

"And you call yourself a Catholic, Hardy?"

There was such a degree of contempt in the voice and gesture of the new-comer, that Hardy blushed for very shame. Muttering something about narrow-minded bigotry, he hurried away to hide his confusion.

As Rodgers knelt by his bed that night he was assailed with quite a shower of stockings, sponges, pillows, etc. Without showing the slightest alarm or irritation he finished his prayers. Many whispered from their beds, "The new-comer is a plucky fellow at any rate." Henceforth he was seldom disturbed at his devotions.

There was trouble yet in store for him. He found next day that many of his friends looked coldly on him; some even refused to let him join in their games, alleging that they wanted no "bigots" there. He found a few, indeed—and in every school such a few will be found—who showed him some kindness, and defended him from the worst of his enemies, though they persisted in advising him to give in. But what grieved him above all was that he had to suffer most from his fellow Catholics. They persecuted him most unrelentingly, and tried to make his life as miserable as they could. They little knew the strong character they had to deal with. Rodgers weathered this storm. He had many qualities that endeared him to the school-boy heart. Sharp and quick of intellect in class, in the playground he promised to become a champion. He was overflowing, too, with good nature, which no amount of annoyance could stamp out. Before many days had passed he was popular among an ever widening circle of friends. Friday came, however, bringing with it a fresh load of troubles.

There was some excitement in the refectory as all eyes were fixed on the new-comer to see if he would stick to his colors. The soup was passed to him.

"Go it, Rodgers, or 'twill be worse for you," said Monks.

"Don't be an ass, Rodgers," Hardy shouted up from the end of the table.