

COMPLETE FOOTBALL STORY BY SIDNEY DREW.

The Boys' Realm 19

of Sport & Adventure.

"CAPTAIN JACK"



THE
WARM
BATH!

A STIRRING STORY
OF LEAGUE FOOTBALL
By A.S. HARDY.





REDFERN MINOR.

A Rattling Long Instalment of Charles Hamilton's Fascinating School Tale.

Skelton was in a cruel uncertainty. He knew too little of what had happened to be able to act. He was as likely to injure Reddy as to help him if he opened his mouth.

While poor Skelton was trying to think out a course to follow, Redfern went on with the captain of St. Dolly's to the Head's study.

He had seen a light burning in the Head's window as they crossed the quadrangle, and he knew that Dr. Cranston was there.

Redfern remembered his last interview with the Head in that dreaded apartment. He had escaped that time. He was not to escape now. He knew that. He had been caught fairly in the act—not doing anything that he thought to be wrong, certainly, but breaking the school laws in the most flagrant manner for another's sake; but he could not say so, and if he did say so it would not help him much, probably.

Already, in his mind's eye, he saw the doctor's grim face, and heard the sentence from his lips.

Well, he had risked it for Arthur, and he could face the music. Hardest of all to bear was the thought that he had made the sacrifice for nothing—that the twenty pounds which would have saved Arthur had not come to him, after all.

He had won the purse, and had not received it. He might extract the money from them afterwards in time for Arthur, but—

Lunsford tapped at the Head's door. A thrill like the contact of ice ran through the veins of Redfern minor.

"Come in!"

The Head's voice seemed deeper, more solemn and stern, than Redfern had ever known it to be before. It was but fancy, but it sounded in his ears like a knell.

They entered. Dr. Cranston was seated at his writing-table, a pen in his hand. He looked at Lunsford, and then at Redfern minor, and quietly laid down his pen, and turned a little in his seat. He knew at once that something serious had happened.

"What is it, Lunsford?" he asked quietly.

"A very unpleasant matter, sir, which I felt bound to bring to your notice at once," said Lunsford. "It's quite beyond me to deal with it. I—I'm almost ashamed to tell you, but

He paused uncomfortably.

"Go on, Lunsford! Is it Redfern minor in trouble again?"

"Yes, sir."

"I am sorry for this, Redfern. I had hoped that your narrow escape would be a warning to you. I had hoped that you would try to lead a straighter life for your brother's sake, after he had saved you from expulsion."

Redfern kept his eyes upon the carpet. For his brother's sake! He could not tell the Head of St. Dorothy's what he had done for his brother's sake.

"Go on, Lunsford!"

"You remember, sir, that you directed me to keep my eye on Cunliffe's place in Wyndale, since it was discovered that St. Dolly's fellows went there?"

"Yes, and I directed you to report to me at once if you discovered that any person belonging to St. Dorothy's visited the place," said the Head. "It was a great shock to me to find that anything of the sort was going on in the school under my charge, and I am determined to stamp it out. This is a case where masters and prefects and all right-thinking boys are at one."

"Yes, sir," Lunsford hesitated. "Redfern minor was missing from calling-over. Mr. Ford was informed that he had a pass to go to the village; but, in view of—of Redfern's late conduct, I thought I had better look into the matter."

"Quite right."

"I inquired among the prefects, and could not find who had given Redfern a pass. One prefect was absent, and I could not ask him. I decided to walk down to the Green Man, and see whether Redfern minor was there."

"Very right."

"I could not help suspecting that he was there, especially as—as the only prefect who could have given him a pass was his major, who was the only one likely to give it him without very close inquiry as to what he intended to do."

"I understand."

"I met Redfern minor in the lane, coming from the direction of Wyndale—"

Redfern minor started. Had his brother been at Wyndale that evening? Did Arthur know, then, of the prize-fight at Mr. Cunliffe's?

The Head observed his start, and his eyes glimmered behind his pince-nez for a moment.

"Go on, Lunsford!"

"I asked Redfern major whether he had given his minor a pass, and he said he had. I asked him if he knew where the boy was, and

"Go on!"

"He looked so distressed, sir, that I asked him nothing further, but went straight on to the Green Man myself. I thought it hard on Redfern major that he should be forced to say anything against his brother, and I wanted, if possible, to leave him out of the whole matter—if you approve, sir."

"Dr. Cranston nodded.

"Quite right, Lunsford. Redfern major shall not be asked to say anything in the matter. He will not appear in it at all."

Lunsford drew a deep breath.

"I am glad of that, sir. It would be hard on him. Well, I went straight to the Green Man, and found Redfern minor there. He had been engaged in a prize-fight—"

"A—a—what?"

"A prize-fight with a fellow put up by Mr. Cunliffe to meet him for a purse of twenty pounds, as far as I could make out. He claimed the money, but I did not allow him to take it."

"Is this possible, Redfern?"

Redfern's eyes were still on the carpet.

"Yes, sir."

His voice was low, quiet, mechanical—more like the tones of some machine cunningly contrived to imitate the human voice than like the voice of a living being. He was crushed—almost stunned.

Lunsford's matter-of-fact report of what he had discovered at the Green Man stripped the whole affair of any guise of chivalry. He realised how brutal, how sordid, it must appear to the Head, for it appeared so to him now.

"You fought with a low ruffian—"

"He was a decent enough chap, sir."

"H'm! Perhaps so. But you fought with a man, then, for money—for a purse of twenty pounds?"

"Yes, sir."

"I am glad to find you so truthful, Redfern," said the Head, after a pause; "although, certainly, falsehood would not help you now. Why did you do this?"

"I—I wanted the money, sir!"

"You wanted twenty pounds! What could you possibly want such a sum of money for?"

Redfern was silent.

"The only possible explanation, Redfern, is that you owed money—that you are in debt—that you spoke falsely when you told me that you had never betted or gambled at that place," said the Head sternly.

The junior did not speak.

"Answer me, Redfern! Did you require this money to pay a debt?"

"Yes, sir."

"That is enough. Have you anything more to tell me, Lunsford?"

"No, sir."

"You have done your duty, Redfern minor, I will not attempt to express the horror and contempt I feel for your conduct. Under a guise of frankness, you have concealed a nature that I hope the worst boy at St. Dorothy's would despise if he knew it as it has now been revealed."

Redfern winced.

His lips were white, but no word passed them. He would not, and could not, defend himself. What was he to say?

"I shall remove this canker from St. Dorothy's before it has had time to spread corruption, I hope," said the Head. "Redfern minor, I would expel you, with every sign of ignominy, before an assembly of the whole school, but for one consideration. I cannot help thinking of your brother—he whose honourable name you have dragged in the mire."

The junior was grimly silent.

"I will not disgrace Arthur, Redfern. It shall not be said of him that his minor was expelled from the school in shame and disgrace. He has had enough to bear, I do not doubt, already on your account. I shall save him all I can. You must leave St. Dorothy's! But for Arthur Redfern's sake you shall go quietly, and this matter shall not be made public. I shall explain to your parents, as in duty bound, why you are sent home; that is all. You will pack your box to-night, and leave the school by the first train in the morning!"

Redfern shivered.

"Yes, sir."

The doctor looked at him long and hard.

"I might have hoped to see a sign of repentance in you, Redfern minor. Are you not sorry for what you have done? Do you not regret bringing this shadow upon an honourable name?"

Redfern's lips were closed.

"Well, go!" said the Head. "I won't speak to you further. You are hardened—more hardened than I should have imagined possible in one so young, if I had not seen it with my own eyes. You may go!"

Redfern staggered rather than walked to the door.

He hardly knew how he got out of the study. He went along the passage like one in a dream; he found his way up to the dormitory without seeing where he was going. The great room was dark and empty—dark, save for a glimmer of starlight in the high windows. It was not yet the bedtime of the juniors.

He was to pack his box that night, to leave

THE PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS ARE:

SIDNEY REDFERN, a bright, fun-loving lad, who is a new pupil at St. Dorothy's School.

ARTHUR REDFERN, Sidney's elder brother, who is a prefect in the Sixth Form. Arthur Redfern is inclined to be easily led, and is under the by-no-means good influence of

RANSOME, another Sixth-Former, a slacker, and a good-for-nothing.

SKELTON and **BROWN**, two Fourth-Formers, and leaders of the Classical side of St. Dorothy's.

TAFFY MORGAN, **VERNON**, and **BAKE**, the leaders of the Modern side at St. Dorothy's, deadly rivals of Skelton and Brown.

At St. Dorothy's there is a deadly and everlasting feud existing between the Classical and Modern sides.

Sidney Redfern allies himself to the Classics, to the rage and humiliation of the Moderns.

Ransome and Arthur Redfern have got themselves into difficulties with a bookmaker named Cunliffe, who threatens to report them to the head-master unless they pay him the money they owe him.

Sidney learns of Ransome's true character, and tries to save him. The Sixth-Former informs the boy that his elder brother is heavily in debt to Cunliffe, and that unless Arthur can scrape together twenty pounds with which to pay the bookmaker, Cunliffe will report him to the Head. This would, of course, mean the expulsion of Redfern major.

Ransome knows Sidney to be a clever little boxer, and offers to show him a way by which he can earn twenty pounds, and save his brother.

Ransome's plan is that Sidney shall participate in a boxing contest for a purse of money. Sidney at first refuses scornfully, but then it occurs to him that Arthur must be saved at any cost; so he falls in with Ransome's plan.

The following night the Sixth-Former and Sidney make their way down to the Green Man, Cunliffe's public-house, where the boxing match is to take place.

Sidney gets badly knocked about in the first couple of rounds, but in the end he manages to defeat the Chicken. No sooner, however, has the fight been decided than there comes a knock at the door, and Lunsford, the captain of St. Dolly's, steps in. Redfern minor is caught red-handed!

"Come along with me, you young fool," says Lunsford sternly; "I'm going to take you before the Head!"

(Now read this week's instalment.)

Sacked!

REDDY! Skelton and Brown uttered the name together, in blank dismay, as Lunsford and Redfern minor entered the schoolhouse at St. Dolly's.

Redfern's eyes were on the ground. He did not look up. He was walking like one in a dream.

Skelton tapped him on the shoulder, and then he looked round with a start.

"Reddy, what's the matter? What—"

"Stand aside, Skelton!" said Lunsford sharply.

"Oh, all right. I only want to speak to Redfern."

"Get back!"

There was an unusual sharpness in the captain's tones. Skelton stepped back in wonder. Lunsford strode on with Redfern minor, who had not spoken a word. Skelton and Brown looked at each other in great disquiet.

"Something's jolly wrong!" said Brown III.

Skelton knitted his brows.

"They've caught him, Brownie!" he said gloomily. "I don't know what it was he was mixed up in with Ransome, but he's been caught at it. I wonder if Ransome's caught, too?"

"Not much!" said Brown bitterly. "Trust Ransome! He wouldn't be caught. Reddy will take the blame for the whole bizny."

"He jolly well won't!" said Skelton between his teeth. "Whatever it was, Ransome led him into it. Ransome can face the music as well."

"He won't!"

"He may be made to."

Skelton tried to think it out with knitted brows. What was it Redfern had left the school for that evening? What wretched business had Ransome dragged him into? Arthur, too, had followed him to interfere, yet nothing had come of it. What did it all mean, and what was the best thing for Reddy's chums to do?



Ransome struggled furiously, but the juniors had the advantage. They rolled him over mercilessly, and they bumped him again and again, the cad of the Sixth all the time struggling and yelling.

St. Dorothy's by the first train in the morning!

Was it possible? Was it true, or was it all some ghastly dream? Would he wake up presently and find that it was but a vision?

Alas, no!

It was real enough. He was expelled from the school. Once before he had narrowly escaped it; this time the blow had fallen, and there was no escape.

And as he realised it, the unhappy boy threw himself upon his bed, and the long pent-up feelings gave way, and he broke into tears.

Ransome is Roughly Handled.

REDDY! It was a whispering voice in the gloom.

Redfern minor started up. The tears were wet upon his cheeks in the darkness of the dormitory.

"Reddy!"

He recognised Skelton's voice.

"He's here, I think," said Brown III. "Benson said he saw him. I say, Reddy, are you here, old chap?"

"Yes," said Redfern quietly.

His two chums came quickly towards him in the gloom. Redfern sat up on the bed. He was quite calm again now; that outburst had relieved him. He felt that he could look at the future calmly once more, terrible as it was.

"What's the row, Reddy? Has Ransome got you into a fix?"

"Yes."

"You've been before the Head?"

"Yes."

"Licked?"

"No."

His two chums peered at him anxiously. His monosyllabic replies alarmed them.

"Not"—Skelton hardly breathed the word—"not sacked?"

"Yes."

"Sacked?"

"Yes."

"Good heavens!"

And there was silence. Skelton and Brown peered at Redfern, and at one another. Redfern did not speak. What was there to say?

"Sacked!" said Skelton at last, in an awed voice. "Sacked! When are you going, Reddy?"

"By the first train in the morning. I've come up here to pack my box," said Redfern drearily. "It—it can't be helped. My luck's out."

"What have you done?"

"No good telling you, old chap; it's going to be kept dark, and the less said the better. You don't mind my not saying anything?"

"N-n-no! Only, I say, Reddy, you—you haven't really done anything rotten, have you?" faltered Skelton.

Redfern's cheeks reddened in the darkness. "Hang it, Skelton! I shouldn't think you would think so, anyway."

"Right—ho! I knew you wouldn't. But—but if it's not that it means that you are standing the racket for your major again. If so—"

"Arthur wasn't in this; he didn't even know."

"Ransome got you into it?"

"Yes."

"Was he caught, too?"

Redfern minor smiled bitterly.

"No; he slid out in time. So far as I can make out he wasn't even suspected. Lunsford didn't guess he was there."

"The hound! He ought to own up, and—"

"It wouldn't save me if he did; he would be sacked, too, that's all. It's no good talking, Skelton. I've got to go. I'm sorry."

Redfern's voice almost broke again, but he controlled it—"I'm sorry to leave the school, and you chaps. I dare say we shall meet again somewhere—"

"Of course we will. But—but you sha'n't go!" exclaimed Skelton quickly. "Something's got to be done. Brown, you dummy, why can't you think of something?"

"I only wish I could," said Brown, who was very near blubbing, as he would have called it. "It will be rotten without you, Reddy."

There was a sound at the door. The juniors turned quickly.

"Is Redfern minor here?"

"Ransome!"

"I want to speak to you, Redfern. Come to my study," said Ransome, striking a match. "What the dickens are you doing here in the dark?"

Redfern looked at him in the flickering glimmer.

"I won't come to your study."

"What!"

"You heard what I said."

Ransome checked the furious words on his lips. He knew that he could not afford to quarrel with Redfern minor, who held his fate in the hollow of his hand. A word from the junior, and the cad of the Sixth was ruined, and Redfern had nothing to lose by speaking that word, if he chose to speak it.

"Get out of here, Skelton and Brown," said Ransome sharply. He lighted the gas, and threw down the match. "Do you hear? Get out!"

Skelton and Brown exchanged a glance, and left the dormitory. They halted on the stairs.

"He wants Reddy to shut up," said Skelton, in a whisper. "That's what he's come for. He's not going to try to help Reddy."

"No; the cad!"

"He's jolly well not going to get off scot-free!" said Skelton, between his teeth. "We've never bumped a Sixth-Former—"

"Eh?"

"But it's time we begun. Ransome is going through it!"

"You—ass! Why—"

"He won't say a word about it afterwards," said Skelton coolly. "He dare not. We know too much about him. He's not going to get off scot-free, I tell you. The cad has ruined Reddy, and now he's thinking only about his own skin."

Skelton was right there. Ransome had been looking for Redfern minor in an extremely anxious state of mind about his own skin. He shut the dormitory door after the juniors, and then fixed his eyes upon Redfern. Redfern had gone to his box, and opened it. He had his packing to do.

"Redfern, how has it turned out?" asked Ransome, in a strained voice.

"I'm sacked!"

Ransome drew a quick breath.

"Did you mention my name?"

"No," said Redfern, with a curling lip. "You need not be afraid."

"Then they don't suspect me?" said Ransome, unheeding the taunt.

"Not so far as I know."

"Good!"

Redfern was pulling the things out of his trunk to pack them. Ransome watched him in silence. He was deeply uneasy; but Redfern was not inclined to help him. The cad of the Sixth broke the silence at last.

"Look here, Redfern, you haven't given me away, and that's decent of you. I suppose you mean to keep your mouth shut?"

"Yes."

"Good! You're—you're a little brick! It wouldn't do you any good to get me into a row with the Head."

Redfern looked straight at him.

"You owe me twenty pounds!" he said. "Where is the money?"

"I don't owe it, Redfern. I—"

"I expect it from you. I want the money. You know why I want it. I fought the Chicken and licked him. You've got to pay the money!"

"Got to?" said Ransome, gritting his teeth.

"Yes."

Ransome's eyes sank before Redfern's.

"It's all right," he said. "You shall have it. Nobody wants to do you out of it, as far as that goes. You shall have it—to-morrow."

"To-morrow will be too late. I want it to-night." Redfern's lip curled in a bitter smile. "You can make your arrangements with your friends at the Green Man to-morrow. You know you won more than twenty pounds over the fight—double that, I should think. Give me the money now."

Ransome forced a laugh.

"You are a young Shylock! But you're right. Here's the money."

He took four crisp, rustling banknotes from his pocket-book, and handed them to Redfern.

The junior thrust them into his pocket. They were the price of his ruin; but they would save his brother.

"And you'll say nothing?" said Ransome.

"Nothing."

The cad of the Sixth left the dormitory. He was quite reassured. He knew that Redfern minor was a fellow of his word. For the fate of the junior he cared not a snap of the fingers. In fact, he was rather glad than otherwise that a boy who knew so many shady things about him was to leave St. Dolly's. He broke into a whistle as he went down the passage. He had done well, very well, out of that fight at the Green Man, and he had more money in his pockets than he had ever had at one time in his life before. Ransome was in a cheerful mood.

His whistle struck on the ears of two juniors waiting in the gloom of the upper staircase.

"That's how much he cares for Reddy!" said Skelton, in a savage whisper. "He's got Reddy sacked from the school, and now he can whistle!"

"The cad!"

"Stand ready!"

Ransome came on unsuspectingly. He gave a sudden yell as two pairs of hands grasped him in the darkness, and he was rolled bodily down the last three or four steps.

"Oh! Ow! What—Help! Oh!"

"Bump him!"

"What—ho!"

"Yow! Yaroooh!" roared the astounded Sixth-Former, as he was rolled over on the linoleum and heavily bumped. "Yaroooh! You—you cheeky cads! Leggo!"

"Bump him!"

"I—I—I'll have you flogged—expelled! I'll skin you alive!" shrieked Ransome, hardly able to believe his ears when he heard the voices of the Fourth-Formers. "You—you dare to touch a Sixth-Former! I—I—"

"Bump the cad!"

Ransome struggled furiously, but the juniors had the advantage.

They rolled him over mercilessly, and they bumped him again and again, the cad of the Sixth all the time struggling and yelling.

"There!" said Skelton, panting. "There! I think that's enough! Do you think it's enough, Ransome?"

"You—you—you young cad! I'll—I'll—"

"Give him another one, then!"

"Bump!"

"Ow!"

"That enough, Ransome?"

"I'll—I'll—I'll—"

"One more, then!"

"Bump!"

"Nuff, Ransome!"

"Ow! Yes, yes!"

"Good! Let him go, Brown. You can call us up before the Form-master for this, if you like, Ransome. We'll be ready to answer for it. We shall have quite a lot of things to tell him, you know."

And Skelton and Brown, satisfied with their vengeance, scuttled off. Ransome staggered to his feet, dusty, dishevelled, his collar torn out, his clothes rumpled, his hair like a mop. He was breathing vengeance; but that vengeance was not to be taken. Skelton's last words showed the cad of the Sixth that it would be better to leave matters where they were, and that "bumping" was never reported to the Form-master.

No Weakness.

TAP!

Arthur Redfern started as the tap came at his door. He was walking up and down his study; he had been doing so ever since he returned from Wyndale. He was in a desperate mood. What to decide, what to do, he did not know. He had left his minor at the Green Man. Again his good resolutions had been foiled, baffled, by circumstances. Whenever he strove to follow a new path some wretched result of a former transgression started up to block the way, and to throw him back into his old ways. His resolution that his young brother should never be mixed up with the Cunliffe set had been as fixed as anything could be in his wavering breast, and that resolution was broken now. What was to be the end of it all?

The door opened and Redfern minor came in. Arthur looked at him guiltily. He noted the signs of the fight on the boy's face; but the fight alone could not account for the paleness there, for the deep trouble in the eyes.

"Hallo, Sid!"

Redfern minor closed the door.

"I've got something for you, Arthur."

"For me?"

"Yes. You remember what you told me—if you had the money to square Cunliffe, and get rid of him, you'd break with that gang for ever, and with Ransome?"

"Yes."

"I've got the money!"

Arthur's eyes glistened. He watched the junior breathlessly as he laid four five-pound notes on the table. He could hardly believe his eyes.

"Sid! Twenty pounds!"

"There it is."

Redfern minor expected his major to ask him where he had obtained it. But he did not, and Sidney wondered if he knew.

Arthur took up the banknotes. The crisp rustle in his fingers was delightful to him. The door was open at last for escape from all his troubles—that misery was over for good. He crumpled the notes in his eager fingers.

"Sidney, you've done a lot for me! This—this saves me! I should have had to leave St. Dolly's. Sid, you're a brick! I—I haven't treated you as I should have done since you've been at St. Dolly's."

"That's all right."

"It isn't. I—I was worried; that was partly the cause. And—and I was afraid of your getting mixed up with—with the people I know—people I shouldn't have known. I was anxious about you, Sid, and—and I wished you hadn't come to St. Dolly's. And—and you made me feel, too, what a fool and blackguard I had been!"

"I never meant to, Arthur."

"I know you didn't. But I felt it, and I was savage and worried. Sid, old man, this clears off everything. It means a different road for me in the future. Ransome and Cunliffe and that set—I shall cut them dead! You're not going to remain Ransome's fag, either. You sha'n't speak to him again. How would you like to be my fag, Sid?"

Sidney Redfern's eyes moistened.

It was clear that Arthur knew nothing of Lunsford's discovery at the Green Man—that he had not been told that his minor was expelled from St. Dolly's. Redfern did not speak, and Arthur went on cheerily:

"It'll be different for both of us after this, Sidney. You'll find me different with that horrible worry off my mind. They have asked me to be football captain this season, as Lunsford is leaving at the end of the term. I shall go in for the footer hot and strong. Better than loafing round pubs, my boy, and running up debts, and staying awake at nights thinking of them—eh?"

"Yes, rather!" said Sidney.

"I've had an eye on your footer, too," said Arthur. "You used to play jolly well at home, and you're playing well here. Do you remember how I used to give you tips in the holidays? And a jolly promising pupil you were, too! Do you remember your first goal—through the dining-room window?"

Sidney laughed.

"Yes, I remember. That was a long time ago."

"You'll be kicking plenty of goals for St. Dolly's yet," said Arthur brightly. "You'll be skipper of the Fourth-Form team—eh? Skelton is a good man, but he won't be able to stand against you. And when you get into the Fifth, Sid, I'll have you in the first eleven. How would you like that?"

Redfern could not speak. The happy prospect his brother was sketching out; it made his heart ache.

Happy enough it was, but it was never to be realised—for him, at least. He was to leave St. Dolly's for ever by the first train in the morning.

"How I'm running on," said Arthur, with a laugh. "The fact is, I feel ten years younger. How I ever got into this fix I don't know. I was a silly ass, I suppose. I don't blame Ransome either. I was old enough to take care of myself, or ought to have been. The matter wrote me when you first came, Sid, to take care of you. Ha, ha! The boot's been rather on the other foot, hasn't it?"

Sidney did not speak. His silence struck his brother at last. Arthur looked at him rather anxiously.

"Sid, why don't you speak—what's the matter?"

What could he say?

"Is there anything wrong?" said Arthur apprehensively. "Look here, Sid, I won't humbug you. I know where you got this money. You fought the Chicken at the Green Man!"

Redfern minor started.

"You knew?"

"Yes. I—I came to fetch you away," said Arthur, colouring. "You must have heard me knocking at the door."

"That was you?" said Redfern, with a start.

"Yes. I—I was going to make you chuck it up and come away. I—I ought to have done it. It was my duty as a prefect. But—but Ransome put it to me—hang it, I won't blame Ransome, but—but he thought you had a chance of winning, and the stakes would clear me. He told me what you wanted the money for. Sid, old man, I came away, and left you to finish, and felt like a scoundrel all the time. But I made up my mind to one thing. I don't know why you should care so much about me, but I swore to myself that I'd do my best to deserve it. But all's clear now, Sid, isn't it? There's nothing wrong!"

Arthur's tone was appealing. It went to Redfern's heart to tell him differently; but he had to know the truth, if not from one, than from another.

"I—I'm afraid there is, Arthur," he said slowly. "Not for you, though; that's all right. You're clear, thank goodness."

"But you?"

"Lunsford collared me, but I can stand it." Arthur grasped him by the shoulder.

"What do you mean?" he cried. "What—what can you stand?"

"I've been up before the Head—"

"Yes, yes?"

"I'm sacked!"

Arthur staggered back.

"Sacked?"

"Yes. For Heaven's sake, don't look like that, Arthur! I—I can stand it. I'm willing to face it. You—"

Arthur grasped the edge of the table convulsively. His face was as white as chalk.

"Did Lunsford find you at the Green Man?"

"Yes."

"Ah! He did not tell me. I—I thought—oh, I might have guessed! He took you to the Head. The Head knows about the fight—knows everything?"

"Yes."

"About me?"

"Oh, no!" cried Redfern. "Do you think I would betray you? Nothing about you."

"But—but—you—"

"It's all right. I can face the music," said Redfern.

Arthur shook his head.

"Never! I'll go to the Head—"

"Hold on! Don't! You can't help me! I'm sacked for the fight!" said Sidney, in distress. "You can't help me by getting sacked too. You—"

"I'm going to the Head, though. You've done too much for me!"

"Arthur, think first."

"I won't think first! If I stop to think I shall be a coward again. There's been enough of that. No weakness this time."

And before Redfern could detain him, Arthur strode from the study. Redfern sprang after him with a cry; but Arthur waved him back. The junior sank into a chair, his face white, his breath coming in short, thick gasps.

Arthur was going to the Head to own up. He was lost—ruined—if he did! Yet, amid the misery that that thought brought to Redfern, he was conscious that he felt prouder of his brother at that moment than ever before.

And yet—and yet—for Arthur to be expelled—ruined! Redfern hardly dared think of it; and Arthur did not give himself time to think of it. He ran rather than walked to the Head's study, and knocked at the door. Dr. Cranston's voice bade him enter. The Head looked distressed as Arthur Redfern came in. He naturally concluded that he had come to plead for his brother as he had done before.

"Redfern, you have heard—"

"Yes, sir. I—"

"I am afraid it is useless to say anything, Redfern. The thing was too flagrant, too disgraceful, and I am afraid that there is more behind than Redfern minor has cared to tell. Redfern minor must leave St. Dolly's!"

"He must not, sir! Sidney is innocent! Only one person is guilty!"

"What are you saying, Redfern?" exclaimed the Head, in astonishment.

"I say that Sidney is innocent of any wrong, that one person alone is guilty, and ought to be expelled!"

"And who is that?"

"Myself!"

(To be concluded in next week's *Grand Christmas Double Number of THE BOYS' REALM*. Price 2d., when Charles Hamilton's rattling new school serial, "Arthur Redfern's Vow," commences. Order your copy at once.)