

board and ceiling. To jump when in this cramped position was impossible. The only chance a boy had was to wriggle off the edge and trust to luck to escape without broken bones. I do not think any boy ever performed the feat without bumping his head against the ceiling in endeavouring to make a spring, or without hurting himself otherwise in his fall. If a boy could make the leap without any appearance of concern he was not asked to repeat the performance, as pleasure was only derived from seeing the timid boys who, pale with fear, were in terror for their very lives—"the brutal delight of the strong over the weak."

As soon as the fun experienced from this amusement had been thoroughly exhausted, boxing gloves were generally produced, and two new boys would be forced to fight with one another. Each would be urged on by the most unearthly shouts until he had fairly lost his temper, when the fight of course would become real earnest. The applause which greeted the pugilists at every successful stroke tended to increase their ardour and excite them the more. The amusement of the spectators depended upon the ferocity displayed by the fighters.

My readers may wonder why boxing gloves were not dispensed with and bare fists used, but gloves were worn for the reason that fights without leave from the head monitor were strictly forbidden, the culprits when discovered invariably receiving a flogging. If two boys quarrelled and considered that their respective dignities could only be upheld by fighting, it was the rule that they should ask leave of the monitor for the week, who decided whether the case warranted their fighting. Leave was almost invariably granted, when notice of the fight would be given, and the whole school would assemble to witness it. This fighting in public tended to de-

crease the number of fights wonderfully; but more of this anon.

Often a new boy would be made to fight with some old boy, who, though smaller, would nevertheless be more skilful than himself. The new and bigger boy could not hit the smaller in return; all he could do was to defend himself as well as he might, and take the blows of his more skilful antagonist, if possible, in good part. The new boy never received any applause; although some no doubt coveted it, but this they dared not give, though the old fellow was always loudly cheered. It makes a great difference to your chance of success if you have plenty of friends at your back urging you on! Any one who has had many fights will bear me out in this.

Single-stick fights were also very popular. Here also the combatants always lost their tempers. Stick after stick would they break over each other's legs, the fight generally lasting until both were so exhausted as to be unable any longer to direct their blows with any accuracy of aim. It was usually nine o'clock by the time the fighting was over; if however there was any time left before prayers, the new boys had to stand upon a table one by one and sing a song or tell a story.

It was difficult for a new boy standing conspicuous upon a table not to feel shy and nervous, and unless prepared with a song it was hard for him to remember one all in a moment. Hesitation, however, was not long permitted; "two minutes to recollect a song, or a dozen books at your head!"

It was often a case of the "dozen books" which I must say seemed to help the singer to recall something. I remember a boy once with this "help" began a hymn. Whether it was that he felt bound to sing this, perhaps the only song he had ever