

hastily thrust the alley into his pocket, in sudden alarm, lest the mysterious marble should fall into the master's hands.

Breakfast was by this time concluded, and the boys received the usual leave to adjourn to the playground. They were allowed an hour's play between breakfast and school; and they were not slow to avail themselves of it. Out they rushed, shouting, leaping, racing, and jostling against one another, as though life and death depended on being in the playground first.

Like sportive deer they coursed about,
And shouted as they ran;
Turning to mirth all things of earth,
As only boyhood can.

Mertoun, however, did not share in the high spirits of his schoolfellows. He followed, slowly and thoughtfully, in the