

physical vapourings, he looked up at the school hill and saw the Morekirk Central.

Oh, that jail! the seven hours' torture for Bardo; boys busy with never-ending devilments and idle at lessons; his the worst room in the school among 17 lady teachers and Pontifex knew it long ago. By winter Bardo's room was a powerhouse of disorder. Pontifex never lectured him. Seldom the two ever talked. When they did, Bardo marvelled at the paucity of language.

THUS winter slid past in a trail of mingled misery and ecstasy, with Naida Dolson in the choir every other Sunday and Bardo now and then visiting Sunny Acres, the old homestead over the hills. Naida sang to him; he talked to her. They engineered duets; sang one of them at church when Bardo blushed like a red-hot stove and she thought it was very funny. Naida recklessly agreed with Carroll and Skritch that Bardo should uplift Morekirk. So also did Timmie Taunton, a tall young baritone, platonically chum of Naida's, the stationer from Butterfly, down the Grand Trunk, who came to Sunny Acres week-ends.

Springtime, at Sunny Acres, and in the town park opposite the new house-building of Mr. Skritch. Also in the soul of tortured Bardo, who was now commissioned by his friends to get up a huge popular concert in any building big enough to hold it.

Naida, however, unkindly went away on a tour, and could not be on the programme. That cut Bardo, who had already planned a school chorus of hundreds on a raised gallery—somewhere.

"Oh, get Timmie to sing," she said. "He will. I'll make him. He's a stunning baritone."

That was some compensation. Timmie promised. Naida went.

It was now up to Mr. Bardo, in the month of April of the year when After the Ball was being driven out by Sweet Marie, and both surviving against The Holy City, to organize his musical thrill for Morekirk. He was now a dynamo of musical energy, minus intelligence. Had he been sane he never would have attempted this Festival. He dreamed dreams and heard the birds and vowed to have Morekirk uplifted by the time Naida came back in the summer. After which his stock would be so high in the columns of the Morekirk Call, edited by Claude Carroll, that he would exercise a mighty influence over his next class of Hilltop boys who would be very meek in the room of so powerful a reformer.

Music evidently had power.

But of course it really wasn't music.

How Bardo gradually organized the idea of a festival in the huge skating rink is no concern of this narrative. He had every day after four and every Saturday all day to weave his net for the young. He began with small crowds in the church basement, rehearsing; himself at the baton, some young lady at the piano; words written on large sheets hung up in front until money could be got to buy copies from the Call press. In May the rehearsals shifted to the "gym" of the Collegiate and drew some of the larger girls. It was, as yet, all girls. They were easier; more musical, perhaps. Bardo wondered why. Mornings on the hills at sunrise he wove in his brain the webs



of this musical dream, a great amphitheatre of white children singing patriotic and religious choruses, with Timmie Taunton, baritone, doing three numbers, a squad of gymnastic girls doing fancy drills and club-swinging and whatever else he could create betwixt now and the middle of June.

News of this everywhere; hints of it in the Call; thanks to Carroll, who favoured the movement.

But Pontifex was mum. Bardo hoped he would be. He would show this tyrant a few tricks in swinging a democracy.

BY the time leaves were full out on the hills of Morekirk, Bardo was emotionally master of the mob. He had rehearsals so crowded that he had to take one section a.m. and the other p.m. on Saturdays; both in the City Hall, the place where all the plays and concerts were held; thanks also to



Skritch's influence with the aldermen.

"But I'm sorry to say, gentlemen," said the merchant, asking for this concession, "that Mr. Bardo will not be able to give the festival in the City Hall. The crowds will be far too big."

Already Bardo had 500 young folk at his rehearsals, and he yearned for Saturdays. Skritch was behind him in uplifting Morekirk. Money was being spent before it was had; sundries cheerfully paid from Bardo's pocket.

"Don't worry about the expense," comforted Skritch. "Go ahead. Whatever it needs in reason

to put that festival on in the rink, count me as your backer."

"Thanks, Mr. Skritch."

"You're welcome, Mr. Bardo. I've always had faith in you."

And there would be a few hundred dollars expense; easily. The rink was a huge barn. It must be built up and decorated for the occasion. A monster stage and choir gallery at the far end; chairs by the thousand from city hall and lodges and schools; one big streamer across the main street; posters and dodgers and newspaper ads; flags and bunting and forest leaves; tickets and programmes. And midst of it all came a note from Naida somewhere in the Rockies:

"Well, I've written Timmie. He will sing for you. I hope you wake up the old town in my absence. Send me a copy of the paper with your picture in it."

NO chance to back up now.

Bardo had the children. Loads of lumber went into the rink. Hammers and haulings. Rehearsals galore. He went further; must have all the choirs. Friday evenings and Sundays after service found him peering into the choir lofts, talking earnestly to the choirs—all denominations. He got a hundred of these singers.

None could stop him. He was filled with missionary zeal. And his friends, Carroll and Skritch, gave him a new idea.

"Must have an object," said Skritch. "Show the people what you intend to do with the money."

They put their heads together.

"Fine," said Skritch, when Carroll proposed something. "The very thing. Improve the park. People's playground. Everybody interested. Help the boys and girls. I'll back that."

Carroll promised the support of his paper. The opposition paper—Grit—promptly knocked the idea.

"What do the citizens across the river think of the people's money spent to improve a park the other end of town?" asked the editor.

Bardo referred the question to Skritch, who intimated that Pontifex—

"Just what I was thinking," said Bardo.

"Stick to your guns, my boy."

"I certainly will."

"We can't retreat. The public expects you to be the man of the hour," said the self-made. "Persecution will advertise you. Remember—I believe in you; and I know what it is to need the faith of other men."

"Success," whispered Bardo. "That's it. Skritch never fears. He's a moral dynamo."

That smile haunted him. Pontifex said never a word, but poked his face in at Bardo's door more often; delighted to find that as Bardo's steam

gauge went up with the public the disorder in his room got worse. The youth was losing what little grip he ever had of the boys. He was teaching girls and choirs to sing.

Now for the orchestra. Morekirk had twelve musicians on string and wind. Bardo ferreted them all out. Some demanded pay.

"State your terms," he said, stoutly.

"You going to swing the stick?" asked a foundry-man horn-blower.

"Y—yes, I suppose somebody will have to," he

(Continued on page 19.)