

THE NEW BOY.



NE of the most interesting features coming before our notice at the opening of a scholastic year, is surely the sight of the new boy.

It is especially so for his elders who have passed through the same phase of college life.

For, in the melancholy shadow that glooms his countenance, in the symptoms of his ambitious views that sparkle in his youthful eyes, in the persecutions, though petty, yet painful, he has to endure at the hands of his merciless companions, they behold a counterpart of the sadness that preyed upon their own minds, of the glowing prospects that dazzled their own fancy, of the ordeals they had to submit to at the dawn of their own literary career.

The poor boy has just wrested himself from the fond embrace of a loving mother, from the society of affectionate brothers and sisters, from all the sweets and comforts of home; he now finds himself thrown into the midst of strangers; his eyes meet none but unknown faces; sympathies come to him but from few, while neglect seems to meet him on all sides.

Of course, owing to the kindness of his teachers, if he has the good fortune of being placed in an institution where his tutors are men whose love and life are exclusively devoted to God and to the welfare of the young, he soon hears from them words that allay his sorrow, pour into his soul the balm of consolation. But, at first, his heart is so full, the thought of his mother and the dear ones he has just left is so vivid in his mind, the change has been so abrupt, he feels himself so forlorn, that tears naturally well up to his eyes, and he feels not disposed to listen to words of solace. But soon after, if he be a young man of ordinary spirit and courage, other thoughts will supersede the former, and other feelings find place in his heart. He is mindful, young as he may be, that sacrifices have to be met with in life, and that instruction and education involve generosity and self-sacrifice. So he begins

gradually to look around; the walls of the college no longer present so repulsive an aspect; he considers it no longer a prison, faces by degrees grow more familiar; the sight of many companions in the same condition as he is, the class work that urges him on, the liveliness of the games, time itself by its benign influence diminishing the vividness of man's impressions, all these concur to draw away his attention and to reconcile him to his new home and new mode of life. But, alas! his trials are only beginning. His lot has been cast into the midst of a hard-hearted, light-minded, mirth-loving, unscrupulous comrades. These, from far and near, eye the new comer, ogle him, gloat upon him, brood over him, fix their gaze upon him, watch his every movement, survey his personal habits, heel his every step, scrutinize his peculiar inclinations, endeavor to ascertain whether in addition to his huge, heavily-laden, well-strapped, strongly-girt, and mysteriously locked oaken trunk, he has brought with him idiomatic terms, quaint expressions, cant phrases, rugged, uphill utterances, novel constructions of antiquated oaths, an abundance of pelf, and, withal, an ample supply of old Virginia leaf in his kangaroo pouch.

And, in the midst of all the intrigues, the plots, the diplomatic tricks, wherewith he is surrounded; in the midst of all the nefarious designs, of all the malicious intentions, of all the covetous views, whereof he is the fresh, innocent, unsuspecting victim, he becomes the aim and the butt at which are hurled many an arrow, fast-succeeding darts of cruel sarcasm.

Many a time he is missioned forth on an aimless errand, the outcome of which cannot fail to cover him with ridicule. Grim and horrible are the accounts dinned into his ears, of impending dangers, of unchronicled hardships, of unearthly sufferings, whereto the student must daily submit. First and prominent among all is a nauseating, qualm-creating, heart-sickening description of the classical hash. In awe-inspiring, horror-striking terms, he is forewarned to so demean himself as to ward off the threatening thunderbolts, the pliable ferule, the squelching