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SCHOOL DAYS**

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TOM BROWN'S SCHOOL DAYS

THOMAS HUGHES

The Brown family lived in a quiet, old-fashioned English village, under the shadow of the everloping hills. This is where Tom was born, the eldest son of Squire Brown, Justice of the Peace, and his good-natured wife. The Browns were a fighting family, and Tom was a fighter from the first.

Tom was a hearty, strong boy. At the age of four, he began to struggle against the yoke and authority of his nurse, Charity Lamb. A war of independence began every morning before breakfast.

Master Tom, you must drink your glass of milk at the farm.



Charity escorted Tom to a neighboring farmhouse.

I want some cards, 100.

No, no, Master Tom. You musn't eat curds. They are unwholesome.



At the farm, the moment Charity had found an occupation, Tom would slip away and snatch a handful of curds.

Charity! Keep your eyes on Master Tom.



Tom would break cover, hands and mouth full of curds, and scamble safely out of reach.

Please get down, Master Tom. You'll get mud all over your stockings, and I'll be blamed.



Tom had two defenders, Noah and Benjamin by name, retired servants of former generations of Browns, who expended much time on his education.



Old Deasy was the young master's real delight and refuge. It was he who beat the first pin with which Tom extracted his first stickleback out of the little stream which ran through the village.



It was Deasy who saddled Tom's first pony and instructed him in horsemanship.



... and who stood ducking outside the door of the girls' school when Tom rode into the cottage and round the table.



No one in the village enjoyed the annual feast day more than Tom

I want to see the
penny peep-show.



Tom mounted Benj's shoulders and beheld a juggling match, in which a dozen blindfolded men had to catch a man with a ball hung round his neck.



The closeness of men in action gave back-swording, or fencing with ash sticks, a strange interest.



As evening fell and the dancing began, Tom was carried home, dog-tired, by old Benj.



When Benny was laid on the shelf with rheumatism, Tom, in search of companions, began to cultivate the village boys. Squire Brown provided bats and balls and a foot-ball for their sports.

It doesn't matter whether he plays with lords' sons or ploughmen's sons, provided they are brave and honest.



Tom was now amongst his equals in age and strength, and could measure himself with other boys. Though most were older than himself, he managed to hold his own very well.



There were trials of skill and strength. All the boys knew the rules of elbow and collar wrestling. Day after day they stood foot to foot, and grappled till a fair back-fall ended the matter.



One by one, Tom wrestled his way up to the leaders. He mastered all the dodges and falls.



Great was the grief amongst the village boys when Tom drove off with the squire one morning on his way to private school.



The biggest boys were favoured at school, whereby they became most abominable tyrants, oppressing the little boys in all the small mean ways which prevail in private schools.



Tom stole his finger on the nose -- which suit that young worthy howling dirty.



On the whole, the school didn't suit Tom, and he was constantly working the squire to send him at once to a public school. Great was his joy when a fever broke out in the school then, and all the boys were sent home.



About a fortnight after Tom's return, Squire Brown addressed his wife at breakfast.



While they waited for the Rugby coach that Friday, the squire gave Tom a few parting words of advice

And now, Tom, my boy, remember you are going, of your own earnest request, to be ducked into this great school, like a young bear -- earlier than we should have sent you.



You'll see a great many cruel blackguard things done and hear a great deal of foul bad talk. But never fear. Tell the truth and keep a brave kind heart.

I'll try, father.



They heard the ring and the rattle of the four fast trotters as the coach dashed up, and then Tom was climbing up behind



What is he sent to school for? If he'll only turn out a brave, helpful, truth-telling English man, and a gentleman, that's all I want.

The coach rode through the dark cold night to the music of the rattling harness, and the ring of the horses' feet, and the cheery toot of the guard's horn



At noon that day, Tom's heart beat fast as he beheld the long line of gray buildings



Here's Fugby, sir. You'll be in plenty of time for dinner at the school house

One of the young boys standing there turned round to Tom



I say, you fellow, is your name Brown? Ah, I thought so. My aunt lives somewhere down your way, and she asked me to meet you. My name's Harry East.

East called to a nearby stablehand.



Bring the young gentleman's luggage up to the school house. And thank you, it must be up in ten minutes, or no more jobs

from me

Hullo, this'll never do. Haven't you got a hat? Only the louts wear caps. If you were to go into the quadrangle with that thing on, I don't know what would happen.



So they went to the hatter's and bought a regulation cockade.

A great deal depends on how a fellow cuts up at first. If he's got nothing odd about him, and answers straightforward, and holds his head up, he gets on.



They passed on through the quadrangle.

The school is split into different houses
Our house is called the school house,
and it's the best house of all



Tom followed his guide through the school-house hall.



Then East and Tom went down long dark passages, upon which the studies opened.

What a nice place! Shall I have a study like this?

Yes, of course. You'll be chummed with some fellow on Monday.



A quarter-past six now struck, and the bell began tolling for dinner. They went into the hall and took their places. Though Tom was all eyes, awed and excited, he managed to eat an excellent dinner.



As soon as dinner was over, East proposed having a look at the great playground.

That's the chapel, you see. And there, just behind it, is the place for fights. It's out of the way of the masters.



As it was cold, East suggested a run across the field. Away he went, with Tom close behind. There wasn't a yard between them when they pulled up.

I say, you ain't a bad soul, not by no means. I'm as warm as a toast now.



Why do you wear white trousers in November?

Don't you know? Today's the school-house match. Our house plays the whole of the school at football. We all wear white trousers.



I love football. Will they let me play?

Why, you don't know the rules--you'll be a month learning them.



The next minute, East cried out:

Hurray! Here's the punt-about!
Come and try your hand at a kick!



They joined the boys who had brought it out, all small school-house fellows.



Tom performed very creditably.



Then it was time for calling-over, and the whole school swept into the big hall.



The propeastor, or monitor, who stood by the master called out the names. Each boy answered "Here" to his name, and hurried off to the football field.



The whole mass of boys moved up toward the two goals, dividing as they went into three groups.



Away went the ball, spinning toward the school goal. The two sides closed, and nothing could be seen but a swaying crowd of boys, violently agitated.



There was many a splendid scrimmage as the boys massed about the ball.



Yard by yard, the school house had been driven back. There was a rush together, and East was hurled forward by the shock and plunged on his shoulder.



East was propped up lame and half-stunned, and hobbled back into goal, unconscious of having played the man.



Now the last minutes had come. All former charges had been like child's play to the one that came sweeping for the school-house goal!



The blood of the Browns was up. Tom threw himself upon the ball, under the very feet of the advancing column.



Over him toppled the leaders of the rush.

Our ball! But get up, boys, there's a little fellow under you!



No bones broken? How do you feel, young'un?

Thank you-- all right.



Let come running up!

It's Brown. He's a new boy.

Well, he is a plucky youngster, and will make a player.



Five o'clock struck, and the boys scattered from the ground. Directly after supper, they prepared for a singing night.



Tom, as a new boy, was required to sing a solo, under penalty of drinking a large mug of salt and water if he broke down.



Song followed song. Then...

A toast from the captain!

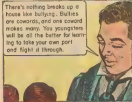


The captain got on his legs, leaning his hands on the table.

I'll do the best I can to say what ought to be said by a fellow who has spent eight years at Rugby and is due to leave.



There's nothing breaks up a house like bullying. Bullies are cowards, and one coward makes many. You youngsters will be all the better for learning to take your own part and fight it through.



And now I must give you a toast -- to the best house of the best school in England!



Then a quarter to ten struck, and the prayer-bell rang. Afterward, Tom and East headed for their rooms.



No. Why? Because there'll be tossing tonight, before the sixth form comes up to bed.



Does it hurt?

Not unless you fall on the floor. I've been tossed a dozen times. But if you funk it, you can hide.



I shan't hide, East.

No more shall I.



Soon, a rushed five great fifth-form boys, headed by their leader, Flashman,



Flashman pulled away at the leg of a small boy, who sang out lustily for mercy.

Oh, please, Flashman, I'll do anything, only don't toss me.

Hold your tongue or I'll kill you.



Flashman tugged the wretched boy along.

Here he is.

I say, Flashy, you heard what the captain said to-night. I'll be hanged if we'll lose any one against he will. No more bullying! Let him go.



Flashman, with an oath and a kick, released his prey.

Here's Ed! -- you'll be tossed, won't you?

If you like, only mind my foot. I hurt it in the match.



And here's another one who didn't budge, the new boy. You don't mind being tossed?

No.



Away they all went, carrying along Tom and East, to the intense relief of the other small boys.

What a trump East is! They won't come back here now.

And that new boy, too. He must be a good plucked one.



The procession went down the passage and joined other parties of big boys, each with a captive or two. East was tucked into a blanket.

Once, twice, and away!



Then came Tom's turn. The boys were in good wind now, and sent him stop up to the ceiling.



Let's toss two of them together.

What a cursed bully you are, Flishey.



A cry that a prospector was coming sent all the boys scattering to their rooms.



On the morning following Tom's arrival, he learned a-
bout fogging. The small boys
had to lag, or run errands, for
the older boys, especially the
propestor who slept in their
dormitory room.

Whose turn for
hot water?

East's and
Tedpole's.



East's leg was bother-
ing him.

I can't go. I'm dead
lame.

I'll go for you.



Tom and Tedpole, in nightgowns
and trousers, went downstairs
and across the school-house court
to get to the kitchen.



Returning, they narrowly escaped cap-
ture by some fifth-form boys, who were
on the lookout for the hot-water carriers.



... and pursued them to the very door of
their room.

We've spilled
half our load.

But it's better than going
down again, as we should
have had to do if those
beggars had caught us.



All went well with Tom in school, and he wrote the most flourishing letters home to his mother.



One day, he was teased by Tadpole and several other boys seated at a long table.



Tom, come and help us tear up scurf.

What for?

Hare and Hounds.

Nine miles at least, and no chance of getting in at the finish unless you're a first-rate runner.



It's the hardest run of the hall, and if a fellow gets in at the end, he's treated to ale and bread and cheese.



I should like to try.

Learning where the meet was to be held, Tom set off with East, whom he had persuaded to join him.



It is the hardest run of the year, Tom. I'm not sure we can get in.

At the meet, they found some forty or fifty boys.

Having seen many of them run at football, I'm sure you and I are more likely to get in than they are.



Two runners, chosen for the heat, buckled on the four bags filled with scot.

After a few minutes' waiting, they started off at a long, sloping trot across the fields.



They've to have six minutes. Then we begin. Every one who comes in within a quarter of an hour of the start will be counted.

Then the pack broke into a hot, scattering over the field to find the traces of scot.



The pace quickened into a sharp run. The scent lay across a meadow and over a good wattle.



As the pack came racing down a slope, great Leicestershire sheep charged away across the field.



Tom, East, and Tedpole were well up among the leading hounds.



The scent was found again. The pack struggled after the leader, panting and plunging along.



Now came a brook with stiff clay banks

I'm stuck!



Tom and East struggled on across the next field. The lead runners grew fainter and fainter



At last, the whole hunt was out of earshot, and all hope of coming it was over

Hang it all! I told you how it would be. Here we are, dead beat!

Well, it can't be helped. We did our best, anyhow.



The evening closed in fast, and clouded over.

What if we're late?

No tea, and sent up to the Doctor.



Presently, a faint hallo was heard. They answered it. Over a gate some twenty yards ahead crawled the wretched Tadpole.



The three plashed painfully down the never-ending lane until, luckily, they met up with the Oxford coach. The coach joggled into Rugby forty minutes after locking-up.



They stole along through the Doctor's garden and into the house, where they met old Thomas.



Ah! Late for looking-up Doctor's study directly you come in, that's the orders.

The Doctor looked up from his task as they strolled into the room.

Well, my little fellows, what makes you so late?

We've been out in Here and Hoards and lost our way.



Well now, run upstairs, all three of you, and get clean things on, and then tell the house-keeper to give you some tea. You're too young to try such long runs. Good night.



At the beginning of the next half-year, Tom found himself in the lower-fourth form with thirty-nine other gentlemen



The temptations of the lower-fourth soon proved too strong for Tom, and he became as unmanageable as the rest.



Sometimes Tom and East were caught

You young scoundrels!
You are as full of tricks
as monkeys



The only thing they feared was the Doctor himself, when he came round once a month to examine their work for one long, awful hour.

I will now read a passage
from Vergil



Now that some of the older boys had left, the big fifth formers soon began to fog the little boys in a bullying manner, although fogging was a privilege of the sixth form.

What right have the fifth-form boys to fog us as they do?

They're bigger than we are.



I've made up my mind that I won't fog except for the sixth.

A pretty pack of troubles you'll get in to if you're going to play that game.



Can't we get some sixth-form fellow to take it up?

You would have to tell on the bullies, and that's against our principles.



When the strongest and best fellows were in the sixth, the fifth formers were afraid of them. Now our sixth-form fellows are too small, and the fifth do what they like in the house.

So we get a double set of masters, the lawful ones, who are responsible to the Doctor, and the unlawful ones, who are responsible to nobody.



A cry sounded along the passage from Flashman's study.



There was no answer. Flashman came to his open door.



Tom drew the bolts as noiselessly as he could. East blew out the candle.



Flashman and his friends came down the passage and assaulted the door.

They're in safe enough -- don't you see how the door holds at top and bottom? The bolts must be drawn.



Vowing vengeance, Flashman and his friends retired. Afterward, Tom and East made a run for it in the passage.



There was no pursuit, so Tom and East turned into the hall. They told their story to a troop of small boys.

I've a good mind to go to the Doctor

flapping won't do it a against school troddies



Tell us how it was, Diggs

Just as it is with you. The fifth form would fog us, and I and some others struck, and we beat them



A voice from the end of the hall made them all turn round.

Don't you go to anybody. Just hold out, say you won't fog. They'll soon get tired of taking you I tried it years ago.



Was Flashman here then?

Yes! And a sneaking fellow he was, too. He never dared join us, and used to steady the bullets by peaching against the rest of us.



The morning after, Flashman laid wait for Tom.

You, fog! Fetch my hat.

Not!



The bully seized Tom and twisted his arm. Tom kicked Flashman's shin.



A war of independence raged. The house was filled with constant shootings and sieges.

Come back here, you!



In return, the bullies' beds were pulled to pieces and drenched with water.

Was Flashman's the most.



The strife settled down to a personal affair between Flashman and Tom and East.

They were the cause of the rebellion, the first rebels, and they call me a snegg and a coward before the others. I'll get even with them.



One night, an auction was held.

They're selling some of Diggs' things. He's in need of money again.

He's the best fifth former around. Let's chip in and redeem some of his stuff.



They bid their ready cash for as many of Diggs' articles as that sum would cover. Then they left the things in Diggs' study.

Diggs will find them here, all right. This way, we won't hurt his feelings.



Diggs, who had attended the auction, remembered who had bought the lots, and came to their study soon after.



He laid hold of their lessons, and began looking over and correcting them. At last he got up and started out into the passage, his back to them.

You're uncommon good-hearted little beggars, you two. I won't forget.



The next morning, a lottery was held for the Derby.

None of the favorites has been drawn yet!



Soon came Tom's turn. He drew the favorite.

Harkaway!



By Jove, Flasher, your young friend's in luck!

Give me the ticket!



But the ticket opener handed the ticket to Tom Flashman made for the door at once and there kept watch until the drawing was over, so that Tom should not leave the room with the others.



When all the boys had gone, Flashman and his friends gathered round Tom and East.

You'll sell Harkaway to us for five shillings, or you'll repent it!

I won't sell a bit of him.



You hear that now! Very well then, let's roast him!



One or two boys hesitated, but the rest joined in. East tried to pull Tom away, but was knocked back.

Out of the way, you!



Tom's shoulders were pushed against the marble-piece, and he was held by main force before the fire as East darted off to find Dragg.

Will you sell now?



I say, Flasher, he has had enough.

No, no, another turn'll do it.



Dragg rushed into the hall with East at his heels.

You cowardly brutes!



Flashman and a friend stunk away.

Get some cold water.

Where am I?



Tom came back to school after a couple of days in the sick room. Flashman's brutality disgusted most of his friends.

Did Tom Brown peech?

Not a word! He's a grouchy little fellow. I'm sick of Flashman's work.



They came up to Tom and begged his pardon.

And we want to thank you for not peaching on us, Brown.



Diggs encountered Flashman on the morning after the lottery and struck him.

You sneaking bully!



The blow was not returned.



Tom won second prize on the lottery, some thirty shillings.

We'll have a supper of sausages, kidneys, and beef-stock pie for all the rebels.



One evening, in forbidden hours, Tom and East were in the hall. Diggs sprawled nearby. Presently, a step came down the passage. It walked Flashman.



Flashman didn't see Diggs, and struck East.

What's that for?

Because I choose. You've no business here. Go to your study.



You can't send us.

Can't I? Then I'll thrash you if you stay.



Rousing up on his elbow, Diggs spoke from the end of the hall.

I stay, you two, you'll never get rid of that fellow till you lock him. Go on all four, both of you. I'll see fair play.



Flashman was taken aback, and retreated two steps.

Shall we try?

Yes.



Tom and East rushed at Flashman, and began pummeling at all of him which they could reach



Tom went spinning backwards over a form



Flashman caught East by the throat, Tom grasped the bully's waist and, remembering an old throw he had learned from wrestling with the village boys, cracked a leg inside Flashman's and threw his weight forward.



Over they went, Flashman striking his head against a form, Tom and East sprang up, frightened

My skull's fractured

Fiddlesticks! It's all sham - he's only afraid to fight it out!



Flashman got up and walked out of the hall

He can't be hurt very badly

You'll see you won't be troubled with him any more



*F*ishman came in drunk one night, and the Doctor arranged for his withdrawal. Tom and East, leaders of the rebellion against the fifth form, now stirred through their flogging.

No sense flogging Brown and East. They're sulky and unwilling.



*E*ast and Tom and one or two more became sort of young outlaws, their hands against everyone, and everyone's hand against them.

I have no respect for a propepator who shirks his duties or has never faced a good scrum-mage of football.



*T*om was caught flaking out of bounds by a keeper one day, and brought before the Doctor. The keeper told the story.

You know the rules, Brown?

Yes, sir



*T*om was flogged next morning. But a few days afterwards he met the keeper, and they became friends.



One day, Tom and East were logged to catch balls that went off the court during a game of tennis. Five or six hit on top of the school.

I say, Tom, couldn't we get those balls back somehow?

Let's try.



They borrowed a roof hammer, bought some big nails, and scoted the wall.



They possessed themselves of huge quantities of live balls. Then ...

Let's carve our names on the minute-hand



Next morning, when masters and boys came trooping down to prayers, the minute-hand was off three minutes, and half the school was late. Two names were discovered on the clock, and Tom and East were sent for.

I expect you to be more responsible
You are each to learn thirty lines of
Homer by heart!



Almost the next day, Tom and East were caught at a fair in town, against the Doctor's orders. The Doctor flogged them soundly. The day before the end of the half-year ...

Brown and East, the Doctor wants to see you.



The Doctor was not angry, but he was very earnest.

You have each been flogged several times for breaking rules. I cannot allow you to stay at the school if this conduct continues. Think this over seriously.



Their form master was worried about them, too.

They are not hard workers, and very thoughtless and full of sports. But I can't help liking them. I think they are sound at heart.

I think so, too.



But I shouldn't let them stay if I don't see them gaining character and manliness. In another year, they may do great harm to all the younger boys.

Oh, I hope you won't send them away.



They don't feel that they have any duty or work to do in the school.

Brown is the more reckless of the two. Perhaps if he had some little boy to take care of, it would steady him.



On the first day of the next half-year, Tom learned from the matron that he and East were to be separated. He was to share his study with a new boy.

The young gentleman is very delicate, and has never been from home before. The Doctor thought you'd be kind to him and see they don't bully him at first.



Tom looked across the room, and in the far corner of the sofa was aware of a slight, pale boy.

I've given him the bed next to yours in Number four.



The little stranger seemed ready to shrink through the floor.

Just the sort whose first half-year would be misery if he were left alone.



Poor little fellow. His father's dead, and he's got no brothers. And his mother, such a kind sweet lady, almost broke her heart at leaving him.

Well, I suppose I must give up East!



Come along, young'un. We'll go and have some supper, and then I'll show you our study.

His name's George Arthur.



Later, they entered the dormitory and prepared for bed.

Please, Brown. May I wash my face and hands?

Of course. That's your wash-handstand under the window.



When Arthur was ready for bed, he dropped on his knees by his bedside to pray.



Two or three boys laughed and sneered, and a big fellow picked up a slipper and shed it at the kneeling boy.

Sneering young shaver!



Then Tom saw the whole thing, and the next moment the boot he had just pulled off flew straight at the head of the bully.

Confound you, Brown, what's that for?

If any fellow wants the other boot, he knows how to get it!



From morning till night, Tom felt responsible for Arthur, and he was never at ease till he had him in sight.

You'll spoil young Hopeful with too much coddling. He'll never be worth a button if you go on keeping him under your skirts.

Well, but he can't fit to fight his own way yet. Poor little beggar. He seems all nerves.



I shall make a hand of him though, say what you will. There's something about him which shows me he's got pluck.



One evening, Tom was shocked to find Arthur in tears.

Why, young'un, what's the matter? You ain't unhappy, are you?

Oh, I'm very happy, Tom. You are so kind to me.



After supper that night, and almost nightly afterwards, they read a chapter of the Bible together.



Arthur made his first attempt at a friendship of his own with Martin the Madman, who had a passion for birds, beasts and insects. Martin led Tom, Arthur and East on a birds'-nesting expedition.

Isn't it dangerous?

Not if you try every branch with a good pull before you trust it.



A crisis occurred when Arthur missed the wrath of Slogger Williams, a big boy.

Seeking little brute! What do you mean by backing down halfway through the Greek translation and getting us off into trouble!

Hullo, you drop that, Williams. You shan't touch him!



The news ran like wildfire, and boys came running to make a circle round the two fighters.

Slogger is bigger than Brown and stands stronger in the arms and shoulders.

But he's a bit ship-wrecked about the knees, and Brown is in top-top training.



The two boys stood to one another like men. Rally followed rally.



Following East's advice, Tom changed his hammer-and-saws tactics and led his opponent in a dance all round the ring.



The next round ended with a puffing, pouting Stogger falling flat on his face.



Suddenly, a boy caught sight of the Doctor

The Doctor! The Doctor!



By the time the Doctor arrived on the scene, only the captain of the school house remained.

I'm surprised to see you here. Don't you know that I expect you to stop fighting?

Yes, sir. But neither boy was hurt. They're the sort who'll be all the better friends now.



Later, under the kindly eye of the school-house captain, Tom and Stogger Williams shook hands



Two years passed. Tom and East, nearly seventeen, were now fifth formers, great strapping fellows, but still thorough boys. Arthur was sick with a fever that had broken out at Rugby.

Arthur is reported worse each day.



The crisis passed -- Arthur was declared out of danger. Tom was allowed to see him.

Dear George, I'm so glad they let me see you at last!

Oh, Tom, I'm so proud of you -- I hear you're in the cricket eleven!



I wish you'd get well quickly. What's to keep me up to working at the examination books? I shall come out bottom of the class, as sure as eggs is eggs.

Tom, you've been my backbone ever since I've been at Rugby, and have made the school a paradise to me.



What do you want to do at Rugby, and to carry away?

I want to be A-1 at cricket and football and all the other games. I want to get into the sixth before I leave, and to please the Doctor. I want to leave behind me the name of a fellow who never bullied a little boy, or turned his back on a big one.



Another two years passed. Tom Brown, now a prospector and captain of the eleven, was spending his last day as a Rugby boy.

The game's getting very serious.



The next batter was bowled out. After deep consultation, Arthur was sent in.

Winter is the best bat left.

Arthur is the steadier!



I am surprised to see Arthur in the eleven.

I'm not quite sure that he ought to be in for his play, but I couldn't help putting him in. It will do him so much good.



Afterwards, Tom accompanied his former master home and they took tea together.

Have you heard from East?

He has just started for India to join his regiment. He will make a capital officer.



Nothing has given me greater pleasure than your friendship with Arthur. It has been the making of you both.

It was the luckiest chance in the world that sent him to Rugby and made him my friend.



Ah, you may thank the Doctor for that. He believed that when you had someone to lean on, you would begin to stand a little steadier yourself, get manliness and thoughtfulness.

To think that the Doctor had time to watch and worry over me like this!

Yes, indeed! He has noted the experiment with great satisfaction.



After a sorrowful adieu, Tom marched down to the school house. He found the eleven of high jinks after supper.



They cheered him round the quadrangle on one of the half benches.

For he's a jolly good fellow



The next morning, Tom said his hearty goodbyes. By twelve o'clock, he was in the train for London, full of hopes and resolves for the next steps upon which he was entering with all the confidence of a young traveller.



The End

NOW THAT YOU HAVE SEEN THE CLASSICS ILLUSTRATED EDITION, DON'T MISS THE ADDED JOYMENT OF READING THE ORIGINAL. OBTAINABLE AT YOUR SCHOOL OR PUBLIC LIBRARY.

THOMAS HUGHES



Thomas Hughes was born in the small town of Uffington, England, on October 29, 1822. He had a pleasant, rural boyhood similar to that of his hero, Tom Brown. After attending a private school for some years, Hughes was sent to

Rugby, where he met Dr. Thomas Arnold, the headmaster.

Rugby at that time was an experimental school, for Dr. Arnold believed in revising the subjects then taught in English schools to include modern languages, history, science, and mathematics, as well as the Greek and Latin classics.

While at school, Hughes learned to play the sort of football that later became known as rugby, after his alma mater, where the game was first played.

Kicking an inflated ball over a goal had long been popular with English workmen, but the game was rough and often led to fights. When the boys at the English public schools adapted it for themselves, they made it more orderly and less violent. But no two schools played with the same rules. About the only rule generally followed was the one which forbade the carrying or passing of the ball by hand in the direction of the opponent's goal. Then, in 1823, at Rugby, William Webb Ellis, in the heat of a game, caught the ball in his hands and ran with it. At first his action was condemned even at Rugby. But soon the game permitting the use of hands as well as feet won great favor, and modern foot-

ball was under way. This was the game that Hughes played.

From Rugby, Hughes went to Oxford and then studied for a law degree, which he received in 1848. He was a liberal, active in the Christian Socialist movement, a reform group that his close friend Charles Kingsley (the author of *Westward Ho!*) had helped to establish.

It was in one of the saddest periods in Hughes' life that he finished *Tom Brown's School Days*. The publication of the book was delayed until 1857 because of the death of Hughes' eldest daughter. But no trace of his sorrow remained in the book. It was popular immediately after its publication, and Kingsley called it "the jolliest book ever written." Hughes later wrote a continuation to it called *Tom Brown at Oxford*, as well as other essays and pamphlets. But none of his works attracted the attention given to the first book about Tom Brown.

Writing was only a secondary interest to Hughes. His career was in politics. He was elected to Parliament in 1865, and in 1882, he was appointed a judge. He never lost his liberal convictions and continued to work for the passage of reform legislation. He helped to found a college for workmen and served as its principal for almost ten years. During the American Civil War, he expressed strong sympathy for the Northern cause. He was interested in the United States and visited it three times. On one of his visits he founded a cooperative colony called Rugby in the mountains of Tennessee. The colony failed eventually, costing Hughes a large sum of money, but its library still exists.

Hughes died in March, 1896, at the age of seventy-three.

THE LEARNED MONKS

On the bleak isle of Iona, lying off the south-west coast of Scotland, a monk sat thinking about his native Ireland. Around him, other monks chanted prayers in the cloisters, hoed the gardens, or pounded carbon to make ink.

The solitary monk was Columba, founder of the monastery and one of the great Irish scholar-monks of the sixth century. Columba was descended from an Irish royal family. He had refused a king's crown to become a monk. Before his arrival at Iona, he had founded many monasteries in Ireland. He spent his days copying Greek and Latin manuscripts. His nights were passed sleeping on a stone pillow to humble himself before God.

Some one hundred years before Columba, St. Patrick had come to Ireland. At that time, the country was a land of warring pagan tribes. Under St. Patrick's direction, churches were built and the Irish were converted to Christianity.

The monks who carried on St. Patrick's work erected school monasteries, to which the Irish eagerly came. In one, Armagh on the Hill of Willows, there were seven thousand students.

At this time, much of civilized western Europe was in decay. It was the period of the Dark Ages. As a result, many European scholars fled to Ireland, where they were housed and led by the monks. These scholars aided the Irish monks in their most important activity, that of copying and sometimes translating manuscripts. Until the invention of the printing press in the fifteenth century, all books had to be copied painstakingly by hand. Columba alone

copied some three hundred books during his lifetime. In this way, much learning was preserved that would otherwise have been lost.

Gradually, with the coming to power of a strong ruler, Charlemagne, in what is now France, life became more orderly in Europe. Irish scholars then ventured to other lands. Wherever they went, they were usually welcomed by the local ruler, who helped them to build new monasteries.

Charlemagne was King of the Franks from 768 to 814. His respect for learning was so great that it was said of him he had put aside his sword to study grammar. He was searching for a tutor for his sons when, one day, he heard that an Irish monk had arrived in the land of the Franks. The monk's name was Clement, and he stood in the marketplace crying out that he had wisdom for sale.

According to legend, Charlemagne spoke with Clement and asked him what price he wanted for his wisdom.

"Only a place to teach, and bright young minds," Clement replied.

Charlemagne was pleased with this reply, and put Clement in charge of his new palace school.

During the next century, Viking raids on Ireland resulted in the destruction of many of the Irish monasteries. The Vikings slew the monks they caught and either threw many of their precious books into the sea or burned them. The day of the Irish scholar-monk had come to an end. But his task of preserving learning during the Dark Ages had been accomplished.

CHILDREN OF THE SLUMS

One spring afternoon in 1830, a dowdy old lady, holding her little grandson by the hand, timidly knocked on the door of the Foundling Hospital in London. A nurse opened the door.

"A friend told me that there's grass on the grounds of the hospital," the old lady explained to the nurse. "I grew up in the country, so I described grass to Tommy, because he's never seen it. Please, ma'am, could he sit on your grass?"

The nurse led the toddler through the building to the lawn and let him sit on the grass. For Tommy, born in London's slums, this experience was to be remembered with delight.

The thousands of Tommys who grew up and lived out their lives in the rookeries of London, as the slum districts were called, were victims of the new industrial age of early nineteenth-century England. London was then the largest city in the world, with a population of well over one million people. New machines, the growth of factories, the development of coal mines—all this had changed the Londoner's way of life.

As a rule, children began work at the ages of five to eight. They were apprenticed into the mills, factories and mines. A fourteen-hour workday left them little time for schooling.

Those working-class parents who were not forced to live on their children's wages could obtain a meager education for them at a cost of only a few shillings at dame

schools. These schools were run by housewives in their homes.

Parents who were unable to pay anything at all could send their children to charity schools. Here, hundreds of pupils were tutored by advanced students under the direction of a single trained teacher.

Sunday schools also were used to educate the poor, but, since they were open only one day a week, it took a pupil about three years to learn how to read. Very young children whose mothers worked in factories all day were sent to infant schools. Here, they were provided with a place to play.

All of these efforts were supported by private benefactors rather than public funds.

English children of this period were sharply separated according to the wealth of their families. Children from well-to-do homes were tutored, then educated, at fee preparatory schools like Eton or Rugby. From there, they went on to Cambridge and Oxford, Britain's great universities, and completed their studies. Sometimes, a brilliant poor scholar achieved a university education by winning an "exhibition," or scholarship.

It was not until 1870 that free public school education for everyone was established in England. The conditions of working children were gradually eased through a series of child labor laws. These laws cut the working hours of children, forbade those under nine to work, and required that every apprentice receive several hours of schooling in some part of each working day.

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