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## REDFERN MINOR.



CHARLES HAMILTON'S GRAND SCHOOL TALE.



# REDFERN MINOR.

A Grand New School Tale.

By CHARLES HAMILTON.

**THE 1st CHAPTER.**

**The New Junior.**

"KEHOLME! Alight 'ere for St. Dorothy's!"

The train clattered to a halt in the quiet little country station, and Sidney Redfern opened the carriage door, and jumped out.

He looked up and down the long, plank platform, bordered on one side with trim flowerbeds and a green hedge. It was a pleasant summer's afternoon, and there was hardly a cloud in the blue sky.

Sidney Redfern's face was very cheerful as he looked about him—cheerful and expectant. He was evidently expecting someone to meet him at the station, but, save for two or three passengers who had alighted from the train, the platform was deserted.

Bump! A neatly-strapped trunk whirled out of the guard's van, and bumped on the platform. Sidney Redfern hurried to look after his property.

"Easy does it!" he exclaimed. "There's a camera in there. That's a travelling-trunk, you know, not a giddy shuttlecock or a football!"

The porter grinned, and touched his cap. The box was labelled for St. Dorothy's, so it was pretty clear that Redfern was a new boy going to the old school, and the Okeholme porter scented a tip.

"Yes, sir! Certainly, sir! You should handle the young gent's property more carefully, Bill." The guard, who did not expect a tip, only sniffed. "Shall I put it on the 'ack for the school, sir?"

"Yes, please!" said Redfern, extracting a shilling from his trousers-pocket and tossing it to the porter. "Catch!"

The porter caught it, and then slung the trunk upon a trolley. Redfern cast another glance up and down the platform, and a slight shade crossed his face. He walked beside the porter as the latter wheeled his trunk to the exit.

"Know if there's anybody here waiting for this train, porter?" he asked.

"I dunno, sir. There was two young gents in the doorway a while ago, sir, and they wouldn't go away when I told 'em. They was Master Skelton and Master Brown, sir, from the school."

"I suppose you know most of the St. Dorothy's fellows by sight?"

"Bless your heart, sir, I know 'em all—from Master Lunsford to the last new boy!" said the old porter. "Some of 'em are all right, sir; but there's some as don't ever think of a tip."

Redfern grinned.

"I see. Do you know Redfern—Arthur Redfern, of the Sixth?"

"Certainly, sir; and a pleasant-spoken young gentleman he is."

"He's my brother," said the new boy. "I'm going into the Fourth, you know. My brother's a prefect, and he's in the Sixth. Have you seen him about the station this afternoon?"

The porter shook his head.

"No, sir. He ain't been about here."

Redfern's face fell a little. He gave up his ticket, and passed out into the station entrance. Redfern was quite new to public school life, and he was only dimly aware that between the Sixth Form and the junior Forms there was a great gulf fixed.

His big brother in the St. Dorothy's Sixth was his idol, and there was a great deal of awe and admiration mixed with his affection for him.

In the holidays, at home, Arthur had always been kind to him, and Redfern had fully expected to see his brother waiting for him at the station.

He felt just a little forlorn at that moment. He was going into a new world, to a new life. The parting with his mother was still weighing somewhat on his heart, and the sight of his brother there would have cheered him up a great deal. Arthur might have taken the trouble, but he crushed that thought from his mind as soon as it rose.

"Here he is!"

It was a sudden shout, and Redfern started and looked round. Two youths in Etons and silk hats were standing before an automatic machine just outside the station, going through their pockets in a thorough and deliberate manner, which seemed to indicate that funds were out, but that they had a lingering hope of discovering an odd, forgotten penny somewhere.

But as they caught sight of Sidney Redfern they ceased turning out their pockets, and ran quickly towards him.

The movement was so sudden that Redfern took it as a hostile one, and involuntarily backed away a pace, and put up his fists. The two juniors of St. Dorothy's burst into a laugh.

"It's all right, young 'un!" said one, a

fair-haired lad a little bigger than Redfern, with a good-natured face, but a somewhat authoritative manner. "We're not going to hurt you. We wouldn't hurt him—would we, Browney?"

"Not for untold tuck, Skelton!" said Brown solemnly. "We wouldn't hurt a hair on his head, or a freckle on his dear little nose!"

Redfern coloured a little. "Well, what's the little game?" he demanded. "Do you belong to St. Dorothy's?"

Skelton chuckled. "Well, I rather think so," he said. "I'm Skelton, and this chap's Brown III. We're in the Fourth Form. You're Redfern minor, of course?"

Redfern brightened up. "Yes. Did my brother send you to meet me?"

"Meet your grandmother!" said Skelton, with crushing disdain. "Do you think we, the heads of the Fourth, would be sent to meet a new kid? Besides, I rather think a prefect in the Sixth has something better to do than to bother his head about new fags. No, my son, we weren't sent to meet you. We came of our own accord. We happened to hear that Redfern had a minor coming, and we found out that he was coming in the Fourth. Therefore—"

"Better not tell him too much now, Skelton—"

"If you're going to start teaching me lessons, young Brown—"

"Look here—"

"Oh, ring off! We've come to meet you, young Redfern, to sort of take you under our wing. We're the heads of the Fourth Form, and if Taffy & Co. tell you anything different, you can put it down as whoppers. I suppose you know—"

"Is my brother at the school now?"

"Blow your brother! Don't interrupt me when I'm talking to you!" said Skelton, of the Fourth. "I suppose you know—"

"Sorry I can't stop! I've got to get to St. Dorothy's."

And Redfern nodded, and walked up the street. Skelton and Brown looked after him, and then looked at one another. Skelton was too amazed to speak for some moments.

"My hat!" he said at length. "Did you ever see so much coolness in a new kid, Browney?"

"Never in my natural!" said Brown.

"Are we going to stand it?"

"I don't think!"

"Come on!"

They ran after Redfern. The latter had just inquired the way to the school, and was walking thither with an easy, springy stride. Skelton and Brown came up puffing, and Redfern looked at them with a cool nod.

"Coming to the school?" he said cheerily. "Ye-e-es," said Skelton. "I say, you new chap, did you come to St. Dorothy's specially in search of a thick ear?"

"Not at all."

"Well, you're going just the right way to work to get one! That's a friendly warning. Now, I was explaining to you, when you bolted, that there are two sides at St. Dorothy's—the Modern side and the Classical side. We don't have separate houses, you know; in fact, there wasn't any Modern side at St. Dorothy's ten years ago. It's quite a new thing, and, in my opinion, it ought to be put down. If the Head took my advice, he would make a clean sweep of the Mods."

"But I suppose he's not likely to take it?" said Redfern innocently.

Brown chuckled, and Skelton went on rather hastily.

"You see, on the Classical side you get the sound, old-fashioned classical education; and on the Modern side you get a commercial education—which I dare say suits some fellows, or they wouldn't have it," said Skelton thoughtfully. "As you're Redfern minor, I suppose you're going to be a classic, like your brother?"

Redfern nodded. He had heard from Arthur some stories of the division at St. Dorothy's, and the rivalry—in sports and in everything else—which reigned between the Commercial and the Classical sides at the old school.

"Good!" said Skelton. "Now, as you're a new kid, I dare say you don't know that there's a crisis at St. Dorothy's—a climax in the history of the school."

"No," said Redfern; "I had a letter from Arthur the other day, but he didn't mention anything about a climax or a crisis."

Skelton reddened a little.

"Perhaps a chap in the Sixth wouldn't notice how important it was," he said. "The fact is, the captain of the Fourth has left suddenly. I suppose you know every Form has its captain at St. Dorothy's? Old Lunsford, the skipper of the Sixth, is captain of the school as well. But every Form has its captain—and the Fourth Form captain has left. We're

going to have a new election for Form captain to-night. I'm the candidate."

"Oh! The only one?"

"N-no! Some of the Commercial kids are putting up a candidate, too; but, of course, that's all rot!" said Skelton.

"Of course," said Brown.

"But we want to rope in all the votes we can," said Skelton. "As a matter of fact, there's been a rush of new kids into the Modern side this term, and, as it happens, they've caught us up in numbers, a thing that has never been known before in the history of the school. There are exactly twenty Classical kids in the Fourth Form, and exactly twenty

Commercial!"

"Oh, I see!" said Redfern, with awakening interest. "Then when you hold the election for Form captain—"

"The votes are bound to tie, because every Classical will be loyal to his own side, and those Modern kids stick together like a lot of thieves!"

Redfern laughed.

"Blessed if I see anything to gurgle at!" said Skelton testily. "Look here, you listen to me! You're going to vote for me, and turn the scale—see?"

"How do you know?"

"Do you mean to say you're going to betray your own side, you measly worm?" demanded Skelton hotly. "You're a Classical, and you've got to vote for me!"

"Rats!"

"Wh-wh-what! Did you say—say rats?"

"Yes, I did," said Redfern coolly. "I'm not going to be told how I'm to vote. I'm going to settle that question for myself. I may back you up—"

"You—you may!" stammered Skelton.

"Yes; or, again, I may not! It all depends!"

"Depends, does it?" roared Skelton. "I'll—I'll—"

"Hold on!" exclaimed Brown, catching his friend by the arm. "Don't lose your temper, old boy! Remember—"

"Who's losing his temper?" shouted Skelton.

"Well, you—"

"I'm jolly calm and reasonable. It's this new chap who's trying to make me waxy! If I give him a licking, it will teach him his proper place in the Form!"

"Yes, but—"

"Well, look here, if he promises instantly to vote for me, I'll let him off the licking," said Skelton magnanimously. "He's got to promise, because some of those Modern kids will be squirmy round trying to get his vote—you know what a mean lot they are. They'd think nothing of getting him to promise to vote on their side in advance. I hate meanness in a chap—why, there's the beast giggling again! I'll give him a giggle!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Are you going to promise?"

"Not much."

"I'll give you a licking you'll remember for a dog's age."

"Perhaps," said Redfern, eyeing the big Fourth-Former warily. "Perhaps not. Blessed if I think you'd make much of a Form captain, anyway! I shall have to see the rival candidate before I make up my mind."

That was too much for Skelton. He was a great fighting man in the Fourth Form at St. Dorothy's; even "Taffy" Morgan was not his superior in that line, and Taffy was a boxer of renown. To be talked to like this by a new boy was too much! Skelton made a wild rush at Redfern.

What happened next was never very clear to Skelton. What he first realised was that he was lying on his back, looking up dizzily at the blue sky, and seeing more stars there in broad daylight than are usually seen on a fine night.

He lay there for some seconds, blinking, and then sat up.

"How—what?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Brown. "Sorry, Skelton; but you are funny!"

"I—I— My hat!" Skelton realised what had happened, and jumped to his feet. "By George, I'll—I'll pulverise you!"

And he rushed at the new boy again. This time he succeeded in getting hold of him, and for some moments nothing was seen but whirling arms and legs in a cloud of dust.

Then suddenly they parted.

Skelton whirled away, and crashed into Brown III, and they rolled on the ground together. They sat up, gasping—Skelton looking very dazed and dusty and dishevelled.

Redfern was strolling away towards the school, with his hands in his pockets, whistling cheerily.

Skelton and Brown looked at one another curiously.

"My word," said Brown softly, "that new kid's hot stuff!"

And Skelton nodded as he slowly staggered to his feet, without speaking. It was borne in upon him that the "new kid" was very hot stuff indeed.

**THE 2nd CHAPTER.**

**Taffy & Co.**

ARTHUR REDFERN, of the Sixth Form at St. Dorothy's, was crossing the quadrangle, with his hands thrust deep into his trousers-pockets, and a thoughtful frown upon his brow. His eyes were on the ground, and he did not see Lunsford, who had just come out of the house with a cricket-bat under his arm. Big, athletic,

Lunsford was captain of St. Dorothy's, the finest cricketer in the school, and a perfect demon for sticking at the nets, and keeping the other fellows there.

"Hallo, Redfern!" he called out, as the Sixth-Former was passing him without looking up. "Will you take a penny for your thoughts?"

Arthur Redfern stopped and looked at him, but he did not smile.

"Coming down to the cricket-field?" asked Lunsford. "You've been cutting the game for the last few days. What's the matter?"

"Nothing!"

"Well, come on, and bowl to me, old fellow!"

Redfern shook his head.

"I—I can't just now, Lunsford! Ransome's waiting for me!"

Lunsford frowned. "You spend a lot too much time with that chap," he said. "Ransome's a slacker—you never see him at the nets, or in the boats; and there are kids in the Fourth and the Shell who can beat him on the cinder-path. He won't do you any good!"

"I don't see what you want to run down my friends for!" said Arthur, flushing red. "Ransome's good enough for me!"

And he walked on huffily. Lunsford looked after him with a darkening brow, and with hot words on his lips; but he restrained them, and strode down to the cricket-field.

Half the Sixth Form were there at practice in the bright summer afternoon; Classical and Modern being equally devoted to the great summer game. It was a pleasant scene—the wide, green playing-fields, the white-flannelled figures running; the groups of fellows looking on and cheering every successful hit, or every clever bit of fielding—in the distance the grey old college, with its high windows and red chimney-pots; its massive walls thick with ivy—walls that had fronted the storms of centuries.

But Arthur Redfern had no eyes for the charm of the scene as he strode on and entered the house. He went straight up to his study, still with the shadow on his brow, as if unpleasant thoughts were thronging in his mind, and would not be dismissed.

He was a handsome lad enough, but there was a weakness about the mouth that told of a nature easily led; of one who found it easier to say "yes" than to say "no," and who usually followed the easier path. A fellow of about his own age was sitting on the corner of the table in the study, reading a pink paper, which he lowered as Arthur came in.

"I've been waiting for you," he said, with a yawn. And then, as he caught sight of Arthur's expression, he added, "Anything up?"

"No," said Arthur.

Ransome grinned.

"Better out with it," he remarked. "What have you got on your mind? Are you beginning to get nervous about—ahem!—that little scheme we have in hand? If you're losing your nerve you'd better say so at once!"

"Don't talk rot!" said Arthur irritably. "I'm not thinking of that! I've had a letter from my mother to-day—"

A sneer crossed Ransome's face.

"Lectures, I suppose?" he said.

"No, hang you! It's about my young brother—I've got a minor coming to St. Dorothy's!" growled Arthur. "The mater wants me to look after him—take him under my wing, and so on—make things easy for him generally, you know."

"Blessed if I see anything to look glum about in that!" said Ransome. "The youngster might be useful to us. You can take him for your fag, and he can be trusted more than Morgan or any of the others."

Arthur flushed hotly.

"If you think I'm going to have my young brother mixed up in—in—well, in anything you have a hand in, Ransome, you're jolly well mistaken."

"You're getting jolly civil, I must say," said Ransome, quite unmoved. "You can keep the kid in a glass case for all I care. I was only giving you a tip. Blessed if I care what you do with him."

"It's beastly awkward his coming now. It will interfere with me in a lot of ways. I shall have to look after him. He's bound to be a lot in my study, I suppose, or else he'll consider himself neglected. I shall have to be careful. I think it's deuced hard on me!"

"So it is—deuced hard," agreed Ransome. "These minors are a general nuisance. You have to coddle them, or they write home and say they're badly treated, and then there's a family council on the subject. When is the kid coming?"

Arthur started, and felt in his pockets.

"This afternoon," he said. "I—I meant to make a note of the train, and—and go and meet it, but it slipped my memory."

"Oh, rats! You're coming out with me," said Ransome warmly. "I suppose you're not going to throw me over for a counfounder minor just out of the nursery?"

"Well, it's his first day at a public school, and—"

"Rot! Let him look after himself."

"It would be only decent—"

"Oh, well, if you want to go, go!" said Ransome sulkily. "I may as well cut, I suppose. Blessed if I should have expected a chap like you to throw his old friends over for the sake of a whiming little monkey with his thumb in his mouth—"

"Hold on!" said Arthur weakly. "The



mater says his train gets in at Okeholme at three—

"That's a quarter of an hour ago," said Ransome. "You can't meet him, you see; so you may as well come over to Wyndale."

"Yes, I suppose so. But—"

"Look here! You can send some fag or other to meet him on the road," said Ransome. "That will do. You can tell him afterwards you had an important engagement. Come on, for goodness' sake, or we shall be late! We can send somebody as we go."

And Ransome put on his straw hat. Arthur hesitated a moment, and then followed his example, and the two seniors left the study. Arthur paused in the passage a moment to shout "Fag!"

But he called in vain. In the bright weather almost all the St. Dolly's fellows were out of doors, and the fags who happened to be in their studies did not hear—or made it a point not to hear.

"Fag! Fa-a-a-fag! Fag!"

"Young monkeys!" grunted Arthur. "I'll bet there are half a dozen at least who can hear me perfectly well. They don't like fagging on holidays."

"Let's look in the Fourth Form passage."

The two seniors hastened thither. It was a wide, flagged passage, with walls of oak blackened by age, in which innumerable initials and names were cut. Doors opened on both sides of it. On one side were the studies tenanted by the Classical scholars, and on the other side the quarters of the Moderns—variously known at St. Dolly's as Moderns, "Mods," and Commercial. When the rivalry between the two factions ran high, the passage was frequently the scene of heroic combats, and bloodshed was by no means unknown—the blood being shed from the nose, as a rule.

The studies were deserted now, the juniors being out of doors, but from the first study in the passage, on the Modern side, came the sound of voices. It was the room occupied by Morgan, Rake, and Vernon, the leaders of the junior Moderns in their alarms and excursions against the Classicals. The door was open, as well as the window, on account of the heat of the afternoon, and Arthur Redfern and Ransome heard the voices of the fags in excited discussion.

"What price getting out to the cricket?" said Rake, as the seniors came along. "We've been jawing this over for a quarter of an hour, but it makes no difference."

"You can't change the numbers by jawing about it, chappy," said Vernon. "It will be a dead heat at the election."

"Rats!" growled Morgan, generally known among the juniors as Taffy. "Rats! We're going to pull off the election somehow, look you. I was thinking—"

"Shut up!" muttered Rake, as he caught sight of the seniors at the door. Taffy promptly shut up. He had his plans regarding the forthcoming Fourth-Form election, but he did not mean to let Upper-Form fellows into his confidence.

"Didn't you hear me call for a fag?" exclaimed Arthur Redfern angrily.

"Did you call?" said Taffy innocently.

"Look here, I want you—"

"Can't you find a Classical kid?" demanded Taffy. "You know the rule—you can only fag kids on your own side. We're busy."

"Awfully busy, chappy," said Vernon, who was the dandy of the Fourth, and affected an elegant drawl. "Shut the door after you."

Ransome scowled and Arthur Redfern looked irritable. He was good-natured as a rule, but impatient of contradiction. The rule to which Taffy Morgan alluded was upheld by Lunsford himself, but the seniors often transgressed it.

"Don't be a young ass!" said Arthur. "Look here! I've got a minor coming this afternoon, and he's out of the station already. I want somebody to go and meet him on the road, and bring him in and look after him a bit. If you don't want a jolly good hiding—"

Taffy's eyes gleamed.

"It's all right, Redfern. We'll go."

Vernon and Rake glared at their comrade in amazement. It wasn't easy, of course, to "buck" against Sixth-Formers, but Taffy, as a rule, had nerve enough for anything. His sudden change of front amazed his chums, and made them indignant.

"Well, out off, then," said Arthur. "You can tell my minor I am sorry I had an important engagement over in Wyndale."

"Right-ho, my son!"

Arthur quitted the study with Ransome, and a minute afterwards was leaving the school gates. In Study 10, in the Fourth-Form passage, two juniors glared wrathfully at Taffy Morgan, who was chuckling.

"You—you worm!" said Vernon, in measured accents. "You apology for a worm! You cheap imitation of an apology for a worm!"

"Hallo! What's the matter?"

"My hat!" said Rake. "He says, 'What's the matter?' after knuckling under like that. Yah! You make me tired, Taffy! Look here, Verny, we ought to bump him!"

"By Jove, yes! Bump him!"

"Here, hold on!" yelled Taffy. "I—"

But they did not hold on—or, rather, to be more exact, they did! They grasped him as he jumped up, and in a moment he was being bumped with force and energy. The process of "bumping," known at most public schools, consisted at St. Dolly's of seizing the victim in a grasp of iron and rolling him over and over,

giving him a heavy bump on the ground at every roll.

It was a common enough punishment in the junior studies, and Taffy now had the benefit of it to the full. He struggled and yelled in vain. They bumped him, and bumped him again, and rolled him over, till he was gasping for breath. He had no mercy from his indignant chums.

"Hold on!" shrieked Taffy. "I—I mean, leggo! Chuck it! Stop it, you asses! I'll give you a prize thick ear, Vernon! I'll lick you into fits, Rakey! Ow, you beasts! I tell you I—\*Ow—wow!"

Bump, bump, bump!

"Ow, oh, ow!"

"We'll jolly well teach you to lower the dignity of the side to those Classical cads!" growled Rake. "Give him another!"

"And another, chappy!"

Bump, bump!

"You—you asses!" gasped the unhappy Taffy, helpless in the grasp of his indignant chums. "Let go! Stop it! I tell you it's a wheeze! I wasn't giving in or knuckling under! It's a wheeze!"

"Rats! Bump him again!"

Bump, bump!

Taffy tore himself at last from the grasp of the avengers and sat up, dusty, dishevelled, his collar torn out and his hair like a mop. His face was crimson with exertion and wrath.

"You shrieking duffers!" he yelled. "You haven't the sense of a giddy oyster! I tell you it's a wheeze—a splendid scheme!"

"Where does the scheme come in?" said Rake suspiciously.

"Why, you howling ass, we want an extra voter for the election, don't we?"

"Yes, but—"

"Well, Redfern minor's the chap!"

Rake and Vernon started—and whistled. Taffy collected himself together and got up, breathing stertorously.

"Do you see now, you prize asses?" he demanded witheringly. "That's why I'm going down to meet Redfern minor. He's the voter we want."

"By Jove!"

"Bravo!"

"I haven't time to lick you now," said Taffy, trying to fasten his collar. "Let's get out and meet the kid; we must collar him before any of those Classical kids get hold of him. They'd be mean enough to capture him, if they could, and keep him in their clutches till the election, and make him vote for them. We've got to see that they don't get hold of him. Come on!"

"Right you are!"

And, hastily jamming their caps on, the three juniors hurriedly left the house, dashed across the quad, and out of the gates, and tore away down the road towards the village as if they were on the cinder-path.

**THE 3rd CHAPTER.**  
**The Rivals of St. Dorothy's.**

ST. DOROTHY'S was one of the oldest schools in mid-England, and fellows of an antiquarian turn of mind related, with pride, that it had been founded by Bishop Tunstall in the reign of King John. It stood in the heart of the county of Warwickshire, amid some of the finest scenery in England. It had stood there for many centuries, and it had gone through many vicissitudes. The ruined chapel was a reminder of the parliamentary wars, and there were fellows who pointed out the marks left by Cromwell's cannon-balls on the walls, fellows of an imaginative turn, perhaps. St. Dolly's, at all events, had seen stormy times, and there had probably been more than one crisis in her history. But the most staggering blow she had ever received, in the opinion of a large number of the "Saints," was when the

Modern side had been established in the old school.

Modern tendencies, they admitted, were making themselves felt everywhere. Other public schools had opened a "Commercial" side; but St. Dolly's might have been true to its traditions. What a chap wanted was an old-fashioned, classical education, and if a chap couldn't get on in the world with Latin, how was he to expect to get on without it?

It was not observed that the enthusiastic supporters of the classical point of view were specially keen on sticking to their Latin exercises, or that any of them took Greek unless their parents insisted upon it. Nevertheless, they were heart and soul on the Classical side, and sniffed at the Commercial. The latter, in their turn, sniffed back. They took German instead of Greek, and chemistry instead of Latin, and seemed to thrive on it. The Classical fellows averred solemnly that the school was going to the dogs, and the Moderns declared that it had already gone there, before their time, and that they were bringing it back again. The two sides agreed to differ, but it was not only in the class-room that mutual distaste was visible. On the playing-fields the sides were rivals; they contended for places in the eleven and the eight, and Lunsford, since he had been captain of St. Dolly's, had sometimes found it difficult to keep the peace.

Needless to say, the division which was keen enough among the seniors, was far keener among the juniors. What the elders thought, or half-thought, the youngsters proclaimed at the top of their voices. The rows between Classicals and Mods were endless, and though, as a matter of fact, there was little or no real ill-feeling, there was incessant trouble.

The Modern side had been steadily increasing in numbers from its foundation, and of late had come to equal the Classical side, a matter for great rejoicing among the present Mods, and of great anxiety to their rivals. Up till now, the Form captains had been, with out exception, Classicals. For the first time since the foundation of the Commercial side, a Modern candidate had a chance of election. Numbers in the Fourth Form were equally balanced, and the anxiety was keen.

The seniors affected a lordly indifference to the elections in the Lower Forms, but, as a matter of fact, some of them felt a keen interest in the result. But interference was not possible. Form captains were elected by their own Form, every boy having a vote, and no outsiders were admitted to the elections.

And so the keenness of the rival candidates to secure the new boy as a voter will be easily understood.

The single voice of Sidney Redfern was enough to turn the scale. Otherwise, the election would tie, and then probably the Head would appoint a Form captain. He was as likely to appoint a Modern as a Classical. St. Dolly's, as we have said, had passed through crises in her history, but in the opinion of the heroes of the Fourth, no crisis of past days had been like unto this.

Cromwell's cannonade, in Skelton's opinion, was a joke compared with the danger of having a Commercial youth for Form captain. The Fourth-Form captain was not a very important person at St. Dolly's in the general estimation, but in the estimation of the Fourth itself he was a very important person indeed. The election of a captain of the school would not have stirred the youngsters nearly so deeply.

It was no wonder that Taffy, Rake, and Vernon jumped at the chance of securing the extra voter. It was the first hint they had had of his existence, and they did not know that Skelton and Brown had already met him at the station. To get hold of the new boy, to keep him to themselves till the election in the Form-room, and then to suddenly produce him to the utter confusion of the Classicals,

that was Taffy's "wheeze." There was no need to hesitate about the matter, for he knew perfectly well that Skelton and Brown would have done exactly the same if they had had the chance, and, as Taffy added proudly, the sense.

The three juniors went along the road at top speed, eager to meet the new boy at the earliest possible moment. As they went round a bend in the lane at a headlong pace, they pushed right into the youth, who was strolling from the direction of the village, and sent him fairly flying.

The stranger reeled back, and fell with a flop in the middle of the road, sending up a cloud of dust, and the three juniors gasped and halted, nearly falling over themselves.

"M-my hat!" gasped Taffy. "You utter ass, what do you mean by running into us like that?"

The prostrate youth sat up rather dazedly. "You—you dummies!" he said. "How did they come to let you out of your strait jackets?"

Taffy was about to make a hot retort, but he checked himself. He noted that the boy was dressed in Etons, and he guessed at once that this was the youth they were to meet on the road.

"Here, I say!" exclaimed Taffy amicably. "Are you Redfern minor?"

"I'm Sidney Redfern."

"Good! I—I say, I'm awfully sorry we biffed into you," said Taffy. "You see, your brother sent us to meet you, and we were in a hurry to—to find you. We thought you'd like somebody to look after you a bit, coming to a strange school."

"Just what I was going to say," said Rake. "That's awfully decent of you," said Redfern gratefully.

"Oh, we're awfully decent chaps, you know. Your brother is sorry he had to go to Wyndale—important appointment or something—but we're to take care of you," said Taffy hospitably. "We're going to show you round, and look after you generally. I suppose you're pretty peckish after a long train journey?"

"Yes, a little," said Redfern, smiling.

"That's all right. I suppose you'll have tea in our study. We've got something decent for tea—ahem!—I mean, we're going to have something decent for tea, and we should like you to come. You'll come, won't you?"

"Jolly glad to."

"Good again! No malice for that biff, eh? It was quite an accident."

"Not a bit," said Redfern cheerily. He dusted down his clothes, feeling his heart a good deal lighter than it had been. His brother had not forgotten him after all, and besides that, the kindness of these juniors, perfect strangers to him, was really enough to make any fellow feel cheerful.

He felt that if all the fellows at St. Dolly's were like these, his life there would be jolly enough. If they were like this to a stranger and a new boy, what would they be like when they got chummy?

Taffy linked his arm affectionately in Redfern's.

"Come along, Reddy! You don't mind if I call you Reddy, do you?"

"Of course not," said Redfern, more and more surprised. "This is jolly decent of you. I've heard that new boys are generally ragged or put upon in public schools."

Taffy & Co., remembering some of their own experiences as new boys, grinned a little, but became serious again at once.

"Nothing of that kind with us," said Taffy. "I know there are some kids in the Fourth—like Skelton and Brown—young ruffians, who'd play any tricks on a stranger. You want to keep clear of fellows like that. You stick to us, and I'll see you through. Let's get in to tea."

They were not long in reaching St. Dolly's. As they passed in, Redfern glanced at the cricketers. Lunsford had just hit a ball out for 3, and the fellows were cheering. Redfern would gladly have looked on for a bit at the cricket, but Taffy & Co., who were on tenterhooks lest a Classical youth should spot the new boy, hurried him on. And as they were hurrying him in to have tea, Redfern could not very well object.

They hurried him into the house, and upstairs to Study 10, and Taffy heaved a great sigh of relief as he was marched into the study. Rake immediately closed the door. Involuntarily, the juniors put their backs to it, as if prepared to resist, by force, any attempt of the new boy to escape. But Redfern was not thinking of escape just then. He was, as a matter of fact, hungry after his journey, and quite ready for tea. There were no signs of tea in the study as he looked round.

"It's all right," said Taffy hastily. "We're just going to get tea. Shove some sticks in the grate, Rakey, and get a fire going. I'll go and fill the kettle."


"Can I do anything to help?" asked Redfern.

"No; that's all right," said Taffy. "You sit down!" He almost pushed Redfern into the armchair. "You must be tired. We've as good as promised Redfern major to take every care of you. How's the little ones at home?"

"Eh? There aren't any," said Redfern, in amazement.

"Hem! I—I mean, how are your people—mater and pater, you know?" stammered Taffy, who hardly knew what he did mean, or what he was saying, in his anxiety to keep the new boy peacefully in the study.

I cordially recommend my friends to—



carefully read this cheery talk.—YOUR EDITOR.

**"FORGET YOURSELF."**

My Dear Boys,—

As I am constantly coming across boys whose chief trouble is self-consciousness, I have chosen this subject to write about this week. If you are going to do anything in the world the first lesson you must learn is self-forgetfulness. Every boy is born looking at himself in the glass, and this he continues to do till some kind friend scratches the quicksilver off the back, making it a window through which he begins to see the big world. At your age I had no end of trouble in this respect, and if you ask me what remedy to advise, my answer is to make yourself busy. You will have no time to worry over yourself or to be self-conscious if you are hard at work. You will find that you will not then be half so concerned about the height of your collar or the colour of your tie.

I know it seems as though all the world is thinking of you, and of what is going to happen to you; but this is one of those illusions out of which you will presently grow.

If you remain strong and healthy, self-consciousness will soon die away, but it depends a great deal on the nerves, and is far more physical than is generally allowed.

Whenever you come across anyone suffering from self-consciousness, do not be unkind or rough with him lest you should drive it inward, which has often done great harm; but go on your own way gaily, and do him and others good turns whenever you can. Then, some day you will discover what it is to genuinely live. That looking-glass I spoke of will then be altogether broken, and you will go into the world to be one of its heroes, and, like all big Britishers, to dedicate yourselves to bringing about the greatest good of the greatest number, with self last of all.

I remain,

Always your affectionate friend,  
**THE CHAPLAIN OF THE SAVOY.**

(Continued at the foot of the next page.)



# FROM YOUR EDITOR'S CHAIR.



Latest Portrait of YOUR EDITOR (H. E.),  
Controller of  
THE BOYS' REALM—Saturday.  
THE BOYS' FRIEND—Tuesday.  
THE BOYS' HERALD—Wednesday.

Your Editor is always glad to hear from you about yourself or your favourite paper. He will answer you by post if you enclose a stamped addressed postcard or envelope. Write to him if you are in trouble, if you want information, or if you have any ideas for our paper. All letters to be addressed to the Editor of THE BOYS' REALM, 23, Bouverie Street, Fleet Street, London, E.C. Back numbers of THE BOYS' REALM may be had by any reader for distribution amongst his chums on receipt of a postcard. THE BOYS' REALM will be sent post free to any part of the world on the following terms: 12 months, 7s.; 6 months, 3s. 6d.; 3 months, 1s. 9d.—payable in advance by British stamps. Postal Orders or Money Orders to be sent to the Publisher, 23, Bouverie Street, Fleet Street, London, E.C.

## "BOWLED OUT," BY MAXWELL SCOTT, STARTS NEXT WEEK!

"BOWLED OUT," in which will be related the further adventures of our old friends Jack Hartley, Dick Vernon, and Nelson Lee. I shall be grateful if my readers will call the attention of their chums to this enthralling new feature. At the same time, let me say that there is still time for my friends to enter for our great "autographed" cricket-bat competition. Full particulars will be found on another page, and as this offer can never be repeated,

my chums will be wise if they avail themselves of it at once. To possess a handsome cricket bat, bearing the signatures of all the players attached to one of our great county clubs, is surely worth striving for. But such a valuable trophy can only be obtained in one way, and that is as set out in the announcement on another page.

### Full of Praise.

I HAVE received a letter from one of my chums, who signs himself "Cestrian," in which he sings the praises of THE BOYS' REALM, and then asks me a question concerning how to make a picture-postcard screen. Before replying to my friend's query, I will publish his very kind note. Here it is:

"Dear Editor,—I have been a reader of the REALM since its first number, and I consider that its progress has been really remarkable. The stories at present appearing all excel anything you have attempted in the past—and that is saying a lot—and if I were asked whether I preferred 'The New Bowler' to 'Behind Prison Walls,' or 'Teddy Lester's Schooldays' to either, I should be unable to say. There is only one word for them—they are 'ripping!' and, though I am now practically twenty-three years of age, I take as much interest in them as my youngest brother, who is only fourteen.

Well, dear Editor, now I have contributed my feeble mite in praise of your REALM, I am going to trouble you for some information. Can you tell me the best way to make a screen of picture postcards? The real difficulty is to get the cards to fasten on the screen without crumpling, and that is where I am stuck. I do not propose to make it yet, but I thought I should like the information for when I was ready.

"With apologies for troubling you,  
"Believe me,  
"Yours sincerely,  
"CESTRIAN."

"Really, chappy—" Taffy took him by the shoulder and slung him out of the study. Vernon pushed back his cuffs; and then, remembering what was at stake, he obeyed orders. Taffy closed the door. But it was opened the next moment, and a junior looked in.

"Look here, Verny—Hallo!" It was not Vernon returning. It was Phipps, of the Fourth, a Classical junior. He looked across at Redfern.

"Hallo," he exclaimed, "I thought I spotted him in the quad! Is that a new kid?" Taffy did not reply. He did not want awkward explanations before Redfern. He rushed straight at Phipps, who retreated in alarm. Taffy seized him by the shoulders and whirled him round, and Phipps struggled in vain as he was driven down the passage under a succession of powerful kicks.

"There!" gasped Taffy. "Don't you come poking into my study again!" He hurried back, and closed the door after him, and met Redfern's stare of astonishment with a feeble grin.

"Who was that?" said Redfern. "Oh, only one of the chaps!" said Taffy. "One—one of the chaps I was telling you about, you know, who are death on new fellows. But don't you be nervous. We'll look after you."

"I'm not nervous." "N-n-no, of course not," agreed Taffy, who would have agreed to anything then. "I know you're not. I didn't mean that. I mean we'll back you up!"

"Just what I was going to say," said Rake.

I think that "Cestrian" will get over his difficulty if he thoroughly soaks the cards in water before attempting to place them on the screen. I myself found exactly the same difficulty some years ago when I was decorating a screen with picture postcards. At length I hit on the happy idea of letting the cards soak for about five minutes in a shallow bowl of water, and the result was highly satisfactory. My chum should adopt this wrinkle, which will, I am certain, overcome his difficulty.

After the decoration of the screen is completed, and the cards are quite dry and firm, it is best to varnish the surface. This not only keeps the cards from peeling off, but enables one to sponge down the screen, and remove the dirt and grime, every now and again. It is then freshened up, and looks like new.

### A Boy With Freckles.

A CHUM of mine, whose initials are W. G., tells me that his face is covered all over with freckles. He wants me to give him a cure for them.

There are two kinds of freckles, permanent and summer freckles. Permanent freckles I do not regard as a disfigurement in any sense of the word, because they are usually taken as an indication of a happy, healthy disposition on the part of the person who possesses them. It is difficult, almost impossible, to remove permanent freckles. Some summer freckles can, however, be made to disappear if the following lotion be applied to the face from time to time: Take 1 oz. of lemon-juice, ½ drachm of powdered borax, and ¼ drachm of sugar; mix, and bottle. After a few days it will be ready for use.

### How to Join the Merchant Service.

ONE of my young friends, who signs himself "Sailor," wishes me to give him some information on entering the merchant service. I may tell him that there is a very useful book published by Messrs. Spottiswoode, 5, New Street Square, London, E.C., entitled "The Sea." Its price is one shilling, or post free 1s. 3d. Meanwhile, the following information may be of interest to my chum:

When a boy first goes to sea he will probably be paid ten shillings per month. At first sight this does not seem much, but when it is remembered that he will be fed and housed for the whole time he is at sea, it is not at all bad pay. After he has made a trip to some foreign country in a sailing-ship—say, to China or America—he can on his next voyage get a post as ordinary seaman at from twenty-five to thirty-five shillings per month—that is, provided he has done his best to pick up his duties and learnt all he could about the life aboard ship. His next step up will be to the post of

first-class seaman, when he will be paid forty to fifty shillings per month, and then, when he is well up in his work, when he has thoroughly learnt his trade, which would not be under three years, by which time he will have been for about half a dozen voyages, he will be able to ship as able seaman at from three to four pounds per month. There is no reason either why he should not eventually rise to a better position even than this, if he does not mind working hard, although the best way to get a post as ship's officer is to be apprenticed to the sea. This can be done through the Superintendent of the Mercantile Marine Office much in the same way as I have previously described.

The work of an able seaman is not particularly irksome, but it must be performed thoroughly and smartly. According to the usual sea phraseology, a sailor is a man possessing the ability to haul, reef, and steer, but more than this is required of the able seaman. In addition to the three duties mentioned above, he should be a good workman on rigging, and it will be on this latter qualification that his services will be valued. No man can possibly pass for an able seaman in a square-rigged vessel who cannot make a long and short splice, fit a block-strap, pass seizings to lower rigging, and make the ordinary sailor's knots in a fair and workmanlike manner.

Therefore it behoves every lad starting out on his career at sea to do his best to make himself really efficient in each of the duties I have mentioned above. The harder he works, the more he attempts to do, the greater care he bestows on his labour, the better will he find himself qualified to take a post as able seaman when an opportunity occurs for him to do so.

### Warning to Emigrants.

I HAVE received a notice from the Emigrants' Information Office concerning numerous cases of hardship and destitution among boys who have emigrated to Chili from this country. They desire to warn any who think of going to Chili to exercise the greatest caution in entering into contracts for service there. Care should be taken to have such contracts legalised by the Chilean consul at the port of embarkation from the United Kingdom, otherwise it may be found impossible to enforce the contracts in Chili. Wages should be stated in the contract in British money, to be paid at the rate of exchange current at the time of payment.

Readers thinking of accepting offers of employment in Chili, or any other country, are advised to apply to the Emigrants' Information Office, 31, Broadway, Westminster, S.W., for further information. This being a Government office, all particulars received concerning other countries may be relied on as correct.

YOUR EDITOR (H. E.).

### REDFERN MINOR.

(Continued from the previous page.)

"Oh, they're all right!" said Redfern. "Look here, let me fill the kettle for you—you can tell me where the tap is. I don't want to slack!"

"That's all right. We can't allow a guest to work. You just sit where you are. Here's the latest number of 'The Boys' Friend.' Look at that while we're getting tea. Is that fire never going to burn, Rake?"

"It's getting on. You haven't filled the kettle yet."

"Go and fill the kettle, Vernon!"

"Really, chappy—" "Go and fill the kettle!" roared Taffy. And Vernon picked up the kettle and went. "Buck up with that fire, Rake! Here, I'll lend you a hand! You get the grub out of the cupboard!"

The fire was soon going. Vernon returned with the kettle, which was jammed on the smoky fire. The "grub" was turned out of the cupboard, but it did not make much of a spread. Taffy looked at half a loaf, a scrap of butter, and a small tin of sardines in something like dismay.

"This won't do!" he muttered to Vernon. "We've got to keep this chap here till the election. Go and raise some grub along the corridor—quick! Get anything you can. We can explain afterwards!"

"Really, chappy—" said Vernon, coming into the study, heavy laden.

"Oh, get the tea, and not so much of your 'really, chappy!'" exclaimed Taffy. "Can't you see the new chap is hungry? We're bound to be hospitable for—for Redfern major's sake. Redfern major is a ripping chap!"

"Yes, isn't he!" said Sidney eagerly.

"Simply stunning!" said Taffy. "Best chap in the Sixth. Hasn't a second. The others are only outsiders. Is that kettle boiling?"

"Yes; I'm making the tea," said Rake.

"Good! Do you like your tea strong or weak, Reddy?"

"I'm not particular."

"Oh, we want to give you what you like, you know! I say, Verny, this is a decent spread." Taffy looked over the table, garnished with a new loaf, a pat of butter, a chunk of cheese, a pound or more of cold ham, half a chicken, several tins of salmon and sardines, and a big plum cake. "I should say you made a pretty good sweep up the passage."

"It's ripping!" said Redfern. "You're treating me jolly well, and I don't know how to thank you."

"Not at all. You see, we're so fond of Redfern major," said Taffy. "Pour out the new kid's tea, Vernon, and if you spill any on his bags, I'll scrag you!"

Redfern looked at his eager entertainers rather curiously, and a smile dawned upon his face. Their hospitality to a new boy, a perfect stranger, was remarkable; and, little as he knew of public schools, he knew that much. Back to his mind came his talk with Skelton

and Brown. Were these extremely hospitable juniors after his vote at the Form election?

Perhaps—perhaps not! At all events, he was hungry, and the tea was certainly ripping, and he was satisfied to take things as they came.

The four juniors sat down round the table, and Vernon poured out the tea. But the meal was not destined to commence in peace. There was a sound in the passage of many footsteps.

"He's in there! I've seen him!" It was the excited voice of Phipps, of the Fourth, perfectly audible in the study. It was Skelton's voice that replied:

"We'll jolly soon see!"

Taffy sprang to his feet as the study door was flung open. Skelton and Brown stood on the threshold, with wrathful and indignant faces. Behind them was a crowd of Classical juniors, evidently on the warpath.

"Caught you, have we?" roared Skelton.

"Look here, get out of our study, you Classical cads! I—"

"Back up!" roared Skelton, and he rushed into the study, with his followers hot at his heels. "Down with the Mods!"

"Hurrah!"

The three Commercial juniors lined up desperately, and hit out right and left; but the rush of the Classics swept them away. The tea-table went over with a crash, and there was crash on crash of smashing crockery. Plates and cups and saucers, jam and ham and butter and cake, were trampled recklessly underfoot in a wild and whirling conflict.

(Another rattling instalment of this new School yarn next week.)

Next Week's Special Feature is "Well Bowled," Maxwell Scott's Great New Cricket Yarn