

Now, however, that it is really a thing of the past, we need not feel quite so much ashamed of speaking of it.

The "fight" used to take place on Shrove Tuesday in every year. At dinner on that day, together with our pancakes we were each of us given a lemon, wherewith seemingly to flavour our pancakes, but in reality, wherewith to injure our neighbour's eye; great dissatisfaction prevailed where only half a lemon was provided for that ennobling purpose. Many boys, fearful lest their ammunition should run short, used to purchase additional lemons on their own account.

Everybody, housemasters included, appeared to be imbued with a generous spirit, suited to the requirements of the occasion; on that day alone of the whole year, we were allowed *two* helpings of pudding; and although few boys ever availed themselves of the opportunity, they all nevertheless fully appreciated the liberality of the housemasters. Many suggestions, of course *generous* suggestions, were offered to account for this goodness, but they need not be recounted here.

Immediately after the excellent repast was over, those boys who respected their clothes put on "hashers" and made ready for the fight.

By the appointed hour the whole school had turned out on "green," and the boys ranged on their respective sides, lemon in hand, eagerly awaited the signal to begin.

Punctually, as the chapel clock struck two, a bell was rung and the fight opened with a furious charge from both sides. The ground soon became covered with lemons, which in turn also soon became covered with dirt, a circumstance which added considerably to the pleasure of receiving them in one's eyes.

Often too, some boys anxious for

the comfort of some special friend, would fill his lemons with ink, vinegar, mustard, or any other ingredient that might suggest itself to his mind as likely to produce the effect he desired.

My readers can, no doubt, picture to themselves the fight better than I can describe it, since they will agree with me in considering the word "beastly" far too mild a term to apply to the custom, in order to convey an adequate idea of its "piggishness."

After the fight had raged for twenty minutes, a bell again sounded, warning the boys that it was time to desist from throwing any more muddy lemons in each other's eyes.

How the custom grew into an abuse is not difficult to conceive. For the twenty minutes during which the fight lasted, no distinction existed between upper and lower boys; all were on the same level; a fag could, with impunity, spend his entire energy in attacking his fag-master; no after punishment would accrue to him for his conduct. Hence it was that all thoughts of a fair and honest fight vanished completely before a secret and more powerful thirst for revenge!

Revenge, what for? it may be asked, and indeed it is not so easy a matter to answer. In most cases, it was revenge for some imaginary wrong inflicted by the monitor upon the boy.

Many monitors, for various reasons, were unpopular in the extreme; some elated at, perhaps, their sudden elevation to the monitorial ranks, would "swagger" and give themselves airs; others would incur a similar hatred to these by unintentionally offending one or more boys in the performance of what they considered to be their duty.

But no matter how they came to be so, there were always unpopular monitors, and woe betide them on Shrove Tuesday!

Those boys who were offended at a certain monitor, would seize upon this

* Carthusian for jerseys.