive of a dirty farm-yard and a slimy pond, with the said bipeds poking their beaks into the muddy ooze. But, as is often remarked, "what's in a name?" and so in the present instance the question applies most appropriately. Duck-puddle, or Ducker, as it is more familiarly termed, is a long swimming-bath in the open air, deep at one end, shallow at the other, with spring boards to jump off, and dressing-sheds round, the whole shut in by a high fence. As will be readily understood, in the summer it is a very favourite place of resort, some young gentlemen having been known to spend a whole half-holiday bathing at intervals. At Eton every boy is obliged to swim a certain distance before he is allowed to

go out in a boat ; at Harrow, on the contrary, no compulsory practice of the art of natation is enjoined, but almost all who bathe in Ducker learn it somehow or other. When I first went to Harrow I was utterly unable to keep myself up in the water ; in fact, I had such a horror of taking my feet off the ground, that it was pain and misery for me to bathe at all. I have no doubt that much of this was owing to the unwise tactics of a friend, who had very early endeavoured to introduce me to the study of swimming by taking me much out of my depth, and then leaving me to struggle as best I could. The result was that, instead of striking out for life, as had been anticipated, I sank to the bottom, and ran a very narrow risk of being done for altogether, while the before-mentioned friend only just escaped being put on his trial for manslaughter. The amount of misery and shivering I had gone through in my efforts to conquer this fear of the water did not incline me to the use of Ducker. But I found that all my house, with scarcely an exception, patronized it daily. There were two new boys, who, like myself, could not swim ; but they had determined to learn, and after a great deal of persuasion induced me to coincide with them in their most praiseworthy resolve. We were to go down very early in the morning, when very few other fellows would be

there, so that we might have freedom and space for our first attempt. Oh, how I shivered and shook as soon after six o'clock we turned out of the house and wended our way towards Ducker. There could be no doubt about it, I was in a terrible fright, and what was worse, my companions could see it. The consequence was that they unmercifully chaffed me, which only increased the feeling of discomfort. It took me a very long time to undress !

Now, as I said before, one end of the bath was deep and the other shallow, but not having been down before, I did not know which was which, so asked for information. Slowly I descended the steps, first one foot and then the other, till the water was up to my middle. I began to feel terribly frightened ; even at the shallowest it must be deep, I thought. I took one step more, and before a second was over I was beautifully underneath the water, as I afterwards found, some one foot and a half out of my depth. Whether my previous experience in a like predicament roused me to action I do not know, but as I came to the top I made the most terrific movements with arms and legs, and to such good purpose that I eventually gained the steps, puffing and blowing like a young grampus. As for the two traitors who had deceived me, they were quietly disporting themselves at the end furthest

from me in shallow water. I have often thought their trick was a silly one; it might have so happened that terror would have paralyzed me, and if so, they being unable to swim, could not have been of any use to me. To them, however, I owe being able to keep myself up with comfort in the water now, and I had my revenge on one of them a couple of years after by beating him in the swimming races in the most hollow and satisfactory manner. These took place during the summer quarter, and excited some interest. There used to be a prize for "*headers*," which were taken off a high spring-board, that only a select few ventured to ascend. But it was astounding with what neatness and grace some would do them, one very tall fellow being especially clever in this respect. With reference to learning to swim, I could make a suggestion or two. Never try to be too adventurous all at once, or to go out of your depth before you are perfectly able to get back again. The great thing first to be done is to acquire confidence in your own powers, and to turn yourself backwards and forwards in the water without throwing up your head and catching for help with your hand. This may all be learnt just as well "*in*" your depth and without the slightest possibility of a mishap. Nothing can be so utterly foolish and reckless as for anybody to take a young lad who is unacquainted

with swimming and to throw him overboard from a boat, leaving him to struggle as best he can. It may answer in one case out of a hundred, but certainly not more, and with the rest may and probably will create a panic that will remain, perhaps never to be overcome.

Naturally enough, among so large a number of boys, there are many who are strong in their musical tastes, and for them exists the Harrow Musical Society, that I remember gave some very creditable and agreeable concerts, which were chiefly instrumental. They were always very well attended, and the masters and their wives and the inhabitants of the town used to show up in great force. All I can say is that the playing was excessively good, and would have been creditable even in professional performers. Once or twice original pieces, composed by members of the Society, were given; and highly creditable they were. Mr. Charles Deffell, the composer of the pretty little operetta, "Christmas Eve," was, I believe, long connected with the Society, and through it introduced his first musical attempt to notice. The general body of the school did not appear to take much interest in these musical matters, and formed but a small proportion of the audience that assembled at the concerts. On one or two occasions the organist of the chapel gave a concert in Speech-room,

when some of the best singers from Town came down, and then a large assemblage of the boys was to be reckoned on. Thackeray, too, so I have heard, gave a reading or lecture not so very long before his death, and was most triumphantly received.

There is, or was, a debating society, which used to meet in the monitor's library, where discussions on matters political and social took place once a week, and where, no doubt, a very large amount of nonsense was talked. This sort of thing is very well in its way; but a too frequent use leads into a careless and slipshod style of speaking that is very difficult to get out of afterwards. The Union at Oxford is about the best specimen of a debating society under the most favourable circumstances; but men who have used it much always admit that its advantages are not nearly so marvellous as certain enthusiasts would have us believe.

The literary element also was not ignored at Harrow, and at intervals there has been a school paper, or magazine, or whatever it should be called. The last of these was the "Triumvirate," which was started by three of the monitors, and for a short time made a fairish appearance. As might be expected, its tone was decidedly didactic, and the editorial "we" occurred frequently. Its politics I am at this moment unable to state; but,

if I remember aright, it was not particularly attached to *Earl Russell*. Its columns were open to contributions from the school, and in its pages I had the honour of seeing my first literary attempt in print. It was poetry—or rhyme would be the better term—and had much of the characteristics of a hymn. The next effort was in the way of fiction, and two chapters appeared; but the rest were so dreadfully commonplace and devoid of interest, while the “*dénouement*” seemed so very far off, that the editors, with much regret, informed me that they were unavoidably compelled to suspend its further publication. However, the “*Triumvirate*” managed to go on without it, till at length it collapsed, after an existence of some twelve or eighteen months, leaving its promoters, I fear, somewhat out of pocket. Since its decease I have not heard of the appearance of any new literary attempt, and I should rather fancy that no one is inclined to risk the chance of a like failure. I never remember anything in the way of theatricals; the nearest approach to the dramatic line was a Christy Minstrel performance we gave in our house once or twice, which was numerously and fashionably attended by an audience consisting of the butler and housemaid, accompanied by some dozen or fifteen of the other boys. We were placed at considerable disadvantage, owing to the confined space of the room; but a stage

was improvised by means of three beds put in a line, on which we placed our chairs. The seat was, however, very rickety, and Massa Bones, in the phrenzy of his musical soul, lost his balance, and went over with a terrific bump on to the ground, much to his own astonishment, and the amusement of the rest. Unfortunately we made rather too much noise one evening, and the result was that our musical performances on the comb were ordered to be adjourned *sine die*, the tambourine having been confiscated, greatly to the indignation of its owner, who so openly expressed his displeasure, that he was overheard by his tutor, and got into hot water.

The school doctor has always plenty to do attending on those who are really ill, and those who are not, but say they are. If a lazy fit seize you in the morning, and you want to escape from school, there is only one chance, and that is to send word to your tutor that you are not well, and ask leave to stay out. It is extraordinary the sudden way in which a boy could be ill at half-past six, and quite well and jolly again by breakfast-time. One of the tutors had a capital plan of dealing with such invalids. "Stay out by all means," he would say; but he would accompany his permission with a strong dose of some kind or another, and, besides that, keep them indoors for three or four days, which individuals of an active temperament would not be

likely to care about. Generally speaking, I should think Harrow is one of the healthiest places in the kingdom, which of course is principally owing to the elevation on which it is placed. The school has been particularly fortunate in escaping epidemics, and, with the exception of a visitation of scarlet fever some time since, I do not remember hearing of any serious illness among the boys. As at all other schools, so at Harrow, there are three or four disreputable individuals who hang about the place and make themselves agreeable to a few by getting them brandy, and other forbidden things, for which they sponge freely on their customers. One of them that I remember was chiefly remarkable for his pertinacity in drinking, and was scarcely ever seen sober; in fact, one Harrow and Eton match day, at Lord's, he was in such a blind state of intoxication that he was obliged to be taken off the ground. I am glad to say that I do not think that either these gentry or their wares were much patronized, and those who did make use of them belonged to a class of which I have previously spoken. They were put out of bounds: that is to say, any of the boys speaking to them would receive a very severe punishment; and there were few who cared to run this risk for the paltry satisfaction of getting a small quantity of fiery brandy, or an ounce of indifferent tobacco.

CHAPTER IX.

LAST WORDS.

I AM drawing near to the end now, and begin already to feel the regret that always accompanies a farewell to pleasant society. Looking back through the few pages wherein I have sought to give a faithful record of an ordinary existence at Harrow, a fear arises in my mind that there is very little in them of what can be called amusing. They, after all, but contain certain dry details. Still there is some satisfaction in feeling that I have not resorted to that extending of the long bow, which, nowadays, is considered imperatively essential to writing anything in a light strain. I am content to abide by the decision of my readers, and with this much of assurance to them that, at least, they may believe what I have said, and an appeal to their indulgence for all literary shortcomings, I now approach that important and highly popular period, going home for the holidays, when—what with the excitement of the examination, and the packing of trunks and portmanteaus—everything is in a glorious state of confusion and bustle. Ten days

before breaking-up, "trials," that being the term applied to the examinations—commence, and, no doubt, to a very large number, they are a source of much fear and anxiety. They are almost entirely conducted by means of printed papers, the matter of which is confined to the books and authors read by the different forms during the past quarter; so that if a boy has paid ordinary attention to his work, he may easily prepare himself for the ordeal he has to undergo. From the *Remove* downwards, it is customary for the masters of the various forms to announce the number of marks, and the order of merit, every week. For the remainder of the school, if I remember aright, this is done less frequently; but, for one and all, these marks are added up at the end of the quarter, and are taken into consideration in conjunction with those obtained in the examination. Classics, mathematics, and foreign languages are treated separately in trials; and a certain amount of proficiency must be obtained in each, or your place will be a low one. For instance, a boy may be first in classics and third in French, and if his quarter's work be good, he would probably take the first place; but his mathematics have to be thought of, and if he makes a mess of them, he will find himself ousted from the position to which his Latin and Greek of themselves

would have entitled him. There was one examination paper which always created a panic in contemplation of its probable difficulties. It was popularly known as "Skew-paper," which being freely interpreted, means, that as it consisted of passages of Latin and Greek to translate that we were supposed not to have seen before, and a piece of English to turn *vice versâ*, it was more than likely that a good many would be sorely puzzled and find great difficulty in doing it properly. One entire form, on a certain occasion, was so terribly at sea that only two boys out of it got any marks at all; all the rest having done theirs so badly that their papers were torn up. The examination lasts the week, and then all trials and troubles are over, and nothing remains to be done but to await patiently the announcement of the results in the various forms. The masters have a weary time of it at this period, and must have to work very hard to look over all the papers of their forms. The system of prize-giving at Harrow is somewhat peculiar. If a boy has done well during the quarter and in examination, the master of his form recommends him for a "Copy," which is a book bought and paid for by papa. When three "copies" have been obtained, due notice is given to the Head Master, who thereupon presents the fortunate possessor with a prize of more or less

magnificence, according to his position in the school. The ceremony takes place in Speech-room, in the presence of all the boys, the names of the successful ones being duly called out in order. Dr. Vaughan also used to give a prize to every boy who learnt fifteen hundred lines of poetry by heart, which of course he had to do in his leisure time, and say them to his tutor out of school hours; and, therefore, but few attempted it. But it was capital exercise for the memory, and those who had the courage to undertake it will never repent having done so.

It was always the custom, when the examination list was read out by the Head Master, for him to commence with the lowest form at the lowest name; so that the boy who actually stood at the bottom of the school had his fate announced to him first, much to the general amusement and his own confusion. There was always a good deal of excitement on the occasion, which became the more intense as the top was gradually approached without your name having been mentioned. Such emotion may well be pardoned, in fact I rather pity him who could not feel it. Some boys are very fond of pretending to be particularly indifferent about their work; they never read at all, so they would make you believe, and endeavour to lead you to fancy they learn everything by inspiration. But depend upon it, if you could only overlook

them, you would find them working away as hard as anybody, and troubling themselves every bit as much about their success as any other of their fellows. I do not mean to say that there are not lads who learn with much greater facility than others, and who are able, therefore, to get over their work in a considerably shorter time; but you will never find such as them make a boast that they are *facile princeps* without any exertion or reading at all. A very clever boy knows perfectly well that nothing can be done without a certain amount of study, and though he may object to taking up his time with routine and detail, he is far too wise to run the risk of failure by neglecting either the one or the other, as it is in these very respects a trap will be laid to catch him.

We have now arrived at the last night of the Michaelmas quarter, and to-morrow morning the school will have dispersed for the Christmas holidays. As I write these lines, the recollection comes full and strong upon me of the night when, with a deep feeling of regret, I realized within myself the fact that my Harrow days were over. What happy times now to be summed up and closed for ever! One stage in life's journey reached, would there ever come another whose passages would be so bright? It is no false sentimentalism for men to speak with affectionate

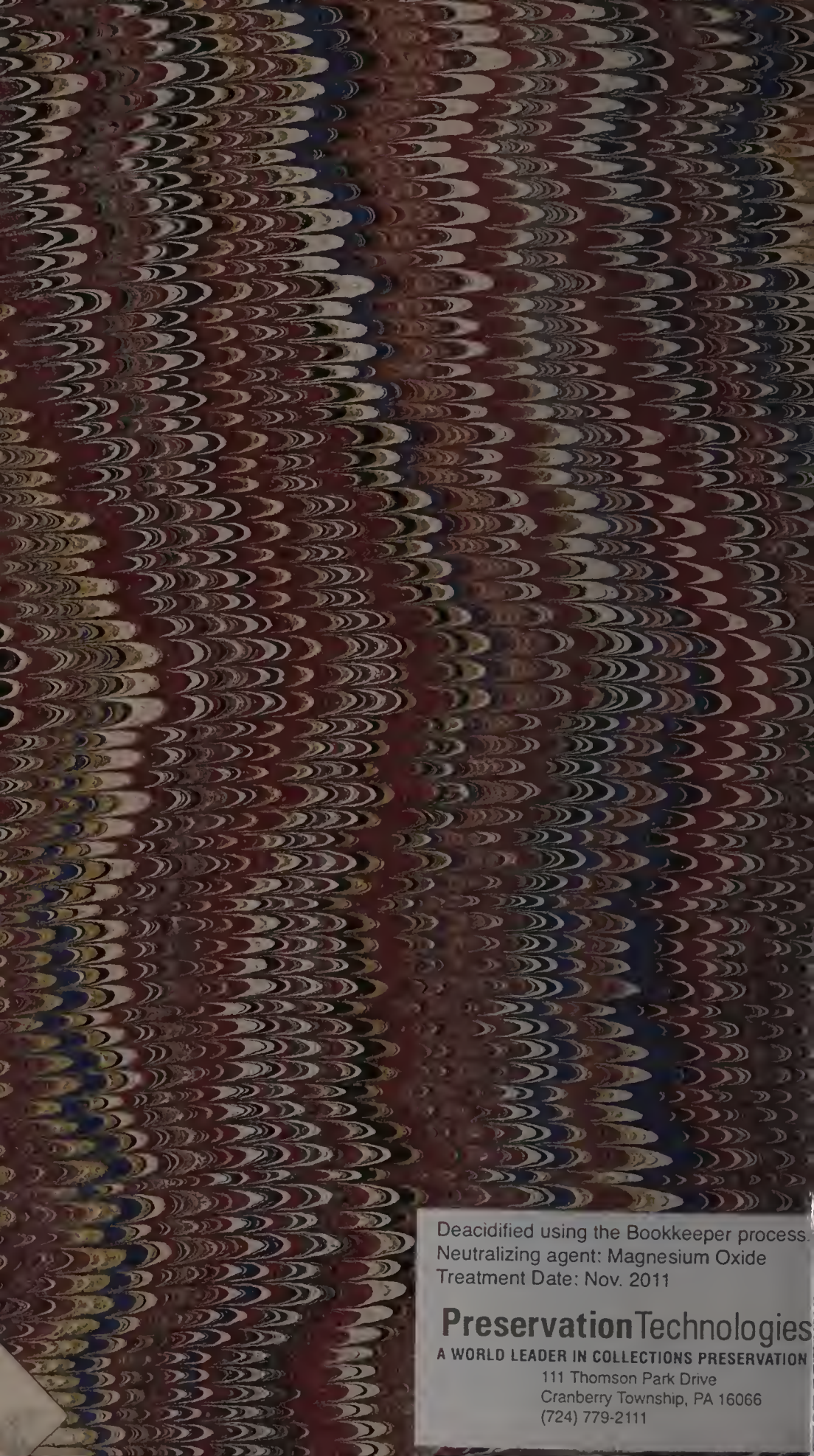
warmth and enthusiastic praise of their school-days. It is no mere form of speech to say that they are the pleasantest of existence. Taken and weighed with those times that come after them, and measured in equitable scales, who can say that these two periods of life bear comparison? True, the existence at a public school is but the mimicry of what will come by-and-by. Certain it is that it has its trials, anxieties, and drawbacks, which are but foreshadowings of what manhood will have to endure, and teaches the boy many other things than how to translate Cicero, or solve a problem of Euclid. But its misfortunes are never of a very serious description, and its griefs relate to very trivial matters. The boy who is just about leaving school begins to appreciate them. Nor can he fail to be deeply moved and affected as he feels that in a few hours he will have passed from the schoolboy into the man. There will rise in his mind the words from the last Sunday's sermon, much of which is always devoted to addressing those who are about to leave for good and all, that told him what he had accomplished, and what still remained for him to do; how the life in which it had seemed to him difficult enough to keep straightforward and honourable was mere child's play after all; and that the temptations he had had so to struggle to avoid would pale before

the inducements to evil that await him who launches into the liberty and freedom of action of early manhood. As I sat in my room alone on this last night, I must confess to have felt deeply and almost with sorrow that to-morrow would end my school-days. There were ringing in my ears the preacher's words, "Be good men, be honourable men, above all, be gentlemen;" and as I realized their meaning, I knew that play was at an end, and that stern reality was about to begin. Softly, and in melancholy cadence, there came, as if floating in the air, the strain of the holiday hymn we always sang in chapel on the last Sunday. With what pleasure had it ever filled me, when hearing it, till this moment; and now it seemed so sad and full of melancholy, like the funeral dirge of buried boyhood.

Pshaw! what am I about, talking in this poetic and romantic strain? I am getting as sentimental as a miss at a boarding-school. This is no time for dumps and melancholy just the beginning of the Christmas holidays, at which season everybody ought to be jolly except people who are in debt. Sam has got all our luggage in charge, prayers are over, and nothing remains but to jump into a fly and bustle down to the station, where a special train is in waiting to take us all off to London for our six weeks' vaca-

tion. Good-bye, old school, good-bye! there's something got into my eyes and made them water, and, confound it, there's something in my throat, too, that makes me feel as if I was choking. That's a horrid word, good bye is, to say. I do not think I will attempt it a second time.

THE END.

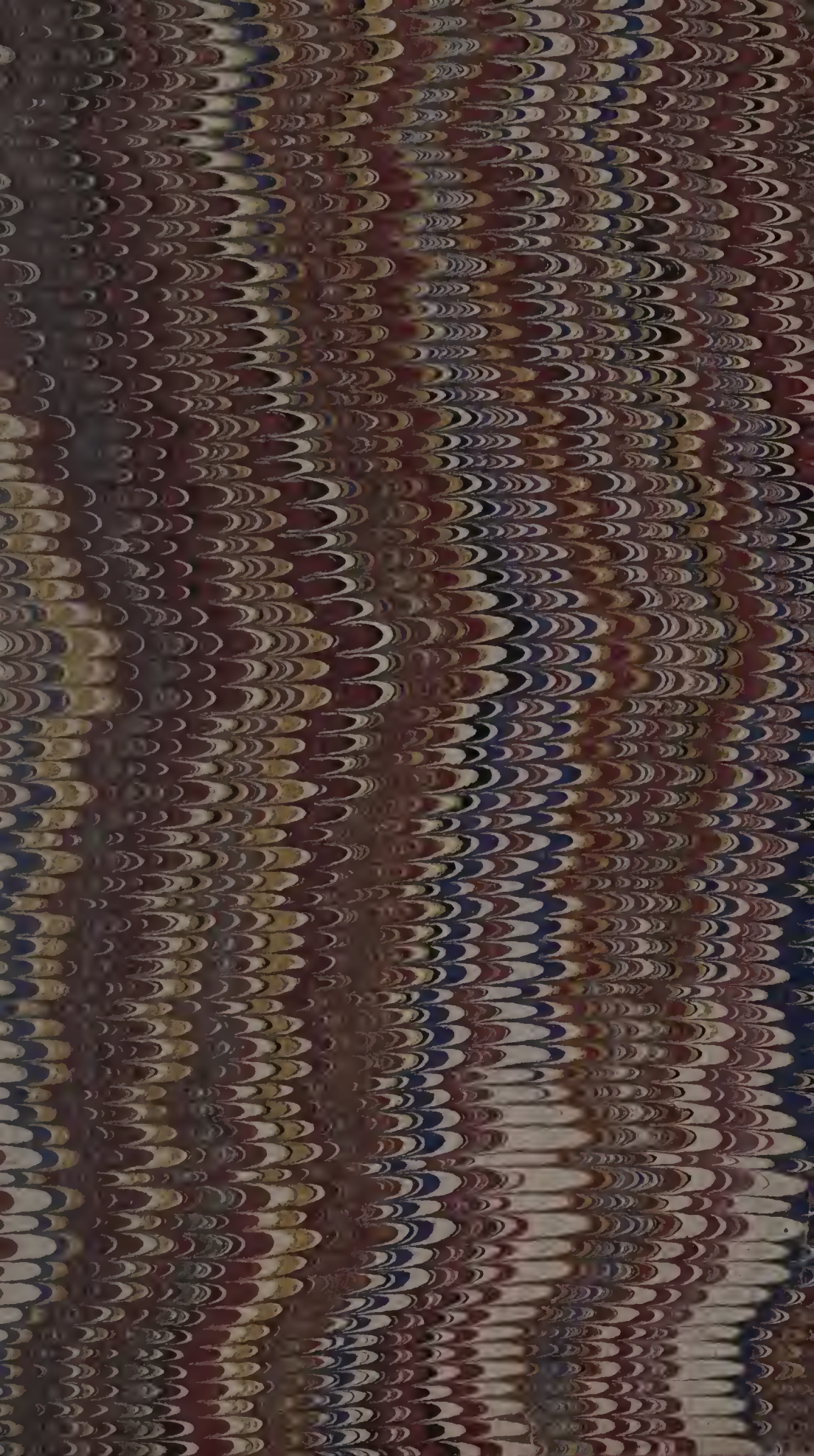


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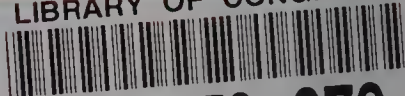
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