

# SUNSHINE AND SNOW.

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE PAPER-CHASE.

IT was a December day, the great day of all the year to Charley Gordon and the boys of Firdene School, which stands in a deep, green valley of the North Country, for the last term's work was done. That very morning the prizes had been given away, and on the following one they would depart homewards for their Christmas holiday. Charley had come out first in many subjects, besides winning a special certificate for all-round excellence, and had read his prize essay to a gathering of all his comrades and some of their parents in the great stone hall which had once formed part of an ancient abbey. The prize distribution at Firdene was generally well attended.

Even now, as he ran first in the paper-chase, he could remember the mass of faces turned