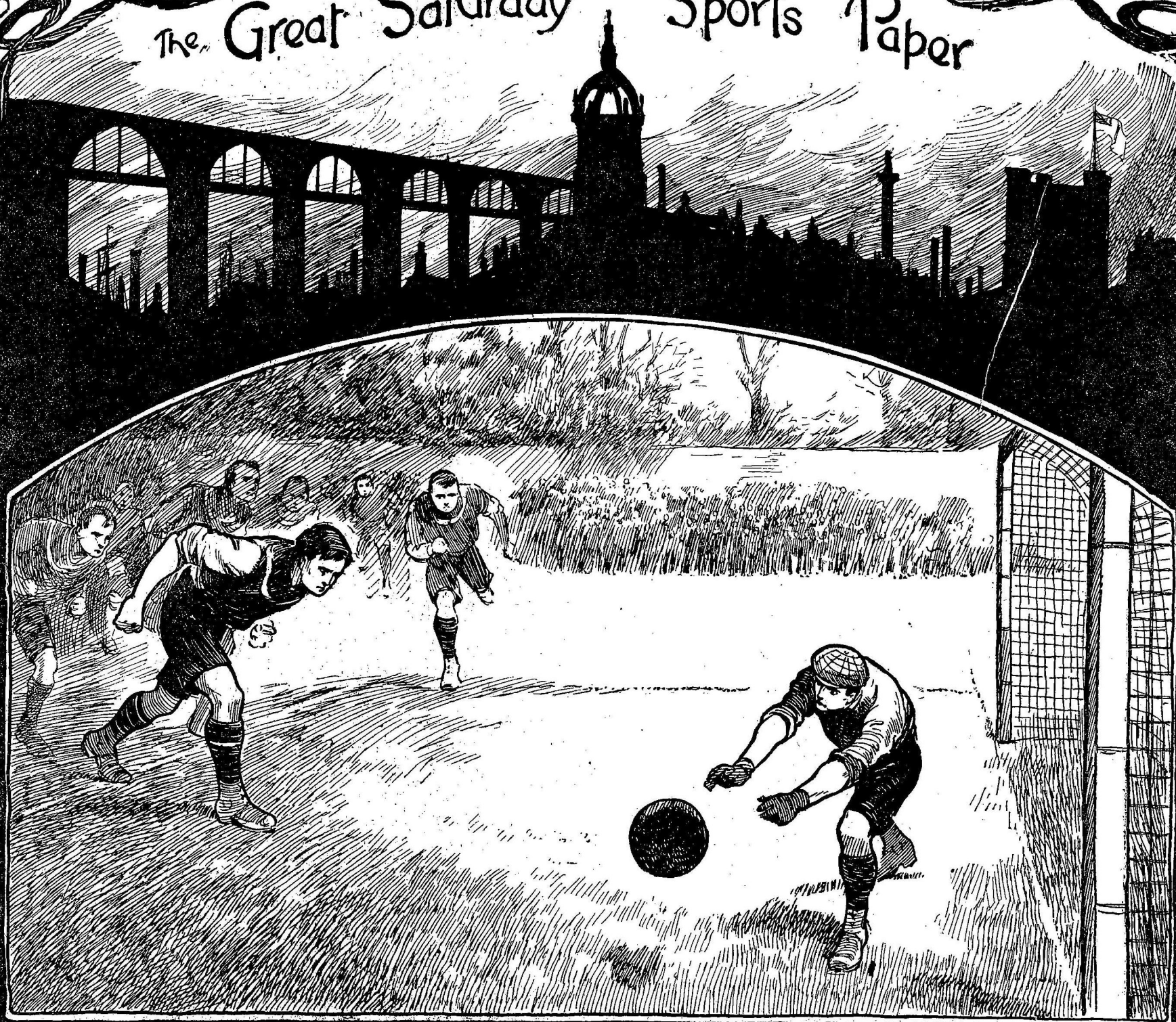


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The Boys' Realm. 1d

The Great Saturday Sports Paper



THE RISE OF TYNEGATE

CREAT NEWCASTLE FOOTBALL STORY - STARTS TODAY

ARTHUR REDFERN'S VOW.

A Rollicking Tale of School Life. By CHARLES HAMILTON.

THE PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS ARE:

ARTHUR REDFERN, a Sixth-Former and a prefect at St. Dolly's School.

SIDNEY REDFERN, or "Redfern minor," Arthur's brother. A bright, fun-loving lad. St. Dolly's is divided into two educational sections—Modern and Classical. Sidney is a Classical, and firm chums with

SKELTON and BROWN, of the Fourth. A deadly feud exists between the Classicals and the Moderns, the latter being led by

TAFFY MORGAN, VERNON, and RAKE of the Fourth.

RANSOME, a Sixth-Former. A slacker and a good-for-nothing, who, exercising a strong influence over Arthur Redfern, gets the prefect mixed up with a betting gang. Thanks to his younger brother, Arthur gets clear of this unsavoury crowd, and promises Sidney that he will have nothing further to do with Ransome's shady transactions.

Ransome, resenting this, vows vengeance, and seeks to draw other St. Dollyites under his wing.

The opening of a new term finds the school captainship vacant, and Arthur Redfern and another lad named Knowles are proposed for election. Additional interest is added to the election by the fact that Arthur is a Classical and Knowles a Modern.

Ransome, though a Classical himself, intends voting for Knowles, the Modern candidate, and endeavours to persuade other Classicals to do likewise; but with no great success, thanks to Redfern minor and Skelton.

The day of the election comes, and despite Ransome's efforts, Arthur Redfern heads the poll, and becomes the new captain of St. Dolly's.

Knowles, chagrined at his defeat, is an easy prey for Ransome, who lures him into his clutches, and encourages him to set at naught Arthur Redfern's authority.

The result of this is that Knowles and Arthur come to loggerheads, and have a desperate quarrel. They arrange to fight it out the same evening in the quad.

At an exciting point the fight is interrupted by the arrival of the Head-master, who has been notified of the affair by an anonymous letter.

Ransome pretends to suspect Redfern minor of having sent the letter, and scatters his unfounded suspicions broadcast, and, later, Sidney is publicly accused by Knowles.

Raging and indignant, Sidney springs at the prefect, and sends him staggering back with a heavy blow.

(Now read this week's instalment.)

The Head's Decision.

"REDFERN!"

"You—you mad young duffer!" Half a dozen voices shouted out to Redfern minor, but too late to stop the blow. Knowles staggered back, with a glowing red mark on his white cheek. Redfern minor stood facing him, his fists clenched now, his eyes blazing.

"You—you cub!" gasped the prefect.

Words failed him. For a prefect of the Sixth to be struck in the face by a junior fag was almost unknown in the history of St. Dolly's. Yet this was the second time Redfern minor had transgressed. Knowles had provoked it, but he had never dreamed that Redfern would dare. He had completely lost his temper, and he sprang towards the junior like a tiger.

A sharp voice rang out:

"Knowles—stop!"

It was Mr. Ford, the master of the Fourth, Redfern minor's Form-master. He had just come into the hall—just in time to see that hasty blow.

The prefect checked himself.

"Did—did you see what he did?" he almost shouted.

"I saw it," said Mr. Ford gravely. "I think you must be mad, Redfern minor! How dare you strike a prefect?"

Redfern set his teeth.

"I would strike him again, if he repeated what he said," he replied.

"What do you mean?"

"He accuses me of having written an anonymous letter," said Redfern hotly. "If he thinks so, let him keep his thoughts to himself. He has no right to insult me!"

Mr. Ford looked on with a frown.

"That is hardly the way to address your Form-master, Redfern," he said.

"I'm sorry, sir; but—"

"You will come with me to the Head. Whatever provocation you received, you must know that you had no right to strike a prefect."

Redfern minor's brow set darkly. Perhaps the Form-master was right; yet he did not regret that smack in the face to Knowles. He had stood enough of the Modern prefect's sneers.

"Follow me, Redfern minor."

"Yes, sir."

Knowles looked after the junior as he followed the Form-master. The prefect's face was still burning from that sudden smack. His eyes were glittering.

"The cub will be expelled for this!" he muttered. "By George, and if his major could be made to follow him—"

Redfern minor followed Mr. Ford quietly to the Head's study. Dr. Cranston looked very grave when Redfern minor was taken in to him. In a few words Mr. Ford explained the matter. The Head's brow set grimly.

"Redfern minor!"

Sidney's heart beat fast, but he managed to answer calmly:

"Yes, sir."

"You know what is the penalty of such a



Redfern chuckled as he swarmed down the rope. Skelton and Benson watched him from above, and saw him land safely below.

breach of discipline as you have been guilty of. Have you any excuse to offer?"

Redfern drew a deep breath.

"Yes, sir. I'm being ragged and badgered by everybody because some mean cad wrote that anonymous letter to you. Knowles threw it in my face; he had no right to. I said I would hit out if anybody threw that at me, and I don't care if he is a prefect! I'd rather be expelled from the school than stand it!"

The words came out in a passionate burst. Then Sidney Redfern stood silent, expecting a thunderclap of wrath.

But it did not come.

The Head's face, as a matter of fact, had softened. Perhaps the very passionate recklessness of Redfern's outburst was more convincing than calm explanation would have been in show-

ing that the lad had acted under the impulse of deep indignation.

"You have done wrong, Redfern. But I can understand, and, to a certain extent, sympathise with, your feelings. But you must keep them within bounds."

"Yes, sir."

"About that anonymous letter. The matter is most unfortunate. I certainly believe that you did not write it, and it is unfortunate that a contrary impression has gained ground among your schoolfellows." The Head's brow contracted in thought. "I think the time has come for the matter to be sifted to the bottom. I had hoped that it would die away of its own accord; but there seems to be no prospect of that. You may go, Redfern; and I trust you to keep your temper within bounds in future, even under an

unjust accusation. You know perfectly well that discipline must be maintained in every school, and that Lower Form boys cannot be allowed to take the law into their own hands."

Redfern coloured.

"I'm sorry, sir—very sorry. It shan't happen again, whatever Knowles likes to say."

"Very well, I accept your assurance. You may go."

"Thank you, sir!"

And Redfern minor left the study. Dr. Cranston turned to Mr. Ford. The Fourth Form-master was his old college friend, and very much in his confidence.

"This matter will have to be looked into," the Head said gravely. "It is most unfortunate. The boy who wrote that anonymous letter did so, I am sure, from a mistaken sense of duty, to warn me of a serious infraction of the rules of the school. The boys seem to have made up their minds that it was Redfern minor. About the last boy in the school to do anything savouring of meanness, I think. Fortunately, I still have the letter, and that will enable me to set the matter at rest."

The Head opened a drawer in his desk, and took out the anonymous letter. He glanced at it, and a troubled look came over his face.

"You do not agree with me in my opinion of the writer of this letter?" he suddenly exclaimed.

The Fourth Form-master shook his head.

"Frankly, I do not," he replied. "A boy would have to be very stupid indeed to imagine it a meritorious act to betray a schoolfellow by means of an anonymous letter. That the fight behind the chapel was a serious transgression does not alter the case. The writer of that letter betrayed Knowles and Redfern major—why? He was not a stupid boy, as a matter of fact, for he seems to have been cunning enough to disguise his hand, and to take a leaf of Redfern minor's exercise-book to write his letter upon. It looks to me like the work of some cunning fellow, actuated by a secret spite against both the Redferns."

The Head nodded thoughtfully.

"It is possible. In any case, the matter has caused trouble enough, and it must be settled definitely, one way or the other."

"I do not see how, sir."

"I shall send for a handwriting expert," explained Dr. Cranston. "He shall have this letter, and a specimen of the handwriting of every boy in the school. Disguised as the hand is, I have not the slightest doubt that a competent expert will at once detect traces in it to reveal the identity of the writer."

"I have no doubt of it."

"Then I shall publicly announce to the school that the writer is discovered, without announcing his name. My assurance that Redfern minor is innocent will be sufficient, I imagine, to clear him in the minds of his schoolfellows."

"Decidedly."

"You may let it be known, Mr. Ford, that it is my intention to send for an expert, and that the matter will be definitely settled this week. It may save a great deal of friction. I think it is due to Redfern minor, who is a very honest and manly lad, though hasty in temper, I am afraid."

"Certainly, sir."

And before bedtime that night everyone in the school knew that the Head had written to a handwriting expert of national fame in London, asking him to come to St. Dorothy's to investigate the matter. The juniors told in bated breath of the supposed fee the Head was to pay for the expert's services, Benson, of the Fourth, declaring that it amounted to a thousand guineas, while others fixed it at the more modest figure of five pounds. The Classicals were delighted, for they felt that their hero was to be cleared now, and the Moderns were mostly sneering and sceptical. But there was one boy in St. Dolly's who heard the news with a cold chill of terror at his heart.

The reader will perhaps guess who that boy was. He walked to and fro in his study, his face pale, gnawing his thin lips.

"The fool," he muttered again and again—"the old fool!" It was the Head of St. Dorothy's he was alluding to. "To think that he should take such a step on account of a rotten junior fag! The fool! If an expert gets hold of that letter, what may it not lead to? Oh, the fool! But the expert shan't see the letter; it must not be in existence when he gets to St. Dolly's. That is the only way!"

A Night Excursion.

"BLESSED if I can make that chap Redfern out!"

It was Lumsden, of the Modern side of the Fourth, who delivered that opinion to a group of Modern juniors in the quadrangle.

"Go hon!" said Taffy sarcastically. "There must be something awfully deep about Redfern minor if you can't make him out, Lumsden. We all know what a keen fellow you are."

And there was a chuckle. Lumsden turned red.

"Oh, cheese it, Taffy!" he said. "I tell you I can't make him out. You fellows all know perfectly well that he wrote that anonymous letter to the Head."

"I don't know anything of the sort, for one," said Taffy. "And you don't, for another, as a matter of fact."

"Look here, we all know it jolly well. Redfern minor wrote that letter. Now the Head has decided to get an expert to sift the matter out. It will come out that Redfern minor wrote it, so clearly that he won't be able to dodge. What I can't understand is, that the boulder seems to be pleased about it."

"Ass!"

"Well, he is, you know. He's been as cheerful as a cockchafer ever since the Head decided. Now, what does that mean?"

"It means that you're an ass, chappy," said Vernon.

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

"Oh, rats! It's true. Redfern minor has been as cocky as anything since the Head's decision, and he's good-tempered about that blessed letter, too. Wylie let slip something about it before him this morning, and he never turned a hair. I expected him to slog Wylie on the boko, but he didn't. Now, what does that mean?"

"Possibly it means that he's satisfied now that his innocence will be proved," suggested Taffy, in a tone of patient explanation.

"But he wrote the letter, you know."

"Ass!"

"Just what I was going to say."

"Look here, Taffy—"

"Oh, rats!" said Taffy. "I said all along that Reddy never wrote that caddish letter, and now I'm certain of it. If he had written it, he would be shivering now. I'll bet the real chap is shivering, if we only knew it."

"He may be up to some dodge," said Lumsden. "Anyway, he wrote the letter, of course. I can't quite make him out, but he wrote the letter."

Taffy snorted, and walked away. He was firmly convinced of Redfern minor's innocence, but it was evidently of no use arguing with Lumsden. He passed Redfern minor with Skelton and Brown in the quad, and stopped to speak.

"I'm glad about this news, Reddy," he exclaimed. "It will clear the air, you know, though I suppose we shall never be told who really wrote the letter. But I said all along that you didn't, didn't I?"

Redfern grinned.

"Well, I don't remember your saying it all along," he answered. "I think I remember something a little different from that. But it's all right; the whole thing will be cleared up in a few days now."

"And I'm jolly glad."

Redfern minor's face was very bright as he strolled on, and Skelton and Brown were looking particularly cheerful. A couple of days had elapsed since the Head's decision, and it was known in the school that Mr. Craven, the expert, was to arrive the following morning. However long the investigation took him, it could not last more than a few days at the outside, and then the truth would be known—at least, regarding Redfern minor.

And the cheerful confidence that Redfern minor's manner showed was quite convincing of his innocence to most minds. Only a few obstinate fellows like Lumsden still held out, and maintained that Redfern was up to some dodge; but probably the real reason of Lumsden's obstinacy was the swelling that still remained on his nose. Until that swelling had quite subsided, he was not likely to believe in Redfern's innocence.

"I'm jolly glad it will be settled about the letter," Skelton remarked. "It made things jolly uncomfy for a few days. But now that's really off our minds, what price the roller-skating wheeze?"

"Just what I was going to speak about," said Redfern. "The Moderns haven't got a hint of it so far. We must keep it dark. Taffy was trying to get on the track, but he couldn't manage it. Now, the question is to get the skates into the school without Taffy & Co. catching on. We've got to practice for a week or two before we come out into the open, and give a rinking show, and knock the Moderns into a cocked hat."

"Exactly!"

"You see, if a lot of things are delivered to us here, the Moderns will know all about it, and they'll soon find out what's in the parcels. So I've had the skates sent to the railway-station in Okeholme."

"Good!"

"It's simply a question of fetching them in now," said Redfern. "Of course, we could walk down to the village any day and do that; but the parcels will be pretty big, and the Modern kids are already on the watch. The only safe way is to get them into the school when Taffy & Co. are safely tucked up in their little bunks."

Skelton whistled.

"At night?"

Redfern minor nodded coolly.

"Just so! You see, as the Modern rotters have a different dormitory, they couldn't possibly catch on to that. We can get out after lights out, out down to the railway-station, and get in again, unknown to anybody."

"It's breaking bounds, Reddy!"

"I know it is; but there's no harm in it. It isn't as if we were like that cad Ransome, breaking bounds to go to the races, or to gamble at the Green Man," said Redfern minor. "It's not so much the act as the intention, you know. There's no harm in a little run like this, and we shall be careful to keep it dark, of course."

"Well, I'm game if you are."

"We three will go, and Benson and Miller can stay up to help us in again," said Redfern minor. "It will be as easy as falling off a form."

And so it was agreed.

The roller-skating "wheeze" had been taken up most enthusiastically by the Classical. The whole country was rinking, and why not St. Dolly's, too? The idea of being the first to introduce the latest craze into the school, of practising secretly, and suddenly coming

out as expert skaters, and dazzling all St. Dolly's, and making the Moderns wild with envy, appealed very much to the Classical juniors.

They were all determined to become possessed of roller-skates, and to join in the wheeze; and almost all of them, by dint of writing to parents and kindly uncles, by saving or borrowing, had raised the necessary "tin." And Redfern, with an eye to business, had bargained by post with a firm in London for supplying twenty pairs of roller-skates at a reduction for the quantity. He had succeeded, too, and the skates had been supplied at a most reasonable price. The consignment was waiting now at the local railway-station, and it only remained to smuggle the skates in undiscovered by Taffy & Co.

When bedtime came, there was some excitement in the Classical dormitory. Arthur Redfern came to see lights out, but he was too preoccupied to notice anything unusual in the manner of the juniors. Arthur had not been in a happy state of mind for the past few days. He had come to feel that his brother was innocent of the accusation that had been made by Ransome in the first place, and he felt a keen remorse for ever having doubted him.

But there was something in Sidney's manner that discouraged him from speaking upon the subject. Redfern minor had been bitterly hurt, and something like a coldness had grown up between the brothers since.

Arthur glanced at his brother, at the frank and honest face, and wondered how he could ever have suspected the lad of a mean action.

"Good-night, kids!" he said.

"Good-night, Redfern major!"

The light was extinguished, and the door closed behind Arthur Redfern. The juniors lay quiet until the sound of the captain's footsteps had died away down the corridor.

Then Redfern minor sat up in bed.

"Good!" he said. "Skelton! Browney! Up you get!"

"I—I say," ventured Brown, who was snuggling under warm blankets, "it's jolly cold to-night, Redfern."

"Well, do you expect it to be warm in the winter?"

"I was thinking—"

"No time to think now," said Redfern minor, jumping out of bed; "it's time to get up. Look here, we've got to get to the station, and get the skates, and get in, and we're not going to be all right about it."

"I—I—I've thought of a good idea, though," said Brown, holding the bedclothes tightly.

"It's an awfully good dodge, you know. Suppose we get up awfully early in the morning, before rising-bell, and spin down to Okeholme on our jiggers, then we could get the skates in as easily as anything."

"And suppose Taffy & Co. should happen to get up awfully early, too, and meet us coming in with twenty pairs of roller-skates clinking on our bikes?" demanded Redfern minor.

"Well, you see, that's not likely to happen."

"No, it isn't; it's very unlikely, because we're going to-night," retorted Redfern, taking a grip with both hands on Brown's bedclothes. "Are you moving?"

"It's jolly cold!"

"Never mind; jump up!" Redfern jerked off the whole of the bedclothes with a powerful wrench. "You'll find it colder there than in your clothes."

"Br-r-r! Beast!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's c-c-c-cold!"

"All right; wait till I've dipped this sponge in the jug, and I'll warn you."

Brown rolled off the bed in a twinkling.

"Br-r-r!" he mumbled, groping for his clothes. "Well, perhaps we'd better go. Nothing like sticking to arrangements. Skelton! I say, Skelton!"

"Snore!"

"Skelton!"

"Snore!"

"Well, my only hat!" exclaimed Brown indignantly. "Blessed if he hasn't gone off to sleep! The lazy slacker! Fancy sticking in bed while we're getting up! Chuck us over that sponge!"

"Here you are!"

"Ow! You silly ass! I didn't say bung it in my face!" roared Brown.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, stop your cackling!" Brown picked up the sponge, and squeezed it over the slumbering face of the captain of the Fourth.

"Time to get up, Skelton!"

"Gr-r-r-r-roooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What's—er—marrer?" gasped Skelton.

"Hallo, I fell asleep, I think! What are you fellows doing out of bed?"

"Get up!"

"Oh, I remember! I say, Reddy, it's cold! Perhaps we'd better leave it—Ow! You beast, Brown! Yow! Gerrooh! Chuck it! Can't you see I'm getting up, fathead?"

And Skelton bounded out of bed.

"Now, then, Benson and Miller!"

"Oh, I say, can't you leave it till—Oh, all right! I'll get up. Keep off, you ass! I'm getting up, ain't I?"

And Benson and Miller tumbled out of bed quickly enough.

Out of Bounds.

REDFERN minor stepped to the door of the dormitory and opened it quietly. He glanced out into the passage. Further along was the door of the Modern dormitory in which Taffy & Co. were slumbering, or, at all events, ought

to have been slumbering. There was no light in the passage; no sound to be heard. The Moderns had no suspicion, and the prefects were not on the alert. Redfern minor closed the dormitory door noiselessly, and with a grin of satisfaction. The hour could not have been better chosen for that little excursion out of bounds.

"Coast's clear," he remarked. "I don't think it's safe to get out of the dormitory, though. I was bagged that time I got out of the end window, you remember. You never can tell when some master is on the prowl."

"No; they're troublesome animals," agreed Skelton. "But we've got the rope, and nothing's simpler than to get down from our window with that."

"Right you are!"

Skelton dragged out a long, thick rope, which was coiled up and hidden under the mattress of his bed. Brown had lighted a candle. By the dim, flickering light Redfern uncoiled the rope.

Most of the Classical juniors were sitting up in bed now, watching the proceedings. In fact, only one was asleep, and that was Fatty Spratt, who would have slept soundly in the midst of a field of battle, with cannon going off all round him. The Fourth were intensely interested in the proceedings, though few of them envied the three chums the dark and dangerous excursion to Okeholme Station.

Redfern minor fastened one end of the rope to the leg of a bed nearest the window at the end of the dormitory. There a big tree grew outside, and when it was windy the tips of the boughs would scrape against the glass. It made a good cover for anyone descending from the window. As the distance was over fifty feet, it required a certain amount of nerve to make the attempt; but, as Brown remarked, it was nothing to the performances they went through in the gym. Anybody ought to be able to get down a thick rope with knots in it.

Redfern swung open the window.

He looked out cautiously. The night was dark, with but few stars gleaming in the sombre sky. Down below to the left a glimmer of light cut into the darkness. He knew that it proceeded from the window of the Head's study, which was on the ground floor. There were French windows to that room, opening on the gardens, and the Head sometimes came out that way in the evening, as a relief from his work, to stroll under the trees. That was the chief danger of the excursion. The light in the window showed that the Head was in his study.

"It's all right," said Redfern. "We've got to be quiet, that's all. Hand me the rope."

He allowed the rope to slide softly out of the window. It rustled away down through the thick, clinging ivy.

"Now, I'm going first," said Redfern.

"Then—"

"Rats!" said Skelton. "I'm the blessed captain of the blessed Form. I'm going first!"

"Look here—"

"Look here—"

"Better let me go first," suggested Brown.

"You want a chap with a good nerve and a steady head to lead the way."

"Rats!"

"And many of 'em!"

"This is awfully interesting," remarked Benson. "I like listening to you; but may I remark that my feet are cold, and the draught is pretty strong from that open window. If you're going to keep up a conversation I'll get an overcoat."

"Oh, don't be funny, Benson!"

"I'm being serious. It's cold, and—"

"Well, shut up!" said Skelton.

"Look here—"

"Oh, go and eat coke! Now, Reddy, you see—Why, where is the boulder? My hat, he's gone!"

Redfern minor was already out of the window.

The rope rustled in the ivy as Redfern minor descended. Skelton looked out after him into the gloom, and breathed lurid threats. Redfern chuckled as he went down. There was danger in the task, true, but it was mere child's play to the strong and active junior. His feet touched the ground, and he gave the rope a shake to indicate that he had landed. Then Skelton came down the rope.

He joined Redfern minor at the foot of the wall, and shook the rope.

"I've a jolly good mind to punch your head!" he remarked. "What do you—"

"Hush!"

Redfern grasped his arm tightly as he whispered the word.

"What is it?" breathed Skelton.

"Look!"

Redfern was pointing towards the glimmering light of the Head's window. The juniors could see that the French windows were open, and they caught the reflection of the red firelight within on the glass.

But what caused Redfern's excitement was the sight of a dark shadow crossing the glimmering square of the window.

Someone had suddenly passed before the window, obscuring it for a moment—someone in the garden!

"The Head's come out of his study!" muttered Skelton.

Redfern shook his head.

"That didn't look like the Head's shadow."

"Well, no. Wasn't it too small?"

"Yes."

"But who else could it be?"

"Blessed if I know. A prefect on the watch perhaps. We shall have to be jolly careful. Quiet, Brown. There's somebody about."

"Right-ho!" murmured Brown.

Redfern minor shook the rope gently. Benson pulled it up to the window, and there was a faint sound as the dormitory window closed.

"I jolly well hope Benson won't go to sleep and forget us," muttered Brown.

"If he does we'll boil him in oil," said Redfern minor. "But don't jaw; there's somebody in the garden—either the Head or a prefect. This way!"

Redfern minor led the way, skirting the school wall, and the light from the Head's window soon vanished among the trees.

To climb over the school wall into the lane was easy. The wall was not high, and it was thick with ivy.

The three juniors dropped into the road, and started for Okeholme. The road was quiet and deserted. At the sound of a pedestrian's footsteps they dodged among the trees. It would not do for St. Dolly's caps to be recognised out of doors at that time of night. They kept up a steady trot to Okeholme, and reached the station in a quarter of an hour. The one porter whom Okeholme boasted was also the man in charge of the luggage department, and the juniors knew him well. He stared at the sight of them, and grinned as Redfern slipped a shilling into his hand.

"Master Redfern, there'd be a mighty row if the doctor knew this!" he said.

Redfern laughed.

"He won't know it, you know. We're in a hurry to get the things in, you see, and we're not telling everybody about it, that's all. Where's the parcel?"

"Here they are, Master Redfern—three of them, directed to you."

"That's right."

The three parcels were each of a good weight. But the juniors shouldered them manfully, and left the station, leaving the ancient porter shaking his head after them in an extremely dubious sort of way.

They stepped out cheerily on the road home.

"By Jove, these weigh something!" Skelton remarked. "I'm glad I haven't to carry mine for a hundred miles. I suppose we'd better hide them in the woodshed, and smuggle them into the school to-morrow."

"That's it; no good trying to get them up to the dorm. window," chuckled Redfern. "We can get them in to-morrow easily enough."

"Good! Here's St. Dolly's at last, thank goodness!"

The school wall, with the line of dark trees beyond it, loomed up in dark shadow before them.

Brown set his burden down with a sigh of relief.

"It's jolly heavy, and no mistake!"

"I'll get on the wall, and you can hand them up," said Redfern.

"Right-ho!"

Redfern minor sat astride of the wall and reached down for the parcels. He dragged them up one after another; and then the other two juniors climbed over, and received them from him on the inner side of the wall.

Then Redfern dropped inside.

"Now for the woodshed!"

There was the growl of a dog as the juniors approached the woodshed. It was the voice of Phipps's mastiff. But Redfern knew the dog well; and a soothing whisper from him quieted Bob at once.

Redfern struck a match, and it glimmered in the woodshed on the piles of faggots and the other lumber that was kept there by Phipps, the house-porter.

The juniors removed some of the faggots, and carefully stacked the parcels away, covering them up out of sight with the wood.

Then, well satisfied with the results of their excursion, they crept out of the woodshed. The light was still gleaming from the window of the Head's study, and the red glow from the fire within fell upon the glass.

"The Head's at work," grunted Skelton. "Examination papers, I suppose. On the whole, it isn't all lavender to be the headmaster of a public school."

"I'd rather be in the Fourth!" chuckled Redfern. "I wonder whether Benson and Miller are awake? Got a stone?"

"Here you are!"

Redfern threw up a stone with careful aim, and it clinked faintly on the glass of the high dormitory window.

The juniors waited anxiously, watching. There was a glimmer of starlight on the glass of the dormitory window.

They felt a sense of relief as they saw the glass slide back. The window was opened. A dark object was projected from within, which they knew to be a head looking downwards.

Redfern imitated a bird-call, the signal agreed upon. The rope came rustling down through the ivy.

Skelton was about to grasp it to ascend, when Redfern suddenly gripped him and Brown, and dragged them both deep into the shadows of the thick ivy.

"Cave!"

Faintly through the stillness of the night came the sound of footsteps—so faintly that it was evident that the walker was moving with deliberate stealthiness, with the intention of escaping observation.

The juniors' hearts beat hard.

It must be a prefect on the watch! There could be no other explanation—at all events, they could think of no other. The Head, if he were taking a turn under the trees, would not be walking stealthily like that.

Did it mean discovery?

(Another rattling long instalment next week.)