

were weather prophets—predicted a splendid Tuesday. Hence the hurried meeting on the hand-ball alley, at 4:30 p.m. on Monday. At that meeting it was decided to ask for a grand congé. The only difficulty was to find a spokesman. Our class was the one selected to do the asking; and our class had to select one of its number to make the speech. We were five. James Burns, Thos. Cole, John Sloan, Henry Lajoie and the writer. Lajoie being an *externe* had gone home that afternoon; Burns claimed that he had asked on the last occasion; Sloan said he was not feeling well; Cole had caught a cold that he said prevented him from speaking fluently. In fine, the task had to be accepted by the least competent as well as the smallest of the five—though none of us were giants.

At five o'clock the bell would ring for study; so we had to bestir ourselves. Father Tabaret was in his room. We knew it, for we had seen him standing in his window. All that was to be done was to go up to the main hall, pass along to the superior's door, knock and wait the outcome. Not much of a feat, you will say. Ah! the reader may not have known Father Tabaret. Kuroki; advancing on Port Arthur did not need more courage than the boy who went up to that awful door to ask for a grand congé. I since learned how good Father Tabaret would laugh to himself after he had given us a terrible fright; but I then imagined that there must have been a dead fire behind the cannon-like roar of the dreaded superior. It was no mean adventure to stand before him, to withstand his frown, to brave his shout, to face his apparent anger, to hear his awful "No Sir." And yet to persist and persist until the assumed lion vanished in the natural meekness of the lamb.

I will not attempt to describe my feelings as we five ascended the steps, moved along the corridor, paused at the door, knocked timidly, and then drew back, as if each wanted to hide behind the other. It was a fearful experience. It was like marching to your own execution. The ordeal, however, did not last more than five minutes. I will try to recall the scene.

As the door flew open, Father Tabaret, towered above us, seemingly larger than ever and apparently in the height of passion. Before I could say a word, he shouted: "Well, what is it?"

"Father," I began, "we have come"