

THE FREE LANCE.

"His good blade carves the casques of men, for the Free Lance thrusteth sure."

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OLD PREPDOM.

"H'low, Shorty! Goin' along to-night?"

"Bet yer life I am! Third floor, back hall, huh!"

"Yep, nine o'clock, sharp."

The two speakers were lads of seventeen or eighteen years. The first carried an empty coal bucket and was rapidly descending the stairs of Prep End; the second was going up the same flight, and carried a like bucket filled with soft coal. They spoke hurriedly as they passed each other, neither pausing in his course.

During the period from 1869 to 1878 the students' rooms in the main building were heated by small, goblet-shaped stoves with flat tops and a griddle. A general supply of coal was kept in the cellar, and each student was required to carry up what he needed for his room. The small stoves were very convenient for cooking purposes, and aside from their use in the inevitable nightly feast they were constantly used by many of the students who boarded themselves. The rooms were lighted by oil lamps, for this was long before the instalment of electric lights, and the filling and general care of the lamps was one of the duties of the occupant of the room.

On the night after the meeting of the two fellows on the stairs, where the above brief sentences were exchanged, a small knot of Preps gathered in the rear north hall of the third floor. Noiselessly, one by one they passed out of the