

H——I evidently means it too. Little P—— understands, and reserves his fun for the morning.

On waking, I tried to persuade myself that the uncomfortable feeling I had was the result of a troublesome dream, but that it was a reality and a most painful reality I soon realized in presence of the sickening feeling of suspense which came over me more and more as the events of the past night rose up before my mind. On these mornings I was always turned in my rep.

On returning to my house from first school, I feel less at ease than ever. I have no appetite for breakfast. I tell Tom to keep mine hot for me till all is over. In Hall there are five or six fellows examining the sticks; I join them.

"What a pile there are; how many do you say? fourteen? I wonder whether N——n thinks there are more fellows in it than there are?"

Little P—— construes the sight very differently, "No, not a bit of it. You will each get about fifteen cuts, and he has allowed for a few break-ages!"

"Consoling to say the least of it."

Coming out of Hall I see M——y——e standing by the fireplace with a semi-belligerent expression of eye and shoulder, intended to represent the carelessness of indifference. Yet he wishes it were over; we all do! D—— is looking out of the window, trying to hide his colourless face! In long-room we breakfast at 8.30, in Hall at 9. As the latter hour approaches, the monitors go into Hall! N——n has just gone in.

"Now H——I," shouts out little P——, "a few minutes and"—he did not finish his sentence. At that moment an ominous sound was heard.

We all knew it well! The tables were being moved aside to give room for the operation.

Pea-a-a-g!

Some one answers; all who were engaged in last night's performance are wanted in Hall! We go in.

"Shut the door!"

We were a little cheered when N——n seemed surprised there were not more fellows.

"I need not tell you why you are here; have any of you an excuse?"

"No!" (At least we could think of none at that moment!)

N——n takes up a stick, "Cock up in school-order!"

Meanwhile a crowd has collected in long-room, round Hall door, anxious to hear what is being said. I can hear some one, who has secured a position near the key-hole, reporting all he sees to those around; he holds up his hand, it's going to begin.

Whack, whack, whack, whack!

"Is that all?"

"No, its only the stick that has broken."

The whacking is resumed.

"Eight, nine, ten."

"That's all, he is coming out."

A movement in the crowd; the door opens and I come out. I run into the buttery to get my breakfast, and try to relieve myself of the pain by hard rubbing. By, Jove! Doesn't it sting! In a few minutes I am much better, and really enjoy my breakfast! The whacking is still going on; it is C——e's turn; "Why, how funnily it sounds on him! He has padded." "Yes, he's caught too! What a duffer he is!" C——e comes out of Hall in a passion. "What did N——n say?" I ask him. "He will see me again at twelve o'clock!" Poor C——e! I pity him!

*(To be continued.)*