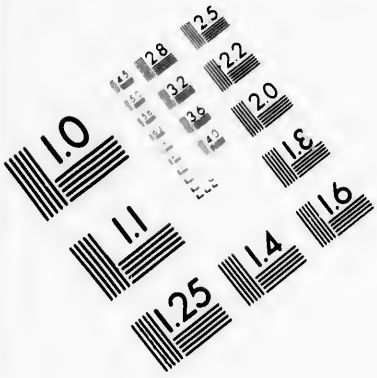

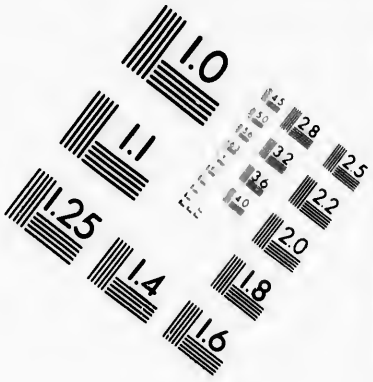

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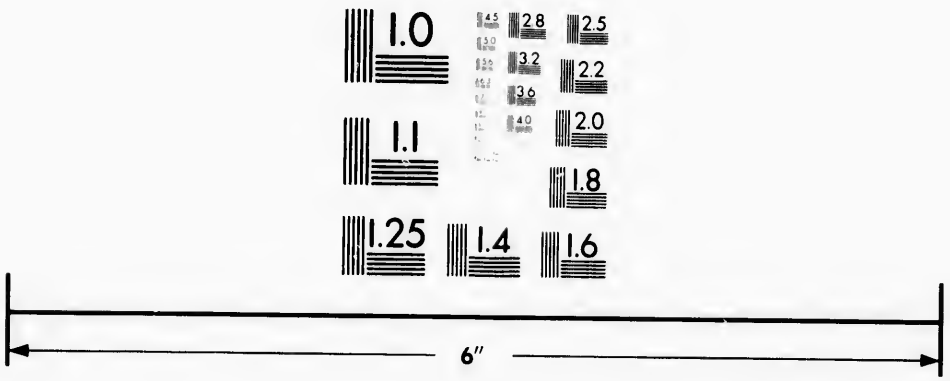

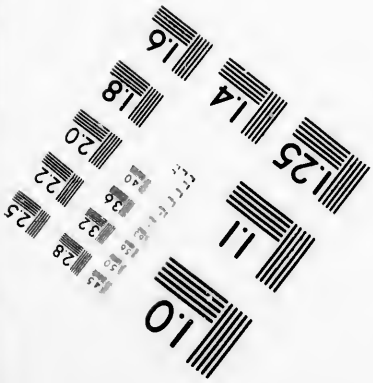

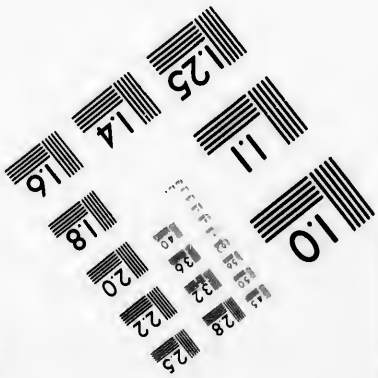

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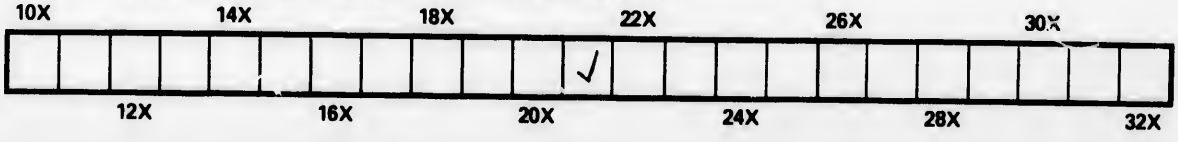

"A Clever Story; a Mate for 'Tom Brown's Schooldays.'"—F. W. M.

Jickling's Experiences

A REMINISCENCE OF ETON LIFE.

EDITED BY J. Robertson

Wm. Drysdale & Co., Publishers,
MONTREAL.
1896.

PREFACE BY THE EDITOR.

The story contained in the following pages had its first appearance in "The Cornhill Magazine" a number of years ago: but as on recent perusal, it commended itself to the present Editor as worthy of separate publication, it is here reproduced.

The story admirably sets forth the influence which one youth—possessed by a high and worthy ideal of life—will almost certainly exert over another who has no ideal at all; and shows how a wild and lawless nature may be subdued unto higher and nobler purposes.

It is not Religion alone, as commonly understood, that works change for good in human hearts. The divine spirit and energy has many and diverse methods of operation; and, not unfrequently, ways which to our narrow vision seem most unlikely to attain the end desired are, by the spirit's power, made potent for good.

But whether one considers the moral of the story or not, no one can read it without perceiving the forcible charm of the writing, the nervous energy of the style, the clear, terse English idioms employed, and the fine power of portraiture and description here displayed.

For reasons that have seemed sufficient to him, the present Editor has somewhat condensed the story from its original length and form; but all the main features of incident and language have been carefully preserved; and the hope is entertained that it may be perused with interest and pleasure by all kind readers into whose hands it may come.

J. R.

Montreal, Xmas, 1895.

JICKLING'S EXPERIENCES.

A REMINISCENCE OF ETON LIFE.

I.

AT the time when Eton School—not having as yet swollen to its present bulky proportions—contained only six hundred and fifty fellows; and Harrow, its arch-rival, something like half that number; I, the present writer, was sent to Eton; and became, after the usual fortnight's grace, the fag of Asheton—a fellow in the *eight* in the upper division of the fifth form and captain of my tutor's house.

I think it better to say right here, however, that this tale is not designed to commemorate experiences of my own, but those of a fellow-fag called Jickling; Jickling, who had already been at school a year when I arrived there, and who was, by common consent, accounted the most idle, unkempt, incapable, and, in a general way, the least promising among the six hundred and fifty of us.

It is a painful thing to say, but nobody esteemed Jickling. His house-fellows were ashamed of him and regarded him as a black sheep in their small and eminently tidy fold. Our tutor, also,

viewed him with a cool and careful eye. If the question had been put to anyone in the school, who was the least desirable fellow to mess with, or indeed, to be intimately associated with, in any way, the answer would readily have been "Jickling;" and this adverse opinion of him was doubly helped along by the cynicism, not to say effrontery, with which Jickling bore off his shortcomings, for of shame at his own unworthiness, Jickling possessed none.

Thus, for instance, I had not been five minutes in his company on the night of my arrival, before he informed me, not a little to my consternation when I understood what he meant, that he "expected to be *swished*" the very next morning for having, in the train down from Paddington, blown a mouthful of peas into the face of an engine-driver, and been "*nailed*" in the act by a master who had got into the carriage next his at Ealing. And this communication was quite of a piece with Jickling's habitual confidences regarding himself.

He was one of those unfortunate boys who seemed pre-doomed to go wrong. Though provided with good clothes enough, his dress was always shabby and ill-matched the trousers of one suit doing duty with the waistcoat of another; and though he was supplied with money sufficient and more than sufficient for all his needs, yet he never had a sixpence, and was always in debt.

Desperate passages of arms would take place between him and Spankie, the tartman, as he endeavored to glide unobserved past that worthy at school hours, and not only with Spankie, but with

all the other tart-men, Spankie's colleagues, who lined the low wall which bisects the college part of High Street and forms a bulwark to the school-yard. No sooner, indeed, did Jickling heave in sight — with his necktie all awry, his hat brushed the wrong way, and his pockets bulging out with fives-balls, stumps of half-eaten pears, and ink-blotted manuscripts — than Spankie himself, red-faced Jobie, grey-coated old Brian, and certain other desultory vendors, who sold apples peripatetically, would set up a chorus of howls and appeals, that generally lasted all the way till the college gate was reached, shrilly calling upon Jickling for pence long overdue.

In school, Jickling was as unsatisfactory as *out* of it. When called up to construe, he never knew where to go on; often he had brought the wrong book; and somehow, he almost always contrived to get himself sentenced to write out and translate the lesson before he had fairly entered on it.

And when he *had* started, who shall describe the torrent of solecisms, false quantities, and hideous errors of translation that flowed imperturbably from his lips? With a coolness utterly and unquestionably beyond rivalling — he would declare that *bis* was the dative plural of *bos*, and *sum* the accusative singular of *sus*; and that the correct rendering of "*basis virtutum constantia*" was "Constancy is the basest of the virtues."

Sometimes indeed — under immediate and forcible threats of condign punishment — he would so far prepare his lesson as to go through it twice

attentively with "*a crib*" before proceeding into school; and on such occasions his memory not being very retentive he would generally treat his hearers to something in this style, reading first the Latin lines in a high-pitched monotone.

"Nux ego juncta viæ cum sim sine crimine vitæ,
A populo saxis prætereunte petor," etc.,

which he would proceed to construe as follows: *Nux ego* I a nut; *juncta viæ* joined to the roadway; *cum sim sine crimine* since I am without crime; *petor* am sought for; *prætereunte* as I go by; *a populo saxis* by the Saxon people! . . . And so on, until pulled up by a dismayed howl from the Master, and enjoined to write out Ovid's "Medea to Jason," in a legible hand, and bring it the next day at one o'clock.

So there was Jickling, at the very bottom of his division—a boy of about twelve, with lank hair of a muddy flaxen color; fingers permanently ink-stained; Balmoral boots that were never laced; and a *curious, white face* that looked inquiringly at you, out of a pair of eyes so wild, shifty and defiant in their expression, that it was a wonder Nature had not taken them to put into the head of a polecat.

Now, that Jickling should have flourished in our midst was a circumstance astonishing enough, seeing that of all the staid and proper youngsters I have ever met with, we, Etonians, were certainly the most exemplary; but that he should have been the fag of such a fellow as Asheton was a

downright puzzle; for Asheton being captain of the house, and entitled to four fags, might have chosen anyone he pleased, and was under no compulsion whatever to select Jickling, who burnt his toast for him, spilled the gravy of sausages over his trousers, and who when sent to carry a note invariably took it to the wrong place.

There could have been no community of thought or sympathy between Asheton and Jickling, for the two were simply as opposite to each other as white is to black, or coal to sugar. What Jickling did wrong, Asheton did well; and what Asheton did well, Jickling was morally certain to do wrong. Asheton was a quiet and finished type of that class of boys who at Eton are termed "swells"—a subtle designation, the exact meaning of which it is not very easy to explain to outsiders. A boy was not a swell because he dressed well, or played cricket well, or was high up in the school. All this had to be touched off, with certain social qualities, and a great—I was going to say "almost exaggerated" air of personal dignity before the "swell" was complete.

Now Asheton was a "swell" *nem. con.* He was not surpassingly excellent in anything, but he was good at everything; and might be relied on in everything. He pulled a capital oar, without great dash, but conscientiously and in fine form; at cricket and fives and football he was also counted among the first; but in these and all other pastimes the great merit of him was that his play was *sure*. As he played to-day so would he play to-morrow; there was nothing unequal in

him, no wavering, no unexpected breaking down at a moment when all the hopes of his friends were centred on his performance.

Personally he was neatness itself. About eighteen years old, lightly built, and rather above middle weight, he had a handsome aristocratic face of essentially English mould, though perhaps a little too serious for his age, and a figure that was fitly set off by the absolutely faultless style in which he dressed. When I have added that in his school-work Asheton shone pretty much as he did in athletics that is uniformly and moderately *well*, without any startling brilliancy I shall, I think, have said all that is needful to fill up his portrait. No one would have said of Asheton that he was one of those fellows who blossom out into Pitts, or Cannings, or Wellingtons, but he was a boy who might develop when the season came, into an irreproachable M.P., or, if he took to soldiering, into an officer, who in victory or defeat, would make an unflinching stand with his men against quintuple odds, and die, firm to his post, with cool intrepidity.

II.

Having said this much by way of introducing the two chief characters of my story, Jickling and Asheton, I take up the thread of my narrative at the point where, having just arrived at Eton in the month of September, 1850, I learned that

untidy Jickling and I were to be "fag-mates" to Asheton. It was not Jickling himself who brought me this piece of news, but Stumps minor, brother to Stumps in the Eleven, who entered my room on the next morning but one, after my arrival—holding a copper kettle in one hand and a plate of muffins in the other, and said:

"Rivers, you're to come down with me to Asheton's room."

I cannot say this summons caused me anything like pleasure; for, at the private school whence I came, the word "fag" had been held up *in terrorem* over me by everybody who had ever pronounced it. Certain of my fellows, amiably jealous no doubt of my going to Eton, had given me clearly to understand that as a preliminary to all further relations with me, my fag-master would begin by having me tossed in a blanket, and Jickling, who had apparently divined the existence of my fears, had taken benevolent pains to develop them, and he was in the very course of gloomily relating to me, how this very Asheton had once "fagged him to go to the top of 'Long Walk'—a distance of four miles and a half—walking all the way on his hands, legs uppermost," when he was severely interrupted by Greegleby, four foot high, but irascible and the protector of the weak, who joined us on the pavement outside our tutor's house, and cried out indignantly:

"Shut up, Jickling; its a stupid shame *greening* new fellows."

"If I waited a week he wouldn't be *greenable*,"

answered Jickling, coolly; and saying this he turned one of the pockets of his trousers inside out, and proceeded to remove a piece of Everton toffee that was sticking in a corner thereof, and added, while sucking the toffee, "New fellows are like puppies—they don't begin to see clear till the ninth day."

"Don't mind what he says, Rivers," exclaimed young Greegleby, loftily, "nobody pays any attention to him."

"No, nobody," concurred young Blazepole, whose head was like an orange-colored mop, and who leaning against a doorpost, was gravely counting what remained of three pounds he had brought back with him after an equitable settlement of all his debts.

Yet somehow, these assurances must have left me not altogether convinced, for it was with something very like a feeling of being about to suffer tribulation, that on the morning in question I obeyed the summons of Stumps minor, and followed *him*, and the *coffee-kettle*, and the *muffins*, down to the room where Asheton lodged.

I remember this room as if I were standing in it now, on that bright September morning, with my heart going "thump-thump" against my brown waistcoat, and my cheeks flushed with anticipatory emotion. It was a largish room, with two windows, curtained with some warm crimson stuff, which I took for silk, and filled with pictures, and stuffed bird cases, and flower-boxes, glowing with scarlet geraniums; and other knicknacks in such

abundance as to make the room seem almost alive with comfort, and color and cheerfulness. Under a set of branching antlers which were placed high above the mantle-piece, were three ribbons, scarlet, and dark blue, and light blue, and lettered respectively, "Saint George," "Brittania," and "Victory," the names of three boats to which Asheton had in turn belonged; and holding the post of honor was a picture, of no great merit in itself, but a picture of a country-house of home executed by a mother's or sister's hand—the first thing that struck you as you went in, and the *one* towards which the eye most gladly returned after roaming over everything else.

I took in all this at a glance, and I had leisure to examine the whole room in detail, while Stumps minor and Blazepole were laying the breakfast things. For Asheton had not turned round on our entry, but was seated at his bureau reading up his seventy lines of Horace for eleven o'clock school, by the aid of Smart's translation, and as Stumps did not see fit to call his attention to my presence, neither of course did I. At last, the breakfast table having been made ready by the united efforts of Stumps and Blazepole, his attention was directed to it, and it was then his eyes lit upon me.

"Oh, I beg your pardon," he said civilly; "I didn't know you were in the room. Why didn't you tell me, Stumps;" and then seating himself at the table, he continued: "Your name is Rivers," I believe? "Northamptonshire or Somersetshire, Rivers?"

"Somersetshire," I answered, feeling very much like adding "Sir."

"And in what form are you placed?"

"In lower fourth, I replied, unable to take my eyes off him, as he ate a muffin, waiting till the mustard had arrived, which Blazepole had forgotten."

"Well, you are excused from fagging till next Thursday week," he rejoined, "and after that you'll fag for me along with Stumps, Blazepole and Jickling. But, by the way, where *is* Jickling? Has he *shirked* fagging?" And Asheton looked up from his plate and round the room inquiringly.

Stumps did not immediately answer. He had no respect for Jickling, personally, but he did respect those time-honored principles that prohibit tale-telling; so, with more solicitude for the interest of these principles than for those of abstract truth, he proceeded to invent an excuse for his absent fag-mate, not knowing more than the man in the moon to what that absence was due.

"I think my tutor sent for him after prayers," he said.

"What about?" said Asheton.

"Probably for *not* being at prayers," responded Stumps bravely.

"But he *was* at prayers," remarked Asheton.

"Then it must have been for something else," said Stumps perplexed; but he was spared the trouble of drawing further on his imagination, for at that moment there was a precipitate shuffling of feet in the passage, and a double entry—Blaze-

pole with the mustard, and Jickling himself, with nothing.

It was the first time Asheton had seen Jickling that term, so he held out his hand. "How do you do, Jickling?" he said.

"How do, Asheton," mumbled Jickling, extending a dusky paw.

"Late, of course," pursued Asheton.

"Yes," returned Jickling, withdrawing the paw, and thrusting it deep into a trouser pocket, where, finding some coppers, he began to rattle them.

"And what's this I hear," asked Asheton, helping himself to the mustard, and speaking without a smile, "that you've already been flogged by way of beginning the term well?"

"Yes," said Jickling, gloomily; "I had seven 'swishes.'"

"For shooting peas! was it not?" inquired Asheton.

"They were small peas," remonstrated Jickling; "Besides, I don't see what right a master has to "*nail*" me when I'm in a colored tie. I was in the train hadn't yet reached Eton, nor put my black tie on. The train stops at Hanwell. I fish out a pea-shooter, and let fly at the engine-driver of a neighboring train. A master pokes his head out of the next carriage window, and says, "What's your name? Where do you board? I shall complain of you." "I call that snobbish," ended Jickling.

"What do you call shooting the peas?" asked Asheton quietly. Jickling stared; but after turn-

ing the matter over in his mind, declined to take any notice of this question, and re-commenced to rattle his coppers.

"Ah! that reminds me," broke in Asheton, "before you've spent all your money, please to pay me your football subscription."

Jickling made an excessively wry face. Not so Stumps minor and Blazepole, who with the alacrity of habit, and without being asked, drew out their purses and laid on Asheton's table the sum of three shillings and sixpence. Jickling in the meanwhile had rummaged in his pockets and produced a sovereign, which he gazed at with an eye of affection as apparently his last. Then after a good deal more fumbling he managed to scrape together the requisite smaller sum and laid it on the table.

Asheton, who had been quietly proceeding with his repast, now looked up fixedly at Jickling, and said, "Have you paid all your debts, Jickling?"

"What debts?" asked Jickling, sulky and embarrassed.

"Your "ticks" to Spankie, Jobie, and the other men at the wall; you owed them all something."

"Yes," growled Jickling, more and more sulky.

"Then, you owe no one anything now?"

"Nothing," answered Jickling, with a sullen manner, and a morose look that bore an economy of truth on the face of them.

"Well, then," returned Asheton, either believing or pretending to believe, "you are free to

make a *fresh start* now, and to turn over a new leaf for the future—and you must try and do it for your own sake. I don't want to say anything unpleasant, mind you," he added, in a voice which I think took us all aback from its sudden seriousness, "but up to this time, Jickling, your life at Eton has been *a failure*; and as we all in this house are concerned for our own honor in not seeing you going to the bad; I mean to keep a sort of a look-out over you this half. Yes; I don't mean to spy over you, or pry about you, or anything of that kind; but I shall make an attempt to render you fit for something, as you've hitherto been fit for nothing. Last half, and the half before, you never played, and never worked, you spent your time mooning about, with your face unwashed, your lessons unlearned, and no sort of object in life but to catch flies, count the dogs in Fisher—the birdman's yard, run into idiotic mucks and get swished. That won't do. Be anything you please, play cricket, or boat, or study, but be *something*. Going on as you are doing, you'd be a confirmed muff, and perhaps a leg, by the time you're twenty; and then, of course, you'd lay it half to me, and say that if Asheton, who was your fag-master, had done his duty, you would'nt be where you are. And that's true. If I had a brother here, I should'nt let him follow the road you're treading, so I don't see why I should allow you. I'll say more, I don't think it would be honest or fair to allow you. And now that's enough," concluded Asheton, quietly pouring himself out some tea; "you may run along all of you; and

as for you, young man," (turning his eyes on me) "bear in mind what I've just said to Jickling. Be *something*, give yourself an aim; and if it's an honorable one, you won't be sorry for it by and by."

In another minute we were all standing outside Asheton's door, and I (whom his few words had impressed more than any pulpit sermon I had ever heard) drew a sigh of relief to think what my fears of the morning had all come to, and what manner of fellow it was I was going to serve.

"Is he always like that?" I asked of Jickling, with some emotion.

"Yes," answered Jickling, in huge indignation; "he's always fond of jawing. What business has he to question me about my ticks? They don't concern him. And why does he say that he will spy and pry into me all this half? He has'nt the right to do it. No, he has'nt. And its hateful snobbishness of him to pretend he has."

Whereupon Jickling turned round facing the door, and raising his hand to a level with his countenance, made, I regret to state, with his displayed fingers, that gesture which, in all times and in all countries, has been expressive of contemptuous defiance.

III.

Our life at Eton was by no means a monotonous one, and a new fellow especially had so many things to visit, to be initiated in, and to

marvel at, that his first month was a sort of honeymoon, very different from the first month at ordinary schools. My comrades also quickly inducted me into the science of taking things easy with regard to school-work; and Jickling who was an apt teacher that way, would have had me adopt the same spirit in all the other businesses and obligations of our small world.

Somehow he had taken a fancy to me, had Jickling. It must have been my *newness* that did it, and also the circumstance that we two were neighbors which allowed him, by the way, to bear down upon me at all hours, and borrow articles of my property which he scrupulously forgot to return.

Jickling was not only one of those boys who are bent upon going wrong themselves, but he dearly loved to drag others into scrapes with him. I was warned of this fatal propensity on his part both by Greegleby and Blazepole; Stumps minor also conveyed a friendly admonition to me on the subject; and Asheton one morning sent for me on purpose to say that I must be more careful when Jickling was by to advise me. But these counsels, though they kept me from falling into any of Jickling's more dangerous snares, did not remove him from my company. He was always with me; he acknowledged with a candour that did him honor, that he "liked fellows whom you could humbug till all was *blue*," and on my soliciting an explanation, he abruptly and gravely asked me when my next birthday was?

"In October," I answered naïvely.

"Next month?" said he. "Well, it's to be hoped (and his eyes glared on me half intimidatingly)—it's to be hoped that you'll do what's usual, and not be mean and shabby as some new fellows are. Every new fellow who's worth his weight in rags, goes to the head master, Dr. Goodford, and asks him to give the whole school *a holiday* on the first birthday he spends here, only the rule is, to ask a month in advance, so as to prevent mistakes, and allow Goodford time to order the fireworks."

"What fireworks?" I inquired.

"Why the fireworks that are let off in the playing-fields on a new fellow's birthday," answered Jickling. "And then there's the ginger wine. After the fireworks, ginger wine's handed round, and everybody has a glassful; fifth form, two glasses full. You'll have to see to all that," he added impressively.

Now there was nothing improbable in any of this to my fresh and unsuspecting mind. At my private school (we had numbered just twelve there) every birthday had been an occasion for festivity, and ginger wine had always formed a prominent feature in the day's entertainment. Accordingly I saw no reason why it should not be so at Eton; nay, I considered that Eton, being the worthier place, would probably hold the more strenuously to a worthy custom. So, that self-same afternoon, I stood, by Jickling's direction, under the colonnade of the school-yard, in the presence of Dr. Goodford and of all the school præpostors gathered together, as was the rule, to deliver their bills of

absentees, or of boys on the sick list, after three o'clock chapel.

Dr. Goodford, seeing me stand beside him, with my hat on, began by asking me, with stately courtesy, whether I "had a cold in my head."

I was about to answer that — "a tiresome cold, which had afflicted me some six weeks before had happily disappeared, and to thank him for so kindly inquiring after it" — when an opportune nudge from a præpostor on the right, and a cavernous whisper of "take off your hat!" from a præpostor on the left brought me to a vague sense of the situation.

I uncovered, reddening; and Dr. Goodford then, (with the same stately politeness as before), begged to know to what he was indebted for the pleasure of my visit."

I spoke without a shadow of diffidence, and asked "for a holiday — a *non dies* — for the whole school (Jickling had furnished me with the precise words) in honor of my birthday, which fell on the twenty-fifth of October, and which was now near at hand."

I have not forgotten to this day, the interminable laughter that followed, nor the convulsions of one particular præpostor — aged eleven, and habitually mournful — who rolled about against the colonnade, holding his hand to his waistband, and shrieking "Oh my! Oh my!" from the intensity of his feelings.

I was known by the name of "*Non Dies*" long afterwards, and Heaven only knows what

never-ending jokes this first successful and cruel "hoax" of Jickling's entailed upon me.

Asheton was the only one who did not laugh at it; and as he had seriously set himself to the regeneration of Jickling, he told that youth roundly and firmly, at fagging next morning, that he meant to have an end of this.

Jickling sulked. Ever since that disagreeable morning when Asheton had hinted at the necessity of Jickling turning over a new leaf, Jickling's life had not been a happy one. Asheton insisted upon his washing his hands and face properly, brushing his clothes, and keeping his room in order; and nothing could have been more distasteful to Jickling, who began to see that a firm hand was exercising its sway over him. Asheton even went the length of seeing for himself every evening that Jickling learned his lessons for the next day, and did not pass his time tracing patterns on his bureau, with a red-hot poker, as he much preferred to do.

One morning about this time Asheton caught both Jickling and myself in the very act of bolting up High street, when we should both have been upon the football ground.

"Jickling, look here," exclaimed Asheton, "You're teaching Rivers to be as disreputable as yourself;" and then turning to me, he demanded,

"What are you doing with Jickling, Rivers?"

"He was going to show me a dog," I stammered.

"A mangy brute you swore you had got rid of at the end of last half," said Asheton indig-

nantly to Jickling. "Now I'll be bound you meant Rivers to buy this dog of you. Didn't he, Rivers? Tell me the truth, Rivers?"

I hung my head and was silent; *such* was indeed the object of our expedition. Jickling had bargained to sell me a mongrel cur which I did'nt want, nor he either for fifteen shillings and sixpence. He had assured me that it was part of established and unsurmountable usage to possess a dog, and that by not having one, I should be holding myself up as an object of scorn and derision to the community. We were on our way to the bird-fancier's, where Jickling kept the brute, when Asheton met us.

Asheton guessed much of this by our faces, and though we were standing in the most frequented part of the street, and though it was not his habit to take the slightest notice of a lower boy in public, he dealt Jickling such a box on the ear as almost sent him backward into a shop-window.

"A fellow who will sell a worthless dog to a credulous school-fellow at twelve, will sell spavined horses at twenty, and be kicked off race courses at twenty-five," he exclaimed, pale with anger. "Now cut along both of you in front of me to Fisher's, and I'll follow. We'll just see into this matter."

The pair of us trooped on together without a word. Jickling dogged and sullen, but not crying, for he was not the fellow to shed tears at a slap of the face, or indeed at any other physical mishap. Asheton walked at a safe distance behind near

enough to preclude all idea of escape on Jickling's part, far enough not to let it be seen that he had us both in custody.

In this way we reached a small and dark bird-cage shop, which we entered, and so passed down a long and narrow passage at the back into a yard, which was like all bird and dog-fanciers' yards filled with curs chained to kennels; plaintive terriers which had their ears cropped and were whining shiveringly; wool-stuffed and pin-trussed bird skins set up in the sun to dry; melancholy rabbits in hutches, and so on. Jickling's dog, conspicuous by a total absence of breed and by deficiency of hair, was seated on his hind quarters, and set up a dismal music at our approach.

There was an old man, with a weather-beaten hat, giving a puppy milk out of a broken saucer. He looked up, expecting to see some of the lower boys, who were his most constant customers, but on catching sight of a fellow in the *eight*, he rose from his stooping posture, and fingered the brim of his head-dress.

"Fisher, which is Mr. Jickling's dog?" asked Asheton, brusquely.

The man addressed as Fisher pointed to the beast, and added apparently for his own private satisfaction, for he could scarcely expect that anybody else would concur in the remark,

"And a 'andsome dawg too."

"Is he paid for?" continued Asheton.

Fisher glanced at Jickling as if to know what this meant. Jickling wore such a hang-dog expression that there was no making out. Asheton

had taken out his purse, which was a manner of eloquence that Fisher seemed to understand. He cast a second look to Jickling and then said :

"Yes, sir, but there be twelve shillings owin' for the keep and doctorin' of him. Very ill that dawg has been took more than a bucketful of physic last holidays!" And as if to assent, the cur raised his head and piped the most doleful notes.

"Did Jickling tell you there were twelve shillings owing?" inquired Asheton of me.

I shook my head. Jickling seeming to apprehend a second edition of the box on the ear, backed to a prudent distance. But Asheton simply said :—

"It looks, Jickling, as if you had meant to sell Rivers this dog without telling him that he was virtually in pawn, and leaving him to find it out for himself after he had paid you the money ; but as this pretty transaction was not completed, you are entitled to the benefit of the doubt." "Now, pay Fisher."

In sulky silence Jickling fumbled for his purse, and presently muttered that there were only six shillings in it. Asheton looked for himself, and then said he would pay the other six shillings, and did.

"And now, what's the sum you were to give Jickling, Rivers?" proceeded he, looking hard at me.

"Fifteen-and-six," I answered, piteously.

"What a muff you must be!" he rejoined with a half-smile ; and then turning to Jickling he said :—

"Well, Jickling, I shall buy your dog of you, you may consider that I owe you nine-and-six."

"A 'andsome dawg, sir," repeated Fisher with suppressed enthusiasm; "What's to be done with him?"

"Since you admire him so much, you may keep him," answered Asheton. "And now, you two," he continued, be back to college, and go off to the football field. "Your nine and six, Jickling, I shall give to Spankie. You told me at the beginning of the half that you owed him nothing. I've learned that you never paid him at all."

"I did pay him," grumbled Jickling. "Spankie has told you a lie."

But as if to render the discomfiture of Jickling complete that morning, we were no sooner out of Fisher's shop than who should come waddling down the pavement but this very Spankie, who immediately made a wheezy dart towards Jickling, and spluttered, in the fat way peculiar to him,

"Ah, Jickling, sir!" you're a bad lot, sir! Owed me ten bob, you did, sir; and never thought of giving me a sixpence of it. No, sir! not you, sir! catch you, sir!"

"There is no reason to excite yourself," said Asheton coldly to Spankie—for he evidently disliked to see an Eton fellow insulted in this pitiful way by the tart-seller—and he handed Spankie a half sovereign.

"This," said he, in a dignified tone that quickly brought Spankie's greasy hat from off his venerable head, "this is money I owe Mr. Jickling, and he has requested me to pay you. But for the future, mind you, whatever Mr. Jickling

takes of you will be paid for there and then, you understand."

Spankie either did, or didn't understand, but he made a profound inclination of the head, saying:

"Yes, sir; of course, sir; I always knew I could trust Mr. Jickling, sir. 'Ave a apple, Mr. Jickling. That's what I've just been to Windsor about, sir, to buy apples at the market, sir, a fine Ribstone penny a piece, sir pay me when you please, sir."

Habit was so inveterate in Jickling that despite everything he had just gone through, he actually stretched out his hand on hearing that a new credit was opened to him, and would have taken the forbidden fruit had not Asheton pushed him roughly by the shoulder, exclaiming:

"You incorrigible young beggar, you! I declare there's no trusting you, even in one's sight. Now run off, and if I don't find you at football when I come, you'll see what will happen. As for you, Spankie, I warn you that if you trust Mr. Jickling again, I shall forbid him to pay you. Whatever he owes you I shall get from him, and hand over to my tutor to put into the poor box. You know I keep my word."

We played football, Jickling and I, that day; and were kept severely to that pastime on every subsequent holiday or half-holiday. Asheton reasoned that while playing football we were at least out of mischief.

But Jickling was not reformed by any means; and, before this could be effected, he had still one quagmiry scrape to wade through, which, whilst

it almost cut his career of scrapes short to eternity, was indirectly the means of making him turn over a new leaf, much more decidedly and definitely than Asheton or anybody else would ever have dared to hope. This scrape was brought about by Windsor Fair.

IV.

Windsor Fair was an annual episode that enlivened the month of October. It was a three days' Saturnalia, during which the royal borough was turned upside down, and all Eton kept in a state of adventurous effervescence.

Eton boys were forbidden attending the Fair, owing to cheap gambling that was conducted by means of low roulette tables in a spot called Bachelor's Acre—but like many other prohibitions at Eton, this one was made, with a very complete knowledge on the part of the masters, that nobody had the slightest thought of paying any attention to it.

Now it stood to reason that Windsor Fair should be to Jickling the one bright date in the year's calendar. It was better than the Eton and Harrow match, and better than the 4th of June; for you broke *no rule* by going to Lord's or to Surly Hall, whereas in the Windsor Fair there was first the fun itself, then the pleasure of being vainly chased by a master you hated, then the ineffable delight of breaking rules—all three rolled into one—perfect bliss in short.

It therefore fell like a thunderclap on Jickling when, the evening before the first day of the Fair, Asheton said to him :

"Mind, Jickling, I won't have you going to the Fair, for you'll be certain to come to grief in some way if you do ; and I've made up my mind that "grief" and you are to be kept apart this half. If I hear you've been to the Fair, you shall have double fagging for a month, and something else besides."

Not go to the Fair ! Even Stumps and Blazepole thought this a stretch of prerogative, and looked compassionately on Jickling, as though he were being victimized. As for Jickling himself, he said nothing ; but I readily guessed, from the expression that stole over his stubborn face and flashed out of his shifty eyes, that to the Fair he meant to go, all prohibitions notwithstanding, nor was I wrong.

The next morning, which was the first morning of the Fair, at about half-past eight, that is after first school, I was engaged in taking a "bun and coffee," at Brown's, the pastry-cook's, in the midst of a crowd of other hungry boys, when I felt an arm laid upon my sleeve tuggingly, and I recognized the voice. It was Jickling's, and he said :

"I say, Rivers, I'm going to the Fair. Will you come?"

"And fagging?" I asked, astonished.

"I'm going to shirk it," said Jickling.

"And prayers?"

"I shall shirk them, too," was his answer.

"I dare'nt," I ejaculated, timidly.

"Then, you're a funk," responded Jickling, with great contempt. "This is just the time for the Fair. All the masters are busy between nine and eleven; there'll be two at the most there, probably only one; and we've got two whole hours and a half before eleven o'clock school. I'm going, whether you do or not; but, I must say, I should'nt like to funk a 'swishing' as you seem to do," sneered Jickling, with diabolical derision.

"I don't funk a swishing," I protested, blushing up to the roots of my hair.

"Then you funk a licking from Asheton for shirking fagging," railed Jickling, waxing more diabolical; "I don't care *that* for Asheton," he continued, with a snap of his fingers, "and I'm just going to the Fair now on purpose to spite him, the brute."

Some more conversation ensued between us; importunately tempting on his side, feebly resisting on mine; and the upshot of it was that, several other boys agreeing to join the party, I no longer had the moral courage to hold aloof, and in another ten minutes I was crossing Windsor Bridge with a beating pulse, throbbing heart, and eyes strained to see if they would not behold a master spring up, like a jack in-the-box, at the next street corner.

At Bachelor's Acre lay the focus of the Fair, there were the circuses, shooting-galleries, skittle-allies, Aunt-Sallies, roulette tables, and all the fun that is popularly described as "fast and furious." One could buy gilt gingerbread there,

flashy porcelain, false noses, masks, and other interesting objects, and indulge in such cheap gambling as may be afforded by betting pence on marbles, set to race down an inclined plane studded with pins. If you wanted excitement, your way lay to the Acre, and thither, of course, we all sped.

By this time we had forgotten that such people as masters existed, and a little intoxicated by the beating of drums, the squeaking of pandean pipes and the braying of horns, and the noise of the merry-go-rounds, we turned a ready ear to the blandishments of a costermonger, who had behind his barrow got a roulette table, screened by a kind of sackcloth contrivance of poles and ropes, and warranted to be "safe as the Bank."

Jickling, who had gathered practical experience of Windsor Fair the year before, was up to a good many moves on the board, and his first step, when behind the sackcloth screen, was to exclaim in his quick, wild voice, as he laid a shilling's worth of pence on the table:

"Now, no master *can* see us here; so if this fellow or anybody else cries out 'beware,' it'll be a false alarm, mind that."

I suppose the words could hardly have been out of his mouth, when, without the slightest warning, without a single premonitory indication of peril, the visage of the Reverend Mr. Jones, a stern master, intruded itself behind the canvas screen, and froze us all, including the costermonger-croupier himself, I think, positively breathless with astonishment and terror.

Mr. Jones must have seen us at a distance,

before we had passed behind the canvas, and he now contemplated us with the calm, sure, and sardonic eye of a sportsman who has got all his fish in the net and need not hurry himself. In his right hand he carried a pocket-book, from which he proceeded to draw the pencil, ready to write our names down.

The space of awful time that we stood looking at one another—he, grimly elate, we, speechless—can scarcely have exceeded ten seconds, but it remains branded on my memory as if it had been ten hours. My sensations were as if the soles of my boots had become of lead and soldered me to the earth.

Then Jickling, who had inspirations of genius in such moments, abruptly dashed his handkerchief over his face, and pulling me by the hand, shouted wildly:

"Come! if we bolt, he can't catch us all." And saying this, he dived through the aperture facing that where the master was standing, and rushed out precipitately, forsaking his pence to their fate, I following him, and the rest plunging after us.

Mr. Jones had made too sure; he had paused just one triumphant second too long to consider his haul before calling upon us for our names, and here was the result. But he was a man of energy and quickly buckled to. Though all the nine of us had flown headlong and in different directions—dexterously eluding the grabs he made to right and left of him—he did not forget who was the author of this misadventure, and without a

moment's hesitation started after Jickling and me, leaving the other seven to go their ways unhindered.

No pair of gazelles ever ran as Jickling and I were doing. Over the rugged ups and downs of Bachelor's Acre we leaped and bounded, with our hair flying to the winds, and our eyes starting out of their sockets at least, I answer for mine. Jickling, more cool, buttoned up his jacket as he ran, kept his elbows well pressed to his sides, and threw his head back to give his legs all their fair play.

But, straight as the crow flies, the Reverend Mr. Jones was bearing down upon us—our start of him not being more than fifty yards. The moment's agony which burst upon us when we made this discovery may be readily conceived. But it was no use feeling agonized.

"There's a passage down there which leads across Peascod Street to the Great Western Station," gasped Jickling. "Keep up, Rivers, don't blow yourself." And this was no vain caution; for, short as the distance was we had covered, I already began to feel as if I could not go much farther at this rate.

Precisely as we reached the Station, a train of old Etonians from Oxford and Cambridge—coming to see the Fair—steamed in, and these, understanding at a glance what was the matter, when they saw Jickling and I running, broke into shouts of laughter, and gaily joined in the chase as spectators to see how it would all end.

Any disinterested stranger who beheld the

spurt that followed through Windsor Thames Street must have wondered at the sight. Two well-dressed boys, with streaming faces, running at the top of their speed, as if they had been stealing spoons; fifty yards to the rear of them a clergyman of the Church of England, with a most unchristian glare on his countenance, also putting his best foot foremost; and around and behind the clergyman, the mob of University men unable to hold their cigars in their mouths from laughing, and doing their utmost to impede Mr. Jones' progress by getting in his way whenever he seemed to be gaining too fast on us.

There was one Oxford man especially whose name I afterwards learned was Martingale, Lord Martingale—who did us valiant service. He was an enthusiastic sportsman, and this "boy hunt" was to him like drinking fine elixir. Racing along by our sides, with his eye-glass screwed in his left eye, and his lavender-gloved hands describing frantic gyrations in the air, he bellowed vociferous encouragements to us in a turf voice:

"Now then, young 'uns, go it! I'll back you to win at five to one! If you're not caught, you breakfast with me at the 'White Hart' to-morrow,—champagne and all the deuce and a five-pound tip for both of you. Go it, I say, go it!"

His Lordship's noise was so terrific, and in a general way the scene was so tumultuous, that it brought out tradesmen to their doors; windows were thrown up; some ladies paused on the pavement to look and exclaim pityingly, "What a shame it was to chase those poor boys so;" dogs began to

bark, and all the tag-rag and bob-tail of Windsor scattered among the Fair booths hurried up hooting, and formed a befustianed rabble that may have been two hundred strong by the time we were at the bottom of Castle Hill, after a race that left Jickling and me with hardly the ghost of a breath in our bodies.

It became urgent now to take some immediate resolution. We could not go on longer like this. If Mr. Jones did not give up the chase as it was not likely he would do with so many looking on, and after the exasperation of a fall he had sustained we must inevitably be overtaken, for our legs were not of a strength to cope with his.

Jickling, undaunted to the end, called on me for a final spurt. We were now in the Datchet Road, close to the South-Western Station. In half a minute we had reached the door and dashed through, right into the midst of a crowd of people taking tickets for the next train. A guard attempted to stop us; Lord Martingale, who was running by our side, pushed him aside with an oath. Down the platform we sped, stumbling over luggage, jostling passengers, and trampling an unfortunate dog underfoot, amid piercing shrieks from his mistress.

At the extremity of the platform Jickling, leading the way, jumped down right in front of the engine that was about to start, crossed the line in disregard of the chorus of shouts and imprecations set up by stokers and porters, ran for a short distance between the two lines of rails, and then struck off towards some waste ground

skirting the towing-path by the river-side—Martingale and I close at his heels.

By this sharp move we gained nearly five minutes start of Rev. Mr. Jones, who had to wait on the platform till the train had started; but then—there being no objection to his crossing the line—he took up the chase once more and followed the identical path that we had taken. The very gallantry of the struggle we were making seemed to him the most cogent reason for bringing us to punishment; and accordingly as Jickling and I were pelting along the towing-path at about half a mile from the Station, congratulating ourselves on our escape, Martingale looked round and suddenly exclaimed with real dismay in his voice:

"By jove, he has stolen a march on us, *and here he is!*"

Something seemed to break inside of me; it was my last spring of courage giving way—we had run so desperately—our hopes had so revived at the thought that by passing through the Station we had given our pursuer the slip—that, to find all this was useless, and that we were on the very point of capture, was indeed cruel.

Martingale, almost as much concerned as we, cried out, with something very like emotion:

"Well, never mind, dash it! I'd rather do what you've done than win the Derby. You're a pair of young bricks—that's what you are—I'll give my solemn word for it!"

But this was after all but cold comfort. There we were with the towing-path before us, an open

space of meadow to our right, and the river rushing in a broad swift stream to our left. Escape was impossible.

In this despairing moment Jickling turned abruptly round—like a young cub at bay—looked at me with fire in his eyes, and in a voice of frenzy cried:

"I say, can you swim?" A thrill seemed to shoot through Martingale; he glanced at the river and then at me.

"Yes," I gulped, with a great dry sob; for, indeed, I *could* swim, having learned that accomplishment at home.

Jickling stroked the perspiration that was bathing his forehead, looked hungrily at me again, and in that moment his Ishmael countenance was radiant.

"But swim—in your—e-e-clothes?" he stammered. "Can you? Will you take your *oath* you can?" and he clutched me by the jacket.

"I'll take my oath I can," I panted, with the amazing courage of fear and hopelessness.

"Well, look here," said Jickling, darting a distracted glance behind him, "I'll believe you, and we'll swim for it. Only, h-hark, if you drown, I'll drown myself too; and if I do that (there is no depicting the solemnity with which he pronounced the next words) *my father, who is coming home from India next Christmas, will write to 'The Times' and say it was your fault.*"

I think I felt the terrible weight of this threat, but Martingale, who apparently saw nothing to laugh at, turned round and made a sudden and

violent use of his handkerchief. When he showed us his face again I could have sworn his eyes were not clear.

"You sha'nt drown, I'll swear that!" he said energetically; "not unless I do so too."

"We had scrambled down the bank by this time and were holding on by some tufts of grass. The water was quite deep under us, and turgid, and rapid. Opposite to us lay the Eton playing-fields. Jickling shivered; but I could see it was not for himself, but for me. He looked wistfully to see if the Master would not give up the pursuit; then, seeing that Mr. Jones (who, of course, could have no idea of what we were going to do) was close upon us, he muttered:

"We can't let ourselves be taken," and *floundered headlong in.*

Even before I had risen to the surface, after following Jickling, I could hear the tremendous uproar of astonishment and consternation and withal of admiration that arose when Mr. Jones and his companions perceived what we had done.

The throng of old Etonians, roughs and street boys that had escorted the master, crowded on the bank, straining their eyes with genuine anxiety to see what would become of us, and surely thinking that we were not going to rise again. But when it was seen that we not only rose, but struck out for the opposite shore, as well as our water-filled clothes would allow us, loud cheers burst forth and rose in peal upon peal to encourage us.

Mr. Jones, who was not, at heart, a hard man, and whose sense of humanity was now getting the

better of scholastic considerations, ran in dismay up and down the bank, shouting to us that if we would only come back, he would not report us. But we either did not believe him, or did not hear him, or thought that once in, it was as well to go the whole way.

Jickling was swimming a little in front of me his tall black hat bobbing curiously above the water like a float. As we reached mid-stream, however, he slackened so as to let me come up with him, and faltered with a sudden intense expression which I shall never forget :

"Mind—you swore you could swim ; so if anything happens, it won't be *my* fault, will—it, eh, Rivers?"

"No," I gasped, not immediately understanding what he meant ; but then it passed through me with an instantaneous flash—that we had both of us overrated our strength ; that, worn out as we were, we were making no headway against the stream ; and that Jickling had said this, because he felt himself sinking.

He turned round once again, as if wanting to say something, with a terrible expression of anguish in his eyes ; but his lips as they opened disappeared under water. I made a sort of unconscious clutch at him and he rose ; but with all the strength he had left, he shook himself free, and gasped as the stream bore him out of reach.

"*No, you'll drown.*"

And then—I remember no more *for I sank too.*

V.

It was rather more than a month after this, that Jickling and I were seated together in my room in my tutor's house, looking rather cadaverous both of us with our pale faces and close-cropped heads.

We had been within an ace of drowning. Lord Martingale, and some other old Etonians, had saved us; but brain fever had supervened, and once again after escaping a watery grave—we had seen death face to face.

However, it was all over now. We were on the fair road to convalescence; and Reverend Mr. Jones was calling upon us every day to learn how we were, and to cheer us with a few minutes talk; for he had a good heart this Mr. Jones and took a liking to us after this terrible adventure of which he was the unwilling cause.

It will scarcely be believed that, on recovering, Jickling showed himself what he had always been that is, much more delighted at the exceptional character of his last scrape, than thankful to Providence for the way in which he had come out of it.

On the particular day when we were seated in my room together, as I have just said, he was charming the leisures of convalescence by manufacturing a short paper tail, like a kite's evidently with the intention of pinning it to some comrade's jacket, as soon as he should be well enough to go into school again.

Asheton entered just as Jickling was writing

on the paper-tail the words "*Please, kick me,*" saw the work, shook his head, and said, with a kind, half-pitying laugh:

"Always the *same*, Jickling,"

Jickling did not like Asheton. He put away the paper-tail with a grumble in his pocket, as if he were afraid it was going to be taken from him, and muttered:

"I don't see any harm in that."

"No harm at all," said Asheton kindly, "if it wasn't of a piece with so many other tricks of yours, Jickling. You'll give up those tricks now after all's that happened won't you, young man?" And he laid a hand on Jickling's shoulder.

"What's happened? What tricks?" asked Jickling in great discontent, moodily twitching his thumbs.

"Well," replied Asheton, "you, and Rivers there, have become *heroes*, as it were; and it's been said that a fellow, who has the stuff in him that you showed on that Windsor Fair day, is worth better things than to be continually in hot water, and at sixes and sevens with everybody."

Jickling changed colour slightly—went to the fire, poked it violently, without its having any need of such operation—and said:

"You're always badgering me, Asheton!"

"I want to see you a good fellow, and on the highway to becoming a *man*," answered Asheton, with almost a woman's patience.

"What is, *is*," said Jickling, doggedly. "You can't unmake yourself, and you can't do what's impossible."

"And what's impossible?" ashed Asheton.

"Why," cried Jickling—breaking out, and throwing down the poker with a clatter—"it's impossible to be *this* and *that*, simply because you are told to be it; and it's impossible to do this or that, when you've not strength enough for it. What should *you* say, if I told you to win the football match against the Collegers this year? It seems you're in the Oppidan Eleven—and the collegers are stronger than you. You know it; so let *me* alone."

There was a moment's silence; then Asheton walked straight up to Jickling. He had become very pale, but looked at his unhappy fag with a steady and earnest expression in his eyes.

"I know the Collegers are stronger than we," he said, "but will you promise me"—he paused—"*will you promise me*, Jickling, that if I win the match for our side, *you'll change?*"

Jickling looked growlingly surprised, and glanced at Asheton with sullen suspicion.

"It's not much to promise," he said at last, "for you won't."

"But will you promise?" asked Asheton.

"Well then, *yes*," said Jickling, with a dry laugh and shrug.

"Very well," answered Asheton, and he left the room.

* * * * * * * *

The match, "Collegers *versus* Oppidans" played every year on St. Andrew's Day—November 30th—was the great event of the football season.

On the day of the match, Jickling and I — who had not yet been out of doors since our accident — obtained leave to go out for two hours just to see the match and return.

Play began at half-past twelve, and there was always an enormous crowd; every boy in the school, every master and master's family, and some hundred or more old Etonians being generally present. Jickling and I, with Greegleby, Blazepole and others, took up our position at that part of the ropes where the lower boys usually congregated, making a frightful "hullabaloo" in response to the gown boys, who, at every advance of their side, shouted like fanatics, as if the safety of the three kingdoms were at stake.

For those who have never seen "wall" football played, a description of the game would scarcely be intelligible; and for those who *have* seen it, it would be useless. Let me only say, therefore, that the points to be scored are *goals* and *shies*—a single "goal" out-numbering any quantity of "shies."

By the end of three-quarters of an hour's play, three "shies" had been scored by the Collegers' Eleven. The game was going dead against the Oppidans, who—opposed by a formidable trio of Collegers, named Bullockson, Hulkey and Drayman, were over-weighted, borne down and forced back into their own ground, or *calx*, every moment, notwithstanding all their gallantry.

Asheton had been performing prodigies of valour in the Oppidan course, but to no purpose. Five minutes only yet remained before the game

was finished, and the conclusion seemed foregone. Jickling, who had been watching the game with a curious, silent interest, said—with a short laugh, but rather softly as I thought,—

"Asheton's played well, but he *won't win.*"

Did Asheton hear him? Did some secret voice, I mean, whisper to him that some such words as these were passing Jickling's lips? Anyhow, he glanced towards us, or at least towards the mass of yelling lower boys—for he did not know where we personally were—and with a determined gesture took off his cap and threw it to the ground. It was the action of a man who is preparing to fight.

Then, this is what we saw. The ball was then within the Oppidan calx, but a sudden movement brought it before Asheton's foot. He stuck to it, and from that moment it did not leave him. Crouching, stumbling, running over it, playing with feet, elbows, and head altogether—he "bullied" it right down the whole length of the ground—unheeding kicks, pushes, mobbings, or anything else. Hulkey, the College "post," shinned him savagely; Drayman bore down upon him, with his shoulder, like a battering-ram; and, just as Asheton was within a few yards of the College calx, Bullockson, the captain, made a rush as of thunder, and both rolled over together—heads first—in the mud.

There was a moment's breathless lull in the whirlwind of shouts, to see who should rise first with the ball. It was *Asheton.* Limping and

bleeding, for the blood was flowing in torrents from his nose, he still crouched over the ball, and with something like superhuman energy shot it over the calx-line, followed it, raised it with his foot against the wall, and touched it with his hand; whilst the umpire in a loud voice, and amid delirious excitement shouted "shy."

A "shy" means the right to take a shot at the goal with the football the whole rival eleven standing in your way to obstruct you.

Not a boy or man spoke, as Asheton, white as a sheet, poised the ball, raised it high above his head, and with another look towards us, threw it straight forward. There was a thud, a dismayed shout from the Collegers, and the Oppidan umpire, throwing his hat in the air, cried:

"*Goal!*"

At that moment the College clock clanged out half-past one, the time for play to stop. *The Oppidans had won the match.*

With a roaring loud, deep and continuous as the waves of the sea—the Oppidans burst the ropes, and rushed on the ground, scampering towards Asheton to carry him in triumph.

Jickling and I were borne along with the rest, adding our own voices to the tumult mechanically. Asheton seemed to expect us. Just as the mighty Bullockson was taking him to lift him on his shoulders, he made a step forward, and holding out his hand to Jickling—the first and last time he had ever done such a thing to a lower boy in public—he said:

"You see, young man, it *was* possible."

Jickling said nothing, and walked along by my side, back to our tutor's house, without opening his lips. He was pale and moody, and I remember he kicked a particular pebble before him as he went, with a strange and absent expression.

At dinner time he said he was "not hungry," and went and shut himself up in his room. He had not re-appeared by tea-time; and as it so happened that I desired to see him that evening about something or other, I went to his room and opened the door. The hinges did not creak, so that he did not hear me, nor look up.

He was seated at his table, with his head buried in his arms, and he was sobbing as if his heart would break.

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Many changing years have come and gone since that memorable St. Andrew's day on which Asheton won the football match for his side, and showed the power of a resolved will to overcome obstacles apparently insurmountable; and on which Jickling—broken down at last, remembering his promise to Asheton—wept in the solitude of his room over his own perverseness and wasted opportunities.

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If you ask nowadays of any old Etonian

"Did you know Jickling?" he will probably answer you:

"Jickling? Do you mean the fellow who was Newcastle scholar and in the Eleven? He went to Oxford, didn't he? and took double honors?"

"I think so."

"And stay, didn't he marry somebody? If I remember aright she was the sister of Sir Frederick Asheton?"

"That's the very one I mean. I was sure you must have known him, or at least have heard of him, and of his early experiences, and of the change that came to pass."

FINIS.