The New Boy at Hilltop

Ralph Henry Barbour

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Produced by Avinash Kothare, Tom Allen, Charles Franks
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THE NEW BOY AT HILLTOP
AND OTHER STORIES

TO BELINDA

THE NEW BOY AT HILLTOP

I

Hilltop School closed its fall term with just ninety−five students; it opened again two weeks later, on the third of January, with ninety−six; and thereby hangs this tale.

Kenneth Garwood had been booked for Hilltop in the autumn, but circumstances had interfered with the family's plans. Instead he journeyed to Moritzville on the afternoon of the day preceding the commencement of the new term, a very cold and blustery January afternoon, during much of which he sat curled tightly into a corner of his seat in the poorly heated day coach, which was the best the train afforded, and wondered why the Connecticut Valley was so much colder than Cleveland, Ohio. He had taken an early train from New York, and all the way to Moritzville had sought with natural eagerness for sight of his future schoolmates. But he had been unsuccessful. When Hilltop returns to school it takes the mid−afternoon express which reaches Moritzville just in time for dinner, whereas Kenneth reached the school before it was dark, and at a quarter of five was in undisputed possession, for the time being, of Number 12, Lower House.

“We are putting you,” the principal had said, “with Joseph Brewster, a boy of about your own age and a member of your class. He is one of our nicest boys, one of whom we are very proud. You will, I am certain, become good friends. Mr. Whipple here will show you to your room. Supper is at six. Afterwards, say at eight o'clock, I should like you to see me again here at the office. If there is anything you want you will find the matron's room at the end of the lower hall. Er—will you take him in charge, Mr. Whipple?”

On the way across the campus, between banks of purple−shadowed snow and under leafless elms which creaked and groaned dismally in the wind, Kenneth reached the firm conclusion that there were two persons at Hilltop whom he was going to dislike cordially. One was the model Joseph Brewster, and the other was Mr. Whipple. The instructor was young, scarcely more than twenty−three, tall, sallow, near−sighted and taciturn. He wore an unchanging smile on his thin face and spoke in a soft, silky voice that made Kenneth want to trip him into one of the snow banks.

Lower House, so called to distinguish it from the other dormitory, Upper House, which stood a hundred yards higher on the hill, looked very uninviting. Its windows frowned dark and inhospitable and no light shone from the hall as they entered. Mr. Whipple paused and searched unsuccessfully for a match.

“I fear I have left my match box in my study,” he said at length. “Just a moment, please, Garwood, and I will—”

“Here's a match, sir,” interrupted Kenneth.

“Ah!” Mr. Whipple accepted the match and rubbed it carefully under the banister rail. “Thank you,” he added as a tiny pale flame appeared at the tip of the side bracket. “I trust that the possession of matches, my boy, does not indicate a taste for tobacco on your part?” he continued, smiling deprecatingly.

Kenneth took up his suit case again.

“I trust not, sir,” he said. Mr. Whipple blinked behind his glasses.

“Smoking is, of course, prohibited at Hilltop.”

“I think it is at most schools,” Kenneth replied gravely.

“Oh, undoubtedly! I am to understand, then, that you are not even in the least addicted to the habit?”

“Well, sir, it isn't likely you'll ever catch me at it,” said Kenneth imperturbably. The instructor flushed angrily.

“I hope not,” he said in a silky voice, “I sincerely hope not, Garwood—for your sake!”

He started up the stairs and Kenneth followed, smiling wickedly. He hadn't made a very good beginning, he told himself, but Mr. Whipple irritated him intensely. After the instructor had closed the door softly and taken his departure, Kenneth sat down in an easy−chair and indulged in regrets.

“I wish I hadn't been so fresh,” he muttered ruefully. “It doesn't do a fellow any good to get the teachers down on him. Not that I'm scared of that old boy, though! Dr. Randall isn't so bad, but if the rest of the teachers are like Whipple I don't want to stay. Well, dad said I needn't stay after this term if I don't like it. Guess I can stand three months, even of Whipple! I hope Brewster isn't quite as bad. Maybe, though, they'll give me another room if I kick. Don't see why I can't have a room by myself, anyhow. I guess I'll get dad to write and ask for it. Only maybe a chap in moderate circumstances like me isn't supposed to have a room all to himself.”

He chuckled softly and looked about him.

Number 12 consisted of a small study and a good−sized sleeping room opening off. The study was well furnished, even if the carpet was worn bare in spots and the green−topped table was a mass of ink blots. There were two comfortable armchairs and two straight−backed chairs, the aforementioned table, two bookcases, one on each side of the window, a wicker wastebasket and two or three pictures. Also there was an inviting window seat heaped with faded cushions. On the whole, Kenneth decided, the study, seen in the soft radiance of the droplight, had a nice “homey” look. He crossed over and examined the bedroom, drawing aside the faded brown chenille curtain to let in the light. There wasn't much to see—two iron beds, two chiffoniers, two chairs, a trunk bearing the initials “J. A. B.” and a washstand. The floor was bare save for three rugs, one beside each bed and one in front of the washstand. The two windows had white muslin curtains and a couple of uninteresting pictures hung on the walls. He dropped the curtain at the door, placed his suit case on a chair and opened it. For the next few minutes he was busy distributing its contents. To do this it was necessary to light the gas in the bedroom and as it flared up, its light was reflected from the gleaming backs of a set of silver brushes which he had placed a moment before on the top of the chiffonier. He paused for a moment and eyed them doubtfully.

“Gee!” he muttered. “I can't have those out. I'll have to buy some brushes.”

He gathered them up and tumbled them back into his suit case. Finally, with everything put away, he took off coat and vest, collar and, cuffs, and proceeded to wash up. And while he is doing it let us have a good look at him.

He was fourteen years of age, but he looked older. Not that he was large for his age; it was rather the expression of his face that added that mythical year or so. He looked at once self−reliant and reserved. At first glance one might have thought him conceited, in which case one would have done him an injustice. Kenneth had traveled a good deal and had seen more of the world than has the average boy of his age, and this had naturally left its impress on his countenance. I can't honestly say that he was handsome, and I don't think you will be disappointed to hear it. But he was good−looking, with nice, quiet gray eyes, an aquiline nose, a fairly broad mouth whose smiles meant more for being infrequent, and a firm, rather pointed chin of the sort which is popularly supposed to, and in Kenneth's case really did, denote firmness of character. His hair was brown and quite guiltless of curl. His body was well set up and he carried himself with a little backward thrust of the head and shoulders which might have seemed arrogant, but wasn't, any more than was his steady, level manner of looking at one.

Presently, having donned his clothes once more, he picked up a book from the study table, pulled one of the chairs toward the light and set himself comfortably therein, stretching his legs out and letting his elbows sink into the padded leather arms. And so he sat when, after twenty minutes or so, there were sounds outside the building plainly denoting the arrival of students, sounds followed by steps on the stairs, shouts, laughter, happy greetings, the thumping of bags, the clinking of keys. And so he sat when the door of Number 12 was suddenly thrown wide open and a merry face, flushed with the cold, looked amazedly upon him from between the high, shaggy, upturned collar of a voluminous dark gray ulster and the soft visor of a rakishly tilted cap.

II

And while Kenneth looked back, he felt his prejudices melting away. Surely one couldn't dislike for very long such a jolly, mischievous−looking youth as this! Of Kenneth's own age was the newcomer, a little heavier, yellow−haired and blue−eyed, at once impetuous and good−humored. But at this moment the good−humor was not greatly in evidence. Merriment gave place to surprise, surprise to resentment on the boy's countenance.

“Hello!” he challenged.

Kenneth laid the book face down on his knee and smiled politely.

“How do you do?” he responded.

The newcomer dragged a big valise into the room and closed the door behind him, never for an instant taking his gaze off Kenneth. Then, apparently concluding that the figure in the armchair was real flesh and blood and not a creature of the imagination, he tossed his cap to the table, revealing a rumpled mass of golden yellow hair, and looked belligerently at the intruder.

“Say, you've got the wrong room, I guess,” he announced.

“Here's where they put me,” answered Kenneth gravely.

“Well, you can't stay here,” was the inhospitable response. “This is my room.”

Kenneth merely looked respectfully interested. Joe Brewster slid out of his ulster, frowning angrily.

“You're a new boy, aren't you!” he demanded.

“About an hour and a half old,” said Kenneth. Somehow the reply seemed to annoy Joe. He clenched his hands and stepped toward the other truculently.

“Well, you go and see the matron; she'll find a room for you; there are lots of rooms, I guess. Anyway, I'm not going to have you butting in here.”

“You must be Joseph Brewster,” said Kenneth. The other boy growled assent. “The fact is, Brewster, they put me in here with you because you are such a fine character. Dr. Whatshisname said you were the pride of the school, or something like that. I guess they thought association with you would benefit me.”

Joe gave a roar and a rush. Over went the armchair, over went Kenneth, over went Joe, and for a minute nothing was heard in Number 12 but the sound of panting and gasping and muttered words, and the colliding of feet and bodies with floor and furniture. The attack had been somewhat unexpected and as a result, for the first moments of the battle, Kenneth occupied the uncomfortable and inglorious position of the under dog. He strove only to escape punishment, avoiding offensive tactics altogether. It was hard work, however, for Brewster pummeled like a good one, his seraphic face aflame with the light of battle and his yellow hair seeming to stand about his head like a golden oriflamb. And while Kenneth hugged his adversary to him, ducking his head away from the incessant jabs of a very industrious fist, he realized that he had made a mistake in his estimation of his future roommate. He was going to like him; he was quite sure he was; providing, of course that said roommate left enough of him! And then, seeing, or rather feeling his chance, he toppled Joe Brewster over his shoulder and in a trice the tables were turned. Now it was Kenneth who was on top, and it took him but a moment to seize Joe's wrists in a very firm grasp, a grasp which, in spite of all efforts, Joe found it impossible to escape. Kenneth, perched upon his stomach—uneasily, you may be sure, since Joe heaved and tossed like a boat in a tempest—offered terms.

“Had enough?” he asked.

“No,” growled Joe.

“Then you'll stay here until you have,” answered Kenneth. “You and I are going to be roommates, so we might as well get used to each other now as later, eh? How any fellow with a face like a little pink angel can use his fists the way you can, gets me!”

Kenneth was almost unseated at this juncture, but managed to hold his place. Panting from the effects of the struggle, he went on:

“Seems to me Dr. Randall must be mistaken in you, Brewster. You don't strike me at all as a model of deportment. Seems to me he and you fixed up a pretty lively welcome for me, eh?”

The anger faded out of Joe's face and a smile trembled at the corners of his mouth.

"Let me up," he said quietly.

"Behave?"

"Yep."

"All right," said Kenneth. But before he could struggle to his feet there was a peremptory knock on the door, followed instantly by the appearance of a third person on the scene, a dark−haired, sallow, tall youth of fifteen who viewed the scene with surprise.

"What's up?" he asked.

Kenneth sprang to his feet and gave his hand to Joe. About them spread devastation.

"I was showing him a new tackle," explained Kenneth easily.

Joe, somewhat red of face, shot him a look of gratitude.

"Oh," said the new arrival, "and who the dickens are you, kid?"

"My name's Garwood. I just came to−day. I'm to room with Brewster."

"Is that right?" asked the other, turning to Joe. Joe nodded.

"So he says, Graft. I think it's mighty mean, though. They let me have a room to myself all fall, and now, just when I'm getting used to it, what do they do? Why, they dump this chap in here. It isn't as though there weren't plenty of other rooms!"

"Why don't you kick to the doctor?" asked Grafton Hyde.

"Oh, it wouldn't do any good, I suppose," said Joe.

Grafton Hyde sat down and viewed Kenneth with frank curiosity.

"Where are you from?" he demanded.

"Cleveland, Ohio."

"Any relation to John Garwood, the railroad man?"

"Ye−es, some," said Kenneth. Grafton snorted.

"Huh! I dare say! Most everyone tries to claim relationship with a millionaire. Bet you, he doesn't know you're alive!"

"Well," answered Kenneth with some confusion, "maybe not, but—but I think he's related to our family, just the same."

"You do, eh?" responded Grafton sarcastically. "Well, I wouldn't try very hard to claim relationship if I were you. I guess if the honest truth were known there aren't very many fellows who would want to be in John Garwood's shoes, for all his money."

"Why?" asked Kenneth.

"Because he's no good. Look at the way he treated his employees in that last strike! Some of 'em nearly starved to death!"

"That's a—that isn't so!" answered Kenneth hotly. "It was all newspaper lies."

"Newspapers don't lie," said Grafton sententiously.

"They lied then, like anything," was the reply.

"Well, everyone knows what John Garwood is," said Grafton carelessly. "I've heard my father tell about him time and again. He used to know him years ago."

Kenneth opened his lips, thought better of it and kept silence.

"Ever hear of my father?" asked Grafton with a little swagger.

"What's his name?" asked Kenneth.

"Peter Hyde," answered the other importantly.

"Oh, yes! He's a big politician in Chicago, isn't he?"

"No, he isn't!" replied Grafton angrily. "He's Peter Hyde, the lumber magnate."

"Oh!" said Kenneth. "What—what's a lumber magnet?"

"*Magnate*, not magnet!" growled Grafton. "It's time you came to school if you don't know English. Where have you been going?"

"I beg pardon?"

"What school have you been to? My, you're a dummy!"

"I haven't been to any school this year. Last year I went to the grammar school at home."

"Then this is your first boarding school, eh?"

"Yes; and I hope I'll like it. The catalogue said it was a very fine school. I trust I shall profit from my connection with it."

Grafton stared bewilderedly, but the new junior's face was as innocent as a cherub's. Joe Brewster stared, too, for a moment; then a smile flickered around his mouth and he bent his head, finding interest in a bleeding knuckle.

"Well, I came over to talk about the team, Joe," Grafton said after a moment. "I didn't know you had company."

"Didn't know it myself," muttered Joe.

Kenneth picked up his book again and went back to his reading. But he was not so deeply immersed but that he caught now and then fragments of the conversation, from which he gathered that both Joe and Hyde were members of the Lower House Basket Ball Team, that Hyde held a very excellent opinion of his own abilities as a player, that Upper House was going to have a very strong team and that if Lower didn't find a fellow who could throw goals from fouls better than Simms could it was all up with them. Suddenly Kenneth laid down his book again.

"I say, you fellows, couldn't I try for that team?" he asked.

"Oh, yes, you can *try*," laughed Grafton. "Ever play any?"

"A little. We had a team at the grammar school. I played right guard."

"You did, eh? That's where I play," said Grafton. "Maybe you'd like my place?"

"Don't you want it?" asked Kenneth innocently.

"Don't I want it! Well, you'll have to work pretty hard to get it!"

"I will," said Kenneth very simply. Grafton stared doubtfully.

"Candidates are called for four o'clock tomorrow afternoon," said Joe. "You'd better come along. You're pretty light, but Jim Marble will give you a try all right."

"Thanks," answered Kenneth. "But would practice be likely to interfere with my studies?"

"Say, kid, you're' a wonder!" sneered Grafton as he got up to go. "I never saw anything so freshly green in my life! You're going to have a real nice time here at Hilltop; I can see that. Well, see you later, Joe. Come up to−night; I want to show you some new snowshoes I brought back. Farewell, Garwood. By the way, what's your first name?"

"Kenneth."

"Hey?"

"Kenneth; K, e, n, n, e—"

"Say, that's a peach!" laughed Grafton. "Well, bring little Kenneth with you, Joe; I've got some picture books."

"Thank you," said the new junior gratefully.

"Oh, don't mention it!" And Grafton went out chuckling.

As the door closed behind him, Joe Brewster sank into a chair and thrust out his legs, hands in pockets, while a radiant grin slowly overspread his angelic countenance.

"Well," he said finally, "you're the first fellow that ever bluffed Graft! And the way he took it!"

Kenneth smiled modestly under the admiring regard of his roommate.

"Gee!" cried Joe, glancing at his watch. "It's after six. Come on to supper. Maybe if we hurry they'll give you a place at our table."

Kenneth picked up his cap and followed his new friend down the stairs. On the way he asked:

"Is that chap Hyde a particular friend of yours?"

"N−no," answered Joe, "not exactly. We're on the team together, and he isn't such a bad sort. Only—he's the richest fellow in school and he can't forget it!"

"I don't like him," said Kenneth decidedly.

Hilltop School stands on the top of a hill overlooking the Connecticut Valley, a cluster of half a dozen ivy−draped buildings of which only one, the new gymnasium, looks less than a hundred years old. Seventy−six feet by forty it is, built of red sandstone with freestone trimming; a fine, aristocratic−looking structure which lends quite an air to the old campus. In the basement there is a roomy baseball cage, a bowling alley, lockers, and baths. In the main hall, one end of which terminates in a fair−sized stage, are gymnastic apparatus of all kinds.

It was here that Kenneth found himself at four o'clock the next day. His trunk had arrived and he had dug out his old basket−ball costume, a red sleeveless shirt, white knee pants, and canvas shoes. He wore them now as he sat, a lithe, graceful figure, on the edge of the stage. There were nearly thirty other fellows on the floor amusing themselves in various ways while they waited for the captain to arrive. Several of them Kenneth already knew well enough to speak to and many others he knew by name. For Joe had made himself Kenneth's guide and mentor, had shown him all there was to be seen, had introduced him to a number of the fellows and pointed out others and had initiated him into many of the school manners and methods. This morning Kenneth had made his appearance in various class rooms and had met various teachers, among them Mr. Whipple, who, Kenneth discovered, was instructor in English. The fellows seemed a friendly lot and he was already growing to like Hilltop.

Naturally enough, Kenneth found himself the object of much interest. He was a new boy, the only new one in school. At Hilltop the athletic rivalry was principally internal, between dormitory and dormitory. To be sure the baseball and football teams played other schools, but nevertheless the contests which wrought the fellows up to the highest pitch of enthusiasm were those in which the Blue of Upper House and the Crimson of Lower met in battle. Each dormitory had its own football, baseball, hockey, tennis, track, basket ball, and debating, team, and rivalry was always intense. Hence the arrival of a new boy in Lower House meant a good deal to both camps. And most fellows liked what they saw of Kenneth, even while regretting that he wasn't old enough and big enough for football material. Kenneth bore the scrutiny without embarrassment, but nevertheless he was glad when Joe joined him where he sat on the edge of the stage.

“Jim hasn't come yet,” said Joe, examining a big black−and−blue spot on his left knee. “I guess there won't be time for much practice today, because Upper has the floor at five. They're going to have a dandy team this year; a whole bunch of big fellows. But they had a big heavy team year before last and we beat them the first two games.”

“Don't you play any outside schools?”

“No, the faculty won't let us. Perfect rot, isn't it? They let us play outsiders at football and baseball and all that, but they won't let us take on even the grammar school for basket ball. Randy says the game is too rough and we might get injured. Bough! I'd like to know what he calls football!”

“I don't understand about the classes here,” said Kenneth. “I heard that big chap over there say he couldn't play because he was 'advanced' or something. What's that!”

“Advanced senior,” answered Joe. “You see, there's the preparatory class, the junior class, the middle class and the senior class. Then if a fellow wants to fit for college, he does another year in the senior class and in order to distinguish him from the fourth−year fellows they call him an advanced senior. See? There are five in school this year. Faculty won't let them play basket ball or football because they're supposed to be too big and might hurt some of us little chaps. Huh! Hello, there's Jim. I've got to see him a minute.”

And Joe slipped off the stage and scurried across to where a boy of about sixteen, a tall, athletic−looking youth with reddish−brown hair was crossing the floor with a ball under each arm. Joe stopped him and said a few words and presently they both walked over to where Kenneth sat. Joe introduced the captain and the new candidate.

“Joe says you've played the game,” said Jim inquiringly in a pleasant voice as he shook hands. Kenneth was somewhat awed by him and replied quite modestly:

“Yes, but I don't suppose I can play with you fellows. Still, I'd like to try.”

“That's right. How are you on throwing baskets?”

“Well, I used to be pretty fair last year.”

“Good enough. If you can throw goals well, you'll stand a good show of making the team as a substitute. You'd better get out there with the others and warm up.”

III

Kenneth's first week at Hilltop passed busily and happily. There had been no more talk on Joe's part about getting rid of his roommate. The two had become fast friends. Kenneth grew to like Joe better each day; and it hadn't taken him long to discover that it was because of Joe's ability to squirm out of scrapes or to avoid detection altogether rather than to irreproachable conduct that Dr. Randall looked upon him as a model student.

Basket−ball practice for both the Upper and Lower House teams took place every week−day afternoon. Kenneth had erred, if at all, on the side of modesty when speaking of his basket−ball ability. To be sure, he was light in weight for a team where the members' ages averaged almost sixteen years, but he made up for that in speed, while his prowess at shooting baskets from the floor or from fouls was so remarkable that after a few practice games had been played all Lower House was discussing him with eager amazement and Upper House was sitting up and taking notice. At the end of the first week Kenneth secured a place on the second team at right guard, and Grafton Hyde, whose place in a similar position on the first team was his more by reason of his size and weight than because of real ability, began to work his hardest.

The closer Kenneth pressed him for his place the more Grafton's dislike of the younger boy became evident. As there was the length of the floor between their positions in the practice games the two had few opportunities to "mix it up," but once or twice they got into a scrimmage together and on those occasions the fur flew. Grafton was a hard, rough player and he didn't handle Kenneth with gloves. On the other hand, Kenneth asked no favors nor gave any. Naturally Grafton's superior size and strength gave him the advantage, and after the second of these "mix−ups," during which the other players and the few spectators looked on gleefully and the referee blew his whistle until he was purple in the face, Kenneth limped down to the dressing room with a badly bruised knee, a factor which kept him out of the game for the next two days and caused Grafton to throw sarcastic asides in the direction of the bench against which Kenneth's heels beat a disconsolate tattoo.

Four days before the first game with Upper House—the championship shield went to the team winning two games out of three—Lower House held an enthusiastic meeting at which songs and cheers were practiced and at which the forty odd fellows in attendance pledged themselves for various sums of money to defray the cost of new suits and paraphernalia for both the basket ball and hockey teams.

"How much do you give?" whispered Kenneth.

"Five dollars," answered Joe, his pencil poised above the little slip of paper. Kenneth stared.

"But—isn't that a good bit?" he asked incredulously.

"It seems so when you only get twenty dollars a month allowance," answered Joe ruefully. "But every fellow gives what he thinks he ought to, you know; Graft usually gives ten dollars, but lots of the fellows can only give fifty cents."

"I see," murmured Kenneth. "'What he thinks he ought to give, eh? That's easy."

The following afternoon Upper and Lower Houses turned out *en masse* to see the first of the hockey series and stood ankle−deep in the new snow while Upper proceeded to administer a generous trouncing to her rival.

"Eat 'em up, Upper! Eat 'em up, Upper!" gleefully shouted the supporters of the blue−stockinged players along the opposite barrier.

"Oh, forget it!" growled Joe, pulling the collar of his red sweater higher about his neck and turning a disgusted back to the rink. "That's 14 to 3, isn't it? Well, it must be pretty near over, that's one comfort! Hello, here comes Whipple. Gee, but he makes me tired! Always trying to mix with the fellows. I wonder if he was born with that ugly smile of his. He's coming this way," Joe groaned. "He thinks I'm such a nice little boy and says he hopes my heart is of gold to match my hair! Wouldn't that peev you?"

"Ah, Brewster," greeted Mr. Whipple, laying a hand on the boy's shoulder, "how goes it today?" He accorded Kenneth a curt nod.

"Going bad," growled Joe.

"Well, well, we must take the bad with the good," said the instructor sweetly. "Even defeat has its lesson, you know. Now—"

But Kenneth didn't hear the rest. Grafton Hyde was beside him with a slip of paper in his hand.

"Say, Garwood," said Grafton loudly enough to be heard by the audience near by, "I wish you'd tell me about this. It's your subscription slip. These figures look like a one and two naughts, but I guess you meant ten dollars instead of one, didn't you?"

"No," answered Kenneth calmly.

"Oh! But—only a dollar?" inquired Grafton incredulously.

The fellows nearest at hand who had been either watching the game or delighting in Joe's discomforture turned their attention to Grafton and the new junior.

"Exactly," answered Kenneth. "The figures are perfectly plain, aren't they?"

Grafton shrugged his shoulders and smiled.

"Oh, all right," he said. "Only a dollar seemed rather little, and I wanted to be sure—"

"Didn't anyone else give a dollar?" demanded Kenneth.

"We don't make public the amounts received," answered Grafton with much dignity. Kenneth smiled sarcastically.

"What are you doing now?" he asked.

"I merely asked—"

"And I answered. That's enough, isn't it?"

"Yes, but let me tell you that we don't take to stingy fellows in Lower House. You'd better get moved to Upper, Garwood; that's where you belong. You're a fresh kid, and I guess we don't have to have your subscription anyway." He tore the slip up contemptuously and tossed the pieces to the snow. Kenneth colored.

"Just as you like," he answered. "I subscribed what I thought proper and you've refused to accept it. You haven't worried me."

But a glance over the faces of the little throng showed that public sentiment was against him. Well, that couldn't be helped now. He turned his back and gave his attention to the game. But the incident was not yet closed. Mr. Whipple's smooth voice sounded in its most conciliatory tones:

"We all know your generosity, Hyde. Let us hope that by next year Garwood will have learned from you the spirit of giving."

Kenneth swung around and faced the instructor.

"May I ask, sir, how much you gave?"

"Me? Why—ah—I think the teachers are not required—I should say expected to—ah—contribute," answered Mr. Whipple agitatedly.

"I guess they aren't forbidden to," answered Kenneth. "And I don't believe you've got any right to criticise the size of my subscription until you've given something yourself."

Mr. Whipple's smile grew tremulous and almost flickered out.

"I'm sure that the boys of the Lower House know that I am always ready and eager to aid in any way," he replied with angry dignity, "If they will allow me to contribute—" He paused and viewed the circle smilingly.

The idea tickled all hands hugely.

"Yes, sir!"

"Thank you, sir!"

"About five dollars, Mr. Whipple!"

Mr. Whipple's smile grew strained and uneasy. He had not expected acceptance of his offer.

"Yes, yes, perhaps it is best to keep the donations confined to the student body," he said. "Perhaps at another time you'll allow—"

"Right now, sir!" cried Joe. "Give us a couple of dollars, sir!"

The demand could not be disregarded. Shouts of approval arose on every hand. On the ice, Wason of the Upper House team had hurt his knee and time had been called; and the waiting players flocked to the barrier to see what was up. Mr. Whipple looked questioningly at Grafton and found that youth regarding him expectantly. With a sigh which was quickly stifled he drew forth his pocketbook and selected a two dollar note from the little roll it contained. He handed it to Grafton who accepted it carelessly.

"Thanks," said Grafton. "I'll send you a receipt, sir."

"Oh, that is not necessary," replied Mr. Whipple. Now that the thing was past mending he made the best of it. His smile had returned in all its serenity. "And now, Garwood," he said, "as I have complied with your

requirements, allow me to say that your conduct has not been—ah—up to Hilltop standards. Let me suggest that you cultivate generosity."

Kenneth, who had kept his back turned since his last words, swung around with an angry retort on his lips. But Joe's hand pulled him back.

"Shut up, chum!" whispered Joe. "Let him go."

Kenneth, swallowed, his anger and Mr. Whipple, with a smiling nod, followed by a quick malevolent glance at Joe, turned away from the group of grinning faces.

Chuckles and quiet snickers followed him.

There was joy in the ranks of the enemy.

Only Kenneth showed no satisfaction over the instructor's discomfiture for he realized that the latter would hold him partly accountable for it.

Presently, the game having come to an end with the score 18 to 7 in Upper's favor, he and Joe went back together up the hill.

"I wish," said Joe, with a frown, "you hadn't made that fuss about the subscription. Fellows will think you're stingy, I'm afraid."

"Well, they'll have to think so then," responded Kenneth defiantly. "Anyhow, Hyde had no business pitching into me about it like that in public."

"No, that's so," Joe acknowledged. "He hadn't. I guess he's got it in for you good and hard. But don't you be worried."

"I'm not," answered Kenneth. And he didn't look to be.

"I'm going to see Jim Marble before Graft gets at him with a lot of yarns about you," Joe continued.

"Thanks," said Kenneth. "I wish you would. I don't want to lose all show for the team."

"You bet you don't! You're getting on finely, too, aren't you? I don't see how you work those long throws of yours. Graft says it's just your fool luck," Joe chuckled. "I asked him why he didn't cultivate a little luck himself! He's been playing like a baby so far; sloppy's no name for it!"

"Think Marble notices it?"

"Of course he notices it! Jim doesn't miss a thing. Why?"

"Nothing, only—well, I've made up my mind to beat Grafton out; and I'm going to do it!"

Two days later there was deeper gloom than ever in Lower House. Upper had won the first basket ball game! And the score, 14 to 6, didn't offer ground for comfort. There was no good reason to suppose that the next game, coming a week later, would result very differently. Individually three at least of the five players had done brilliant work, Marble at center. Joe at left forward and Collier at left guard having won applause time and again. But Upper had far excelled in team work, especially on offense, and Lower's much−heralded speed hadn't shown up. On the defense, all things considered, Lower had done fairly well, although most of the honor belonged to Collier at left guard, Grafton Hyde having played a slow, blundering game in which he had apparently sought to substitute roughness for science. More than half of the fouls called on the Red had been made by Grafton. And, even though Upper had no very certain basket thrower, still she couldn't have helped making a fair share of those goals from fouls.

Kenneth hadn't gone on until the last minute of play, and he had not distinguished himself. In fact his one play had been a failure. He had taken Grafton's place at right guard. Carl Jones, Upper's big center, stole the ball in the middle of the floor and succeeded in getting quite away from the field. Kenneth saw the danger and gave chase, but his lack of weight was against him. Jones brushed him aside, almost under the basket, and, while Kenneth went rolling over out of bounds, tossed the easiest sort of a goal.

But Kenneth's lack of success on that occasion caused him to work harder than ever in practice, and, on the following Thursday the long−expected happened. Grafton Hyde went to the second team and Kenneth took his place at right guard on the first.

IV

Grafton could scarcely believe it at first. When he discovered that Jim Marble really meant that he was to go to the second team his anger almost got the better of him, and the glance he turned from Jim to Kenneth held nothing of affection. But he took his place at right guard on the second and, although with ill grace, played the position while practice lasted. Kenneth took pains to keep away from him, since there was no telling what tricks he might be up to. The first team put it all over the second that day and Jim Marble was smiling when time was called and the panting players tumbled downstairs to the showers. On Friday practice was short. After it was over Kenneth stopped at the library on his way back to Lower House. When he opened the door of Number 12 he found Joe with his books spread out, studying.

"Hello, where have you been?" asked Joe. "Graft was in here a minute ago looking for you. Said if you came in before dinner to ask you to go up to his room a minute. Of course," said Joe, grinning, "he may intend to throw you out of the window or give you poison, but he talked sweetly enough. Still, maybe you'd better stay away; perhaps he's just looking for a chance to quarrel."

Kenneth thought a minute. Then he turned toward the door.

"Going?" asked Joe.

"Yes."

"Well, if you're not back by six I'll head a rescue party."

Grafton Hyde roomed by himself on the third floor. His two rooms, on the corner of the building, were somewhat elaborately furnished, as befitted the apartments of "the richest fellow in school." He had chosen the third floor because he was under surveillance less strict than were the first and second floor boys. The teacher on the third floor was Mr. Whipple and, as his rooms were at the other end of the hall and as he paid little attention at best to his charges, Grafton did about as he pleased. To−night there was no light shining through the transom when Kenneth reached Number 21 and he decided that Grafton was out. But he would make sure and so knocked at the door. To his surprise he was told to come in. As he opened the door a chill draft swept by him, a draft at once redolent of snow and of cigarette smoke. The room was in complete darkness, but a form was outlined against one of the windows, the lower sash of which was fully raised, and a tiny red spark glowed there. Kenneth paused on the threshold.

"Who is it?" asked Grafton's voice.

"Garwood," was the reply. "Joe said you wanted me to look you up."

The spark suddenly dropped out of sight, evidently tossed through the open window.

"Oh," said Grafton with a trace of embarrassment. "Er—wait a moment and I'll light up."

"Don't bother," said Kenneth. "I can't stay but a minute. I just thought I'd see what you wanted."

"Well, you'll find a chair there by the table," said Grafton, sinking back on the window seat. "Much obliged to you for coming up."

There was a silence during which Kenneth found the chair and Grafton pulled down the window. Then,

"Look here, Garwood," said Grafton, "you've got my place on the team, I don't say you didn't get it fair and square, because you did. But I want it. You know me pretty well and I guess you know I generally get what I want. You're a pretty good sort, and you're a friend of Joe's, and I like Joe, but I might make it mighty uncomfortable for you if I wanted to, which I don't. I'll tell you what I'll do, Garwood. You get yourself back on the second team and I'll make it right with you. If you need a little money—"

"Is that all?" asked Kenneth, rising.

"Hold on! Don't get waxy! Wait till I explain. I'll give you twenty−five dollars, Garwood. You can do a whole lot with twenty−five dollars. And that's a mighty generous offer. All you've got to do is to play off for a couple of days. Tomorrow you could be kind of sick and not able to play. No one would think anything about it, and you can bet I wouldn't breathe a word of it. What do you say?"

"I say you're a confounded cad!" cried Kenneth hotly.

"Oh, you do, eh? I haven't offered enough, I suppose!" sneered Grafton. "I might have known that a fellow who would only give a dollar to the teams would be a hard bargainer! Well, I'm not stingy; I'll call it thirty. Now,

what do you say?"

"When you get your place back it'll be by some other means than buying it," said Kenneth contemptuously. He turned toward the door. "You haven't got enough money to buy everything, you see; and—"

There was a sharp knock on the door.

"If you say anything about this," whispered Grafton hoarsely, "I'll—I'll— Come in!"

"Who is here?" asked Mr. Whipple's voice as the door swung open.

"I, sir, and Garwood," answered Grafton.

"Ah! Garwood! And which one of you, may I ask, has been smoking cigarettes?"

There was a moment's silence. Then,

"Nobody in here, sir," answered Grafton.

"That will do, Hyde. Don't attempt to shield him," said Mr. Whipple coldly. "Light the gas, please."

Grafton slid off the window seat and groped toward where Kenneth was standing.

"Yes, sir," he said, "as soon as I can find a match." He brushed heavily against Kenneth.

"I beg your pardon, Garwood. I'm all turned around. Where—? Oh, here they are." A match flared and Grafton lighted the droplight. Mr. Whipple turned to Kenneth, a triumphant smile on his thin features.

"Well, what have you to say?" he asked.

"About what, sir!" inquired Kenneth.

"About smoking. You deny it, then."

"Yes."

"Ah! And what about this!" Mr. Whipple opened his hand and displayed a portion of a cigarette with charred end. "You should be more careful where you throw them, Garwood. This came from the window just as I was passing below."

"It's not mine," was the answer.

"Oh, then it was you, Hyde?"

Grafton smiled and shrugged his shoulders.

"If you can find any cigarettes in my room, sir, you—"

"Pshaw! What's the use in pretending?" interrupted the instructor, viewing Kenneth balefully. "I fancy I know where to look for cigarettes, eh, Garwood? You have no objection to emptying your pockets for me?"

"None at all, Mr. Whipple."

"Then, may I suggest that you do so?"

Kenneth dove into one pocket and brought out a handkerchief and a small piece of pencil, into the other and—

"Ah!" said Mr. Whipple triumphantly.

In Kenneth's hand lay a piece of folded paper, a skate strap and—a box of cigarettes! He stared at the latter bewilderedly for a moment. Then he glanced sharply at Grafton. That youth regarded him commiseratingly and slowly shook his head.

"I'll take those, if you please," said Mr. Whipple. Kenneth handed them over.

"I never saw them before," he said simply.

"Oh, of course not," jeered the instructor. "And the room rank with cigarette smoke! That's a pretty tall story, I think, Garwood. You told me once that I would never catch you smoking cigarettes. You see you were a trifle mistaken. You may go to your room."

"I wasn't smoking cigarettes," protested Kenneth. "I never saw that box before in my life. If Hyde won't tell, I will. I came up here and found him—"

He stopped. What was the use? Telling on another fellow was mean work, and, besides, Mr. Whipple wouldn't believe him. He had no proof to offer and all the evidence was against him. He turned to the door. On the threshold he looked back at Grafton.

"You sneak!" he said softly.

Then, with the angry tears blinding his eyes, he hurried down to his room to unburden his heart to Joe Brewster.

Joe was wildly indignant and was all for dashing upstairs and "knocking the spots out of Graft!" But Kenneth refused his consent to such a procedure.

"I'll tell them the truth when they call me up," he said. "If they don't believe me they needn't."

Well, they didn't. Kenneth refused to incriminate Grafton and as all the evidence was strongly against him he was held guilty. The verdict was “suspension” as soon as Kenneth's parents could be communicated with. Grafton denied having smoked with Kenneth and got off with a lecture for permitting an infraction of the rules in his study. Joe stormed and sputtered, but as Kenneth had bound him to secrecy he could do no more.

That night Upper and Lower met in the second basket−ball game and Grafton Hyde played right guard on the Lower House team. Fate was kind to the Beds. Knox, Upper's crack right forward, was out of the game with a twisted ankle and when the last whistle blew the score board declared Lower House the winner by a score of 12 to 9. And Lower House tramped through the snow, around and around the campus, and made night hideous with songs and cheers until threatened by the faculty with dire punishment if they did not at once retire to their rooms. And up in Number 12 Kenneth, feeling terribly out of it all, heard and was glad of the victory.

Sunday afternoon he spent in packing his trunk, for, in spite of Joe's pleadings, he was determined not to return to Hilltop when his term of suspension was over. He expected to hear from his father in the morning, in which case he would take the noon train to New York on the first stage of his journey.

That night they sat up late, since it was to be their last evening together, and Joe was very miserable. He begged Kenneth to go to Dr. Randall and tell just what had occurred. But Kenneth shook his head.

“He wouldn't believe me if I did,” he said. “And, anyhow, what's the use of staying while Whipple's here? He'd get me fired sooner or later. No, the best way to do is to quit now. I'm sorry, Joe; you and I were getting on together pretty well, weren't we?”

“Yes,” answered Joe sadly. And then he became reminiscent and asked whether Kenneth remembered the way they kicked the furniture around that first evening and how Kenneth had joshed Grafton Hyde.

When they at last went to bed Kenneth found himself unable to sleep. Eleven o'clock struck on the town clock. From across the room came Joe's regular breathing and Kenneth, punching his pillow into a new shape, envied him. For a half hour longer he tossed and turned, and then slumber came to him, yet so fitfully that he was wide awake and out of bed the instant that that first shrill cry of “*Fire!*“ sounded in the corridor.

V

Kenneth's first act after hearing the alarm was to awake Joe, This he did by the simple expedient of yanking the bedclothes away from him and yelling “Fire!” at the top of his lungs. Then, stumbling over the chairs, he groped his way to the hall door and opened it. The corridor was already filled with excitement and confusion. Of the eighteen boys who roomed on that floor fully half were in evidence, standing dazedly about in pyjamas or night shirts and shouting useless questions and absurd answers. Simms, who lived at the far end of the corridor, emerged from his room dragging a steamer trunk after him. Instantly the scantily clad youths dashed into their rooms intent on rescuing their belongings. Joe joined Kenneth at the door.

“Where's the fire?” he gasped.

“I don't know,” answered Kenneth, “but I can smell it. Get something on; I'm going to. Has anyone given the alarm?” he asked, as Simms hurried back toward his study.

“Yes! No! I don't know! Everything's on fire upstairs! You'd better get your things out!”

“Somebody ought to give the alarm,” said Kenneth. “Who's seen Mr. Bronson?”

But none had time to answer him. Kenneth scooted down the hall and thumped at the instructor's door. There was no answer and Kenneth unceremoniously shoved it open. The study was in darkness.

“*Mr. Bronson!*” he cried. “*Mr. Bronson!*“

There was no reply, and Kenneth recollected that very frequently Mr. Bronson spent Sunday night at his home. He hurried back to his own room and found Joe throwing their belongings out of the windows. At that moment the bell on School Hall began to clang wildly and a second afterwards the alarm was taken up by the fire bell in the village, a mile away.

Kenneth pulled on his trousers and shoes, looked for a coat only to find that Joe had thrown all the coats out of the windows, and went back to the corridor. All up and down it boys were staggering along with trunks and bags, while from the western end the smoke was volleying forth from Number 19 in great billowy clouds. From the floor above raced fellows with suit cases and small trunks, shouting and laughing in the excitement of the moment.

One of the older boys, Harris by name, came galloping upstairs with a fire extinguisher, followed by a crowd of partly dressed fellows from Upper House. But the smoke which filled the end of the corridor drove them back and the stream from the extinguisher wasted itself against the fast yellowing plaster of the wall. The building was rapidly becoming uninhabitable and, calling Joe from the study, where he was vainly trying to get the study table through the casement, Kenneth made for the stairs. The light at the far end of the corridor shone red and murky through the dense clouds of smoke.

“All out of the building!” cried a voice from below, and the half dozen adventurous spirits remaining in the second floor corridor started down the stairs.

“Do you know how it began?” asked Joe of a boy beside him.

“Yes,” was the reply. “King, in 19, was reading in bed with a lamp he has, and he went to sleep and upset it somehow. He got burned, they say.”

“Serves him right,” muttered some one. Kenneth glanced around and found Grafton Hyde beside him.

“Hello,” said Kenneth.

“Hello,” answered Grafton. “Did you save anything?”

“Yes, I guess so,” Kenneth replied. “Did you?”

For the moment animosities were forgotten, wiped out of existence by the calamity.

“Not much,” said Grafton. “But I don't care. I tried to get my trunk down but the smoke was fierce and the end of the building was all in flames. So I lit out.”

The lower hall was crowded with boys. Dr. Randall, tall and gaunt in a red flowered dressing gown, and several of the instructors were doing their best to clear the building.

“All out, boys!” called the doctor. “It isn't safe here now! The firemen will be here in a minute and you'll only be in the way! I want you all to go over to Upper House!”

“Hello!” said Kenneth. “What's the matter with you, Jasper?”

Jasper Hendricks, the youngest boy in school, was crouched in a dim corner of the hall, sobbing and shaking as though his heart was broken.

"What's up?" asked Grafton.

"Don't know. Here's young Jasper crying like a good one. What's the trouble, Jasper? Did you get hurt?"

But the boy apparently didn't even hear them.

"Lost his things, probably," suggested Grafton, "and feels it. Never mind, kid? you'll get some more."

"I want every boy out of the building!" cried the doctor. But his voice was almost drowned in the babel of cries and shouts and laughter.

"Come on, Jasper," said Kenneth, trying to raise him to his feet. "We've got to get out."

For the first time he caught a glimpse of the boy's face. It was white and drawn and horror stricken.

"What's the matter?" cried Kenneth in alarm. Young Hendrick's lips moved but Kenneth could not distinguish the whispered words.

"Eh? What's that? Speak louder! You're all right now! Don't be scared! What is it?" And Kenneth bent his head as the younger boy clung to him convulsively.

"*Mister Whipple!*"

Kenneth barely caught the whispered words.

"Mr. Whipple," he muttered. "What does he mean?" He pulled the lad's body around so that he could see his face in the smoke−dimmed light. "What about him, Jasper? He's safe, isn't he?"

The white face shook from side to side.

"What does he say?" cried Grafton. "Whipple? Isn't he down? Where is he?"

"He must be—!"

Kenneth paused, his own face paling, and looked fearsomely toward the stairs down which the gray−brown smoke was floating wraithlike. Then his eyes met Grafton's and he read his own horror reflected there.

"Jasper's room is next to Mr. Whipple's," said Grafton hoarsely. "He must have seen something! *Jasper, is Mr. Whipple up there now?"*

The lad's head nodded weakly. Then he broke again into great dry sobs that shook him from head to foot. Kenneth seized him beneath the shoulders and dragged him a few yards nearer the door. There he put him down.

"Don't cry, Jasper," he whispered kindly. "It's all right; we'll save him!"

For an instant he looked about him. Through the doors the boys were pushing their way outward, protesting, laughing, excitedly.

Of the faculty Dr. Randall alone was in sight. One other instant Kenneth hesitated. Then with a bound he was halfway up the first flight.

"Who's that going up there?" cried the doctor. "Here, come back instantly!"

But Kenneth did not hear, or, hearing, paid no heed. He was at the second floor, the evil−smelling smoke thick about him, blinding his eyes and smarting his throat. Above him was a strange lurid glare and the roaring of the flames. For a moment his heart failed him and he leaned weak and panting against the banister. Then a voice sounded in his ears.

"It's no use, Garwood," cried Grafton. "We can't get up there."

"We'll try," was the answer.

Bending low, his sleeve over his mouth, Kenneth rushed the next flight. Grafton was at his heels. At the top Kenneth crouched against the last step and squinted painfully down the corridor in the direction of Mr. Whipple's room and the flames. The heat was stifling and the smoke rolled toward them in great red waves. Grafton, choking, coughing, crouched at Kenneth's side.

"We can't reach him," he muttered. "The fire has cut him off."

It seemed true. Mr. Whipple's room was at the far end and between his door and the stairway the flames were rioting wildly, licking up the woodwork and playing over the lathes from which the plaster was crumbling away. Kenneth's heart sank and for an instant he thought he was going to faint. Everything grew black before him and his head settled down on his outstretched arm. Then Grafton was shaking him by the shoulder and his senses returned.

"Come on!" cried Grafton. "Let's get out of this while we can! We'll be burned alive in a minute!" There was panic in his voice and he tugged nervously at Kenneth's arm.

At that moment a great expanse of plaster fell from the ceiling some thirty feet away and the flames glared luridly through the corridor, making everything for a brief moment as light as day. From below came calls, but Kenneth did not hear them.

"Look!" he cried, seizing Grafton's arm. "*On the floor! Do you see?*"

"Yes," shouted Grafton. "It's Mr. Whipple! Can we get him?"

"I'm going to try," was the calm reply. "Will you come with me?"

For a moment the two boys looked into each other's eyes, squinting painfully in the acrid smoke. The flames crackled and roared in their ears. The strained, terror−stricken look passed from Grafton's face. His eyes lighted and he even smiled a little.

"Come on," he said simply.

"Wait!" Kenneth leaned down so that his face was against the spindles and took a deep breath. There was a current of clearer air arising from the well and, although it smarted in his lungs, it gave him relief. Grafton followed his example. Then, for they realized that there was no time to lose, with one accord they rushed, stooping, down the corridor into the face of the flames.

Mr. Whipple lay stretched face downward on the floor where he had fallen when overcome by the smoke and, as is more than likely, his terror. He was in his night clothes and one hand grasped a small satchel. Behind him the floor was afire scarcely a yard away. The thirty feet from the stairs to where he lay seemed as many yards to the rescuers, and the heat grew fiercer at every step. But they gained the goal, fighting for breath, bending their heads against the savage onslaughts of the flames, and seized the instructor's arms. Whether he was alive there was no time to ascertain. There was time for nothing save to strive to drag him toward the stairway. With tightly closed eyes, from which the smarting tears rolled down their faces, and sobbing breaths, they struggled back.

But if it had been hard going it was trebly hard returning. The instructor was not a large man nor a heavy one, but now he seemed to weigh tons. Their feet slipped on the plaster−sprinkled boards and their hearts hammered in their throats. Ten feet they made; and then, as though angry at being deprived of their prey, the flames burst with a sudden roar through the melting partition a few feet behind them and strove to conquer them with a scorching breath. Kenneth staggered to his knees under its fury and Grafton gave a cry of anguish and despair. But the fiery wave receded and they struggled desperately on, fighting now for their own lives as well as for that of the instructor.

Ten feet more and the worst was passed. A frenzied rush for the stairway and safety was in sight. Half falling, half stumbling, they went down the first few steps to the landing at the turn, Mr. Whipple's inert body thumping along between them. There, with faces held close to the boards, they lay drinking in grateful breaths of the smoke−poisoned air, which, after what they had been inhaling, was fresh and sweet.

Then, above the booming of the fire, voices reached them, hoarse, anxious voices, and white faces peered up at them through the smoke from the corridor below.

"All right!" called Kenneth, but, to his surprise, his words were only hoarse whispers. Struggling to his knees, he seized Mr. Whipple's arm and strove to go on. But Grafton offered no assistance. He lay motionless where he had thrown himself on the landing.

"Come on!" croaked Kenneth impatiently, and tugged at his double burden. Then the crimson light went suddenly out and he subsided limply against the banisters just as the rescuers dashed up to them.

When Kenneth came to a few minutes later he was being carried across the campus. Near at hand a fire engine throbbed and roared, sending showers of sparks into the winter darkness. Behind him a red glare threw long moving shadows across the grass. In his ears were shouts and commands and a shrill whistling. Then he lost consciousness again.

VI

Kenneth lay in bed in Dr. Randall's spare chamber. His left hand was bandaged and a wet cloth lay across his closed eyes. A window was open and the lowered shade billowed softly up and down, letting into the darkened room quick splashes of sunlight. From without came the cheerful patter of melting snow upon the sill.

Kenneth had had his breakfast—how long ago he could not say, since he had slept since then—and had learned all the exciting news; that Lower House was so badly burned that there was no question of repairing it; that Mr. Whipple had been sent to the hospital at Lynnminster, seriously but not dangerously hurt; that Grafton Hyde had received no damage and was about this forenoon wearing a strangely blank expression due to the loss of his eyebrows; and that King, to whose disregard of the rules the fire had been due, had, previous rumors to the contrary, escaped unharmed.

Kenneth's informant had been the school doctor, who had also imparted the information that Kenneth's injuries were trifling, a couple of scorched fingers and a pair of badly inflamed eyes, but that nevertheless he would kindly spend the day in bed, “as heroes are scarce these days and must be well looked after when found.”

There came a soft tapping at the door and Kenneth peeked eagerly out from under the bandage as Grafton Hyde entered and tiptoed across the floor. Kenneth looked for a moment and grinned; then he chuckled; then he threw an arm across his face and gave way to laughter unrestrained. Grafton laughed, too, though somewhat ruefully.

“Don't I look like a fool?” he asked.

Kenneth regained his composure with a gasp.

“I—I didn't mean to be rude,” he said contritely, “but—”

“Oh, I don't mind,” answered Grafton. “Besides, I'll bet you're the same way.”

“Me?” Kenneth looked startled and passed a finger questioningly across his eyebrows. “There's nothing here!” he gasped. Off came the bandage. “How do I look?”

A smile started at Grafton's lips and slowly overspread his face. Kenneth smiled back.

“We must be a pair of freaks,” he said, chuckling. “Do they ever grow back again?”

“Yes, in no time,” answered Grafton. “Besides, Joe says that all you have to do is to take a pencil and rub it over and no one can tell. I'm going to try it.” He sat down cautiously on the edge of the bed. “How are you feeling!” he asked.

“All right. Kind of tired, though. How about you?”

“Fine.” There was a silence during which he played nervously with a shoe strap. At last:

“I say, Garwood,” he blurted, “it's—it's all right about—about that, you know. I told President Randall.”

“You needn't have,” muttered Kenneth.

“I wanted to! And I'm sorry. It was a sneaky thing that I did to you. I—I don't know why I cared so much about staying on the team; I don't now.”

“Did he—was he mad about it?”

“Wasn't he! I am to be suspended for a month.”

“I'm sorry,” said Kenneth honestly. “It—it was decent of you to tell.”

“Decent nothing! It was decent of you not to blow on me the other day. Why didn't you?” he asked curiously.

“Oh, I don't know,” answered Kenneth embarrassedly. “I—I didn't like to, I suppose. When are you going?”

“This afternoon. That's why I came to see you now, I wanted to—to tell you that I was sorry about it and see if you wouldn't be friends.”

“That's all right,” said Kenneth. “I—I'm glad you came.”

Had they been older they would have shaken hands. As it was they merely avoided looking at each other and maintained an embarrassed silence for a moment. It amounted to the same thing.

The silence was broken by a knock on the door.

“Come!” called Kenneth.

“Look at the heroes having a convention,” said Joe gayly as he crossed the floor. “The Society of the Singed Cats! Well, how are you feeling, chum?”

"Fine and dandy," answered Kenneth.

"Good! Say, we had lots of fun last night! They bunked us in with the Upper House fellows, and maybe there wasn't a circus! Every time we see King we ask him if it's hot enough for him! I wouldn't be surprised if he folded his pyjamas like the Arabs—that's all he saved, you know—and as silently stole away. We've sure got him worried!" He paused and looked inquiringly from Kenneth to Grafton. "Did Graft tell you?" he asked.

Kenneth nodded.

"I always told you he wasn't a bad sort, didn't I? Don't you care, Graft; we'll keep a place warm for you, and a month is just a nice vacation. Wouldn't mind it myself! Say, are you going to be fit to play in Saturday's game, Kenneth?"

"I don't know. Will they let me?"

"Why not? They haven't anything against you now, have they? How about your blessed eyes?"

"Oh, they'll be all right, I guess. But I wish—Graft was going to play."

"Oh, I don't care," declared that youth stoutly. "Go in and give 'em fits, Kenneth. And—one of you fellows might write me about the game," he added wistfully.

"We'll do it," said Joe. "We'll write a full account and send diagrams of the broken heads of the Uppers. Only thing I'm afraid of," he added soberly, "is that now that Kenneth hasn't any eyebrows they may take his head for the ball!" Kenneth was up the next day feeling as fit as ever, but when the subject of returning to basketball practice was broached to the doctor, Kenneth met with disappointment.

"I can't allow it," said the doctor kindly but firmly. "I'm sorry, but you know we're responsible for you while you're here, my boy, and I think you'd better keep away from violent exercise for a week or two. No, no more basket ball this year."

The verdict brought gloom to Lower House, or, as Upper facetiously called them now, the Homeless Ones. For with Grafton gone and Kenneth out of the game the team's plight was desperate. But there was no help for it, and so Jim Marble went to work to patch up the team as best he might, putting Simms back at guard and placing Niles, a substitute, at right forward.

The Homeless Ones were quartered wherever space could be found for them. Joe and Kenneth were so fortunate as to get together again in an improvised bedroom, which had previously been a disused recitation room, at the top of School Hall. Most of the Lower House residents had saved their principal effects and those who had lost their clothing were reimbursed by the school.

Friday morning two announcements of much interest were made.

"On Monday next," said the doctor, "we receive a new member into the Faculty, Mr. George Howell Fair. Mr. Fair, who is a graduate of Princeton, will take the place left vacant by the resignation of Mr. Whipple, who was so unfortunately injured in the recent disaster. Mr. Fair will take up Mr. Whipple's work where that gentleman left off."

There was a stir throughout chapel, and murmurs of satisfaction. The doctor picked up another slip of paper, cast his eyes over it and cleared his throat.

"You will also be pleased to learn," he said, "that in our time of tribulation generous friends have come to our assistance. We have lost one of our buildings, but money has already been provided for the erection of a new and far more suitable one. I have received from Mr. John Garwood, of Cleveland, and Mr. Peter L. Hyde, of Chicago, a draft for the sum of one hundred thousand dollars for the erection of a large dormitory capable of housing the entire student body. The generous gift seems to me especially, singularly appropriate, coming as it does from the fathers of those two students who recently so bravely distinguished themselves. With this thought in mind the Faculty has already decided that the new dormitory when completed shall be known as Garwood−Hyde Hall."

Well, Kenneth's secret was out! I hope and believe that his fellows held him in no higher esteem because they found out that he was the son of one of the country's wealthiest men. But true it is that for the next few days he was the object of violent interest not altogether unmixed with awe.

But Joe had to have everything explained, and as the shortest means to that result Kenneth produced a letter which he had received from his father the day before and gave it to Joe to read. Only portions of it interest us, however.

"The newspaper account" (ran the letter) "says that neither of you sustained serious injuries. I trust that it is so. But I think I had better satisfy myself on that point, and so you may look for me at the school on Saturday

next. Your mother is anxious to have you come home, but I tell her that a little thing like pulling a professor out of the fire isn't likely to feaze a Garwood!

“Now, another thing. You recollect that when you decided to go to Hilltop we talked it over and thought it best to keep dark the fact that you were my son. You wanted to stand on your own merits, and I wanted you to. Then, too, we feared that Hyde's boy, because of the misunderstanding between Peter Hyde and myself, might try to make it uncomfortable for you. That alarm seems now to have been groundless, since surely a boy who could do what he did—and join you in doing it—wouldn't be likely to pick on another. But that's of no consequence now, as it happens.

“Quite by accident I met Peter here the day after the papers published the story of your little stunt. Well, he was so tickled about it that we shook hands and had a 'touching reconciliation,' quite like what you see in the plays. We talked about 'those worthless kids' of ours and it ended up with his coming home to dinner with me. So you see you did more than save a professor's life; you brought about a renewal of an old friendship. After dinner we got to talking it over and decided the least we could do was to replace that building. So I've sent your principal a draft by this mail which will cover the cost of a good new hall. I'm giving half and Peter's giving half. I hope you and young Hyde will be good friends, just as his father and I are going to be hereafter. You may expect me Saturday.”

“Now,” cried Joe triumphantly when he had finished reading, “now I understand about those brushes!”

“What brushes?” asked Kenneth.

“Why, the night of the fire I threw your suit case out of the window, and when I went down to get it, it had bust open and was full of swell silver−backed things. I thought at first I'd got some one else's bag, but I found I hadn't. And I wondered why you hadn't had those brushes out.”

“Oh,” laughed Kenneth, “I thought they looked a bit too giddy!”

VII

It was Saturday night and the gymnasium was crowded. The Faculty was there to a man, and with them, the honored guest of the evening, sat Mr. John Garwood, trying hard to make out what all the fuss was about and looking more often toward a bench at the side of the hall than toward the struggling players. On the bench, one of several red−shirted players, sat Kenneth. He was forbidden to enter the game, but there was nothing to prevent his wearing his uniform once more and sitting with the substitutes. But the fellows with him were not all subs. One was Simms, weary and panting, nursing a twisted ankle which a moment before had put him out of the game. And Upper House had suffered, too, for across the floor Carl Jones was viewing the last of the contest from the inglorious vantage of the side line. Upper and Lower were still shouting hoarsely and singing doggedly. On the scoreboard the legend ran:

Upper House 11—Lower House 11.

No wonder every fellow's heart was in his throat! It had been a contest to stir the most sluggish blood. In spite of the absence of Grafton and Kenneth, Lower had played a hard, fast game, and had she made a decent per cent of her tries at goal would have been the winner at this moment. But Jim Marble had missed almost every goal from foul, and Collier, who had tried his hand, had been scarcely more successful. And now the score was tied and it seemed ages agone since the timekeepers had announced one minute to play.

The ball hovered in the middle of the floor, passed from side to side. Then Hurd of Upper secured it, and, with a shout to Knox, sped, dribbling, down the side line. But a red−shirted youth sprang in front of him and the two went to the floor together, while the ball bounded into the ready hands of Jim Marble.

“Oh, good work, Joe!” shouted Kenneth, as Joe sprang to his feet and dived again into the play.

Jim, taking long and desperate chances, tried for a basket from near the center of the floor and missed by a bare six inches. A groan went up from the supporters of the Red, while Upper House sighed its relief. Then there was a mix−up under Upper's goal and the whistle shrilled.

“Double foul!” called the referee.

A sudden stillness fell over the hall. Not a few of the players sank to the floor where they stood, while Knox picked up the ball and advanced to the line. Kenneth, watching with his heart in his throat, had a vague impression of Jim Marble bending across the rail in consultation with one of the Faculty. Then the ball rose gently from Knox's hands, arched in its flight and came down square on the rim of the basket. For a moment it poised there while hearts stood still. Then it toppled gently over the side to the floor. Knox had missed!

Lower House set up a frantic chorus of triumph. If only Marble or Collier could succeed where Knox had failed! But neither Jim nor the left guard was going to try, it seemed. For over at the Red's bench a lithe form was peeling off his sweater, and in a moment the cry swept the hall:

“Garwood's going to throw! Garwood! Garwood!”

“It's all right,” Jim had whispered. “I asked the doc. Do your best. If you make it we win, Garwood!”

Kenneth, his pulses far from calm, walked out on the floor and picked up the ball. The shouting died away and the sudden stillness seemed appalling. He toed the black streak across the boards and measured the distance to the basket. Then, his legs astraddle, his knees slightly bent, he swung the ball once—twice—

There was a moment of suspense, and then—

Then pandemonium broke loose! The ball dropped to the floor unheeded, but above it the tattered meshes of the netting swayed where it had struck them going through! It was the cleanest kind of a basket, and it won the game and the series and the Shield for Lower House!

Kenneth, fighting off the howling fellows who would have perched him on their shoulders, caught a glimpse of his father's amused face, and broke for the stairway.

THE PROVING OF JERRY

"I'm awfully sorry," said Ned Gaynor earnestly, "but it isn't as though you had been blackballed, Jerry."

"I don't see what difference it makes," replied Gerald Hutton disconsolately. "I don't get taken in, do I?"

"No, but when a fellow's name is 'postponed' he can try again any time. If he's blackballed, he's a goner until next year."

"Oh, well, I don't want to join the old Lyceum, anyhow," said his roommate with a scowl.

"Yes, you do," responded Ned, "and I want you to. And I'm going to bring your name up again just as soon as I think there's a chance of getting you elected."

"When will that be?" asked Jerry dubiously. Ned hesitated.

"I don't just know, Jerry," he answered finally. "You see, it's like this; the Lyceum is the only society we have here at Winthrop, and it's small, only thirty members, you know, while there are over seventy fellows in school this year. So of course there are lots of chaps who want to get in. And when it comes to selecting members the society naturally tries to get the best."

"Which means I'm not one of the best," said Jerry with a grin.

"No, it doesn't," replied his roommate. "It just means that you aren't very well known yet; you haven't proved yourself."

"Shucks! I've been here ever since school opened in September, and I know almost every fellow here to speak to."

"Well, but that isn't quite what I mean," replied Ned. "You—you haven't proved yourself."

"What do you mean by 'proved myself'?" asked Jerry.

"Well, you haven't done anything to—to show what you are. I can't explain very well, but—"

"What the dickens do you want me to do? Burn down Academy Hall or chuck one of the Faculty in the river?" inquired Jerry sarcastically.

"Oh, you know what I mean," answered Ned a trifle impatiently. "Sooner or later a fellow does something worth while, like getting a scholarship or making the Eleven or the Baseball Team. Then he's proved himself. You've been here only half a year, and, of course, yon haven't made yourself known."

"I've done my best," replied Jerry disconsolately. "I worked like a slave for two weeks trying to get on the Football Team, and I almost broke my neck learning to skate well enough so I'd have a show for the Hockey Team."

"Maybe you'll make the Nine," said Ned hopefully. "I guess if you do that there won't be any trouble about the Lyceum."

"I'll never get on the Nine while Herb Welch is captain," said Jerry with a shake of his head. "He doesn't care for me much."

"Well, I guess that's so," answered Ned thoughtfully. "The fact is, Jerry, it was Herb who objected to your election to the Lyceum."

"I guessed as much," Jerry replied dryly. "I knew he'd keep me out if he could. Just as he will keep me off the Nine."

"Oh, come now, Herb isn't that bad. He's sort of rough and bossy, but he's straight, Jerry. He was very decent at the election. He simply said—"

"I don't want to hear what he said," interrupted Jerry peevishly. "He's a big bully. He's hated me ever since I interfered the time he was ducking young Gordon. Gordon couldn't swim, and he was so scared that his face was as white as that block of paper."

"Well, it was pretty cheeky for a Sophomore to lay down the law to a Senior, you know," said Ned.

"And it was pretty mean of a Senior to haze a Freshman, wasn't it?" Jerry demanded. "Anyhow, I spoiled his fun for him."

"And got ducked yourself," laughed the other.

"That was all right. I could swim and wasn't afraid. I was better able to take it than young Gordon was. Ever since then Welch has had it in for me. I dare say that if I went and licked his boots he'd let me into the Lyceum

and give me a fair show for the Nine, but I'm not going to do it. I can play baseball, and I'd like to make the team, but if it depends on my toadying to Welch, why, I'll stay off, that's all."

"Oh, come now, it isn't as bad as that," responded Ned. "Don't you bother. I'll get you elected before Class Day, Jerry. Grab your skates and come on down to the river."

"Skates!" exclaimed Jerry. "Why, you can't skate to−day. The ice is all breaking up. Look at it!"

From the dormitory window the river was visible for a quarter of a mile as it curved slowly to the south between Winthrop Academy and the town bridge. It was late February, and for two days the mercury had lingered around fifty degrees. Along the nearest shore the ice still held, but in midstream and across by the Peterboro side the river, swollen by melting snow and ice, flowed in a turbid, ice−strewn torrent. For a while at noon the sun had shone, but now, at four o'clock, the clouds had gathered and the moist air coming in at the open window of the room suggested rain.

"There's plenty of ice along this bank," answered Ned cheerfully, "and as it may be the last chance I'll get to skate I'm going to make the most of it. I promised Tom Thurber and Herb Welch I'd meet them at four. I must get a move on." He closed the book before him and arose from the study table. "You'd better come along, Jerry."

But Jerry shook his head, staring moodily out over the dreary prospect of wet campus and slushy road. A mile away the little town of Peterboro lay straggling along the river, the chimneys of its three or four factories spouting thick black smoke into the heavy air. Jerry was disappointed. It meant a good deal to win election to the Lyceum, and, in spite of what he had told Ned, he had all along entertained a sneaking idea that he would make it, Welch or no Welch. He wondered whether Ned couldn't have got him in if he had tried real hard. Ned and he were very good friends, even though they had never met until they had been roomed together in the fall, but Jerry was a new boy still, while Ned was a Junior and had known Herb Welch three years.

"I suppose," he thought, "Ned didn't want to offend Welch. Much he cares whether I'm elected or not!"

"Coming?" asked Ned, pausing at the door. Jerry shook his head.

"No, I guess not. I think I'll walk over to town and get some things."

"Well, buy me half a dozen blue books, will you?" asked Ned eagerly. He tossed a coin across and Jerry caught it deftly and dropped it into his pocket with a nod. Ned slammed the door behind him and went clattering downstairs. Jerry watched him emerge below, jump a miniature rivulet flowing beside the board walk and disappear around the corner of the dormitory. Then he got into his sweater, put his cap on, and in turn descended the stairs.

It was a good twenty−minutes walk to the village. By keeping along the river path to the bridge he might have saved something in time and distance, but the river path was ankle−deep in slush and mud, while the road, although longer, gave firmer foothold. When he reached the old wooden bridge he paused and watched the water rushing under between the stone pillars. He had never seen the stream so high. The surface appeared scarcely eight feet beneath the floor of the bridge. Huge cakes of ice, broken loose upstream, went tearing by, grinding against each other and hurling themselves at the worn stones. And between the fragments of ice the surface was almost covered with a layer of slush. Jerry flattened himself against the wooden railing while a team of sweating horses, tugging a great load of hay, went creaking by him. Then he followed it across and turned to the right at the end of the bridge into the main street of the town.

His purchases didn't take him long, and soon he was back at the bridge again. Upstream, on the Academy side of the river, he could see the skaters. Apparently half the school had decided to seize this last chance for indulging in the sport, for the long and narrow strip of ice remaining was quite black with figures. At the end of the bridge Jerry decided to take the river path, for a glance at his shoes and stockings convinced him that it was no longer necessary to consider them; they were already as wet and muddy as it was possible for them to be. He felt rather more cheerful after his tramp, and told himself that if there was time he would run up to the room, leave his purchases, get his skates, and join the group on the ice. By the time he had covered half the distance between bridge and Academy he could distinguish several of the skaters. There was Morris, with his blue sweater, and the tall fellow was, of course, Jim Kennedy; and there was Burns, and young Gordon; Gordon, even if he couldn't swim, was a dandy skater.

"Only," thought Jerry, "if he got into the river it would be a bad outlook for him."

He had left the bridge a full quarter of a mile behind when a sudden commotion among the skaters attracted his attention. There was a scurrying together and the skating stopped. Jerry paused and watched intently, but for a

moment saw nothing to account for the actions of the fellows. They were lined up along the edge of the ice in little groups. Then several of them turned and skated frantically toward the bank. Jerry's first thought now was that some one had fallen into the water, that the ice had given way, as it was quite likely to do in its present half−rotten state, and he looked anxiously for young Gordon's slight figure. He couldn't see him, but that signified little, since the fellows were packed together and the light was failing.

But in another instant Jerry saw that his surmise was wrong. For suddenly a single figure came into view, a figure huddled on hands and knees a full fifty feet away from his companions. For an instant Jerry couldn't understand. Then the huddled figure was swept farther away toward the opposite shore and a clear expanse of angry river showed between it and those on the ice. One of the fellows had ventured too far, the ice had broken away, and now he was being borne swiftly down the stream! Already the current had swept him away from all hope of assistance from his companions, for up there the channel ran close to the Peterboro shore. The fragment of ice to which he clung seemed to be fairly large, perhaps ten feet long by half that in width, but Jerry knew that the chance of its remaining unbroken for long was very slim. If the fellows had gone for a boat they might have saved themselves the effort, for no boat could be managed in that seething mass of broken ice. And a rope would be quite as useless, since the current would keep the boy along the farther shore and no one on earth could throw a coil of rope half the distance.

Jerry had already broken into a run, but now he pulled himself up and glanced behind him toward the bridge. He could be of no more use up there than were the fellows grouped helplessly at the edge of the ice. If the boy was to be rescued it must be downstream somewhere, always supposing the cake of ice hung together and that he managed to retain his place on it. Jerry thought rapidly with fast−beating heart. Already the boy on the ice had covered half the distance to where Jerry stood, and the fellows up there where the accident had happened were leaving the ice, frantically freeing themselves from their skates and running down the path. Jerry turned and ran back the way he had come. If he could reach the bridge first there might be a chance!

His feet slipped in the ice and slush of the path and it was slow going. Once he fell flat on his face, but was up again in a twinkling, wet and bruised. A glance over his shoulder told him that the pitching, whirling slag of ice with its human burden was gaining on him. If only he had started before! he thought. But he ran on, sliding and tripping, his breath coming hard and his heart pounding agonizedly against his ribs. He was almost there now; only another hundred yards or so remained between him and the end of the bridge. He prayed for strength to keep on as he glanced again over his shoulder. The boy had thrown himself face down on the ice and Jerry saw with a sinking heart that already the cake had diminished in size. If it struck one of the stone pillars of the bridge it would go to pieces without a doubt, and it would be a hard task for the strongest swimmer to battle his way clear of that rushing current.

With his breath almost failing him, Jerry reached the bridge and ran out upon it. He was none too soon. Close to the farther shore the jagged fragment still held together as it dipped and turned, glancing from the jutting points of the shore ice and grinding between its fellows in the ugly green torrent. Face down lay the boy, limp, his hands outthrown beside him. Under the bridge the river rushed with a loud rushing sound, swift and relentless.

Jerry ran with aching limbs to the third span, toward which the current was bearing the helpless, huddled figure. In the brief moment of time left him Jerry noted two things. One was that those in the van of the straggling line hurrying toward him along the river path were but a couple of hundred yards distant. The other was that his left shoulder was aching dully. He must, he thought, have struck on it when he fell. Then his gaze was on the motionless form sweeping toward him, and he was leaning over the wooden rail, his hands at his mouth.

"Stand up!" he cried with all his might.

But there was no answering movement from the boy. Jerry's heart sank, but once more he shouted, putting, as it seemed to him, every remaining bit of breath into his call:

"*Stand up and I'll save you*!"

The head raised and a white face gazed up at him as the narrowing current seized the ice fragment. With a gasp of surprise Jerry looked down into the horror−stricken eyes of Herbert Welch! Then he had thrown himself down on the floor of the bridge, his head and shoulders over the water.

"*Stand up*!" he called again. And Welch staggered weakly to his knees, the ice beneath him tilting perilously. Jerry's hands stretched down over the rushing water.

"*Catch hold!*" he cried.

A momentary return of hope and courage came to Welch, and as his treacherous craft shot, crushing and grinding, into the maelstrom, he found his feet for a moment, and threw his arms above his head, his fingers clutching hungrily at the empty air. Then a corner of the ice fragment struck against the left−hand pillar and he lost his balance. But in that brief moment Jerry's left hand had grasped one of Welch's wrists, and now the latter hung between bridge and water, swinging slowly and limply. Then Jerry's right hand found a hold below his left, and he set his teeth and closed his eyes, praying, as he had done before on the river path, for strength and endurance. The strain was terrible. He felt the blood rushing to his head and throbbing there mightily.

His left shoulder hurt worse every moment. But he could hold on a moment longer. Surely the others would be here in just a second. He thought he heard cries, but the roar of the water beneath and the throbbing in his head made it uncertain. Then he heard a voice. It was Herb Welch speaking.

“Let me go, Hutton,” said Welch quietly. “You can't hold me here.”

Jerry tried to answer, but the pressure against his chest was too severe. His left hand began to slip from Welch's wrist; the fingers wouldn't hold; there was a strange numbness from hand to shoulder. With a smothered groan he tried to tighten his clasp again. Then help came. Eager hands took his burden, and he felt himself being pulled back from the edge. He glanced up once and had a glimpse of somber twilight sky and Ned's brown eyes....

When he opened his eyes again he was lying on a couch in a cottage at the edge of the village. There were several figures about him, and one was Ned's. He smiled and tried to rise, but was glad to lay back again and look curiously at his bandaged shoulder.

“It's only a busted collarbone,” said Ned. “Doctor says it will be all right in two or three weeks. We're going to take you back in a minute. The carriage is coming now.”

“That's nice,” said Jerry drowsily. “How's Welch?”

“Not hurt a bit. He walked home. And say, Jerry,” Ned went on, dropping his voice, “it's all right about the Lyceum. Herb says he's going to bring your name up himself at the next meeting. You—you proved yourself to−day, old chum!”

McTURKLE, THE BAND

We had had hard luck at Harvard all that fall. First Phinney, our 208−pound left guard, dislocated his shoulder in the Indian game; then Hobb, full back, got a swat on the head that sent him to the Infirmary for two weeks; then Jones, our best half, hurt his leg. Those were the principal troubles, but there were lots of smaller ones besides. Every team that came to Cambridge did something to us; if they didn't beat us they scored; if they didn't score they laid up one or two of our men just to show that there was no hard feeling. Then Penn rubbed it into us good and hard—which wasn't the way it was written—and about half the college began writing letters to the *Crimson*.

To make matters look worse, Yale had the best team she had had in several years; in fact, since the Gordon Browne aggregation. And our chance of winning from her was about one in one hundred. But we were a daffy lot that fall, and every time fate smote us we grinned harder and hitched up the enthusiasm another peg. On the Thursday before the game we had our fourth mass meeting in the Union. The captain, very much embarrassed, assured us that every man on the team was ready to do his level best and lay down his life for the honor of the Crimson—a fact which we knew before, but which we applauded wildly. Then the trainer told us that every "mon on the tame" was in the best physical condition, something which we seriously doubted, but which we also applauded wildly. Then the head coach informed us that it was a great sight to see the college get together in this way and that if we stood loyally behind the team on Saturday the team would do its part and fight to the last breath—or ditch, I forget which. We applauded *that* more wildly. Then the captain of the Nine got up, brushed the perspiration from his marble brow, and started the singing. The University Band, eleven strong, got together after a fashion and we pretty near lifted the roof. After that we cheered and sung some more and the enthusiasm kept on bubbling up. Finally, a lot of us in the back of the room yelled in unison:

"We—want—another—meeting—to−morrow−night!"

"So−do−we!" yelled the others.

And we kept that up until the leader told us we could have it. And presently we stood up and sang "Fair Harvard"—or as much as we knew of it—and broke up.

In the morning the *Crimson* contained a notice which said that there would be no meeting that night. But we didn't believe it, because the meeting had been agreed upon. At least, a good many of us didn't. Some did, though, I guess, for at eight the room wasn't more than half full. We sat there and waited a while and did a little singing and cheering. But no one got on the platform to talk to us, and the band didn't show up. So about a quarter to nine we moseyed outside. But we were still full of enthusiasm, and we wanted to work it off. So we stood around, about eight hundred of us, and informed the world at large that we wanted the band. No one seemed to care. But, of course, every minute the crowd got bigger, just as it always will if you get out and yell something. After a bit we decided to do without the band, and so we formed in fours and marched over to the yard, singing and cheering like mad.

After we'd marched around twice we had depopulated the buildings. Fellows put their heads out of windows, had a look, yelled enthusiastically, turned the gas up high, and tumbled downstairs and into line. By a quarter past nine we had easily two thousand fellows in the procession. And when you get that many together something simply *has* to happen.

"What we need," said Bud, "is a band."

"But we can't get one," answered Withey.

"Then let's get part of a band."

"Where?"

"McTurkle," answered Bud, with a grin.

"A−a−aye!" we yelled. "McTurkle! We want McTurkle!"

So we left the gang yelling themselves hoarse in front of the university and scooted over to our dormitory. McTurkle was in. He was sitting at his table with a green drop light casting a wan glow over his classic features. The table was piled high with all sorts of books, and you could just hear McTurkle's wheels go round. When we walked in he slipped the glasses from his nose by wriggling his eyebrows and turned around and looked at us blinking.

McTurkle was a funny genius. He was forever grinding. When he wasn't grinding he was causing strange, painful sounds to emanate from his room. For a good while we had puzzled over those sounds. Then, finally, one fateful night, we had descended upon McTurkle in force and learned the truth. McTurkle performed on the French horn. A French horn is an instrument which is wound up in a knot like a morning−glory vine, and the notes have such a hard time getting out that they get all balled up and confused and are never the same afterwards. I'm not musical, and don't pretend to be, but I'll bet a hat that the man who invented the French horn was the same chap who invented French verbs. Well, we made McTurkle take a solemn oath never to practice after seven o'clock, because it was simply impossible to remember anything with those sounds sobbing along the entry. He was frightfully apologetic and promised at once.

When we went in Bud winked at us to leave the negotiations in his hands. We did so, drawing up in a semicircle behind him and looking very grave.

“McTurkle,” said Bud, “we have come to you on behalf of the university.”

McTurkle blinked harder than ever and looked a bit scared.

“Out there”—Bud waved his hand toward the window—“out there our college—your college—the college we all love awaits you.”

McTurkle gasped and tried to find his glasses, which were hanging over the back of his chair at the end of a black cord which he wore around his neck.

“McTurkle,” continued Bud, tensely, “as you know, we are on the eve of a great conflict. Tomorrow the pick of our athletic young manhood does battle with the brawny horde of Yale. Defeat looms ominous above—upon the horizon, but the unconquerable spirit of Harvard arises triumphant and—er—flaps its flaming pinions!”

“A−a−aye!” murmured Withey.

McTurkle found his glasses, fixed them on his lean nose, and regarded Bud with genuine alarm.

“Not for a moment do we acknowledge defeat, sir! Not until the pall of evening settles over the trampled field of battle shall we abandon hope. The university stands firm and undismayed behind her loyal warriors. Listen, McTurkey—McTurkle, I mean!”

Bud held up a hand imperiously and we all listened, McTurkle with his mouth wide open and his near−sighted eyes fixed in fascination upon the speaker's face. From outside came a long, impatient wail from two thousand throats:

“We−want−to−go−to−the−Stadium!”

“What of that, McTurkle!” demanded Bud, sternly. “The spirit of Harvard speaks! Her sons demand to be led to the scene of the conflict that with mighty voices they may—er—consecrate the field to victory!”

“But—but—what is it you wish me to do?” stammered the dazed McTurkle, visibly affected.

“To lead them!” thundered Bud.

“Lead them?” cried McTurkle. “Who? Me? Me—ah—lead?”

“Ah! You, McTurkle! You, with your French horn!”

“You—you want me to play it?”

“We do. The college calls for you. Your duty, McTurkle, your duty to that college, to your fellows, summons you. Listen, McTurkle, to the voice of Duty and Patriotism!”

Apparently McTurkle's manner of listening was to hold his mouth open. He held it open now, wide open. Also his eyes. At last he said:

“But—but—I'm afraid I don't know any of the—ah—the college airs.”

“What of that! It is your leadership we want; that and the inspiring strains of your dulcet horn. Play what you will, McTurkle, only play. Remember that the success of the team may depend upon you! That to−night it is our duty and pleasure to show the team that the whole college is behind them, eager and loyal in its support!”

Never before in three years of college life had any one ever wanted McTurkle to do anything. And now the knowledge that the whole university demanded his aid, his leadership, was too much for McTurkle. His face glowed; he leaped to his feet; a Greek lexicon crashed to the floor; McTurkle was transformed.

“I'll go!” he said, with majestic simplicity.

We cheered.

McTurkle feverishly wrested his French horn from its green bag, settled his glasses upon his aquiline nose, turned up the collar of his plaid lounging coat, and strode to the door.

We followed in triumph.

Over in front of the university they had cheered every one and everything, and now they were forming again into line of march.

“On to Soldier's Field!” they cried.

We hurried across to the head of the procession, McTurkle's long legs making us work hard to keep up with him. Arrived, Bud waved an arm for silence.

“Fellows!” he shouted. “Fellows!”

And when silence had fallen about us he swept his hand dramatically toward McTurkle.

“Gentlemen,” he cried, “the band!”

“A−a−a−aye!” they cheered. “Band! band!”

“Where's the band?” called those further down the line, and the news traveled fast until from far down by Thayer came wild paeans of delight.

“Where'd they get it? ... Where is it? ... We want 'On Soldier's Field'! ... We want 'Veritas'! ... Strike up! Move on, there! ... 'Ray for the band! ... A−a−a−aye! Band! band!”

Up at the head of the line we were all laughing and shouting for fair. McTurkle, beaming delightedly through his glasses, his head held back inspiritingly and the folds of his plaid jacket waving in the November wind, placed the French horn to his lips, took a mighty breath and—the procession moved forward to the strains of “Annie Laurie!”

Now, I've heard since then that the French horn has a compass of only four octaves and is principally useful as an orchestral adjunct; that, in short, its ability is limited and its use as a solo instrument slight. All I can say is that the person who said that doesn't know a French horn; anyway, he doesn't know McTurkle's French horn. Four octaves be blowed! McTurkle went fourteen, or I'll eat my hat! Why, the way he put that thing through its paces was a caution! And as for—er—variations and such!—well, you ought to have heard him, that's all I've got to say!

Out into the avenue we turned, through the Square and down Boylston Street. The line was so long that the cars were held up for ten minutes, and Bud was for circling back and holding them up ten minutes more. And all the while McTurkle, thin, gaunt, but impressive, marched at the head and informed us startlingly and with convincing emphasis that for Bonnie Annie Laurie he'd lay him down and dee. And we took up the refrain, and hurled it back to the gray November sky. Further along they were singing, “Hard luck for poor old Eli,” and still further down the line they were informing the dark front of the post office that the sun would set in Crimson as the sun had set before. And way, way back they were cheering like Sam Hill.

Oh, that was a glorious night! Talk about enthusiasm! We had it and to burn. We exuded it at every step. Enthusiasm was a drug on the market. Down by the river McTurkle gave Annie Laurie her final death blow and started in on the overture to “Martha.” That carried us as far as the Locker Building, and we marched on to Soldiers' Field to the inspiriting strains of a selection from “Traviata.” McTurkle told me what they were afterwards; that's how I know. Around the gridiron we marched once, the band still clinging to “Traviata” and the fellows singing whatever pleased them, generally “Up the Street.” Then we had a snake dance, a wonder of a snake dance! The band got lost in the shuffle, but later on we found him standing serene and undismayed under the shadow of the west stand spouting “Auld Lang Syne” till you couldn't see.

Then Bud climbed up on to the edge of the Stadium and we did some more cheering, and when he called for “a regular cheer for the band" the way we hit it up was a caution.

Back in the Square, Bud led us over in front of the “Coop,” mainly, I guess, so we would stop the cars for a while. We had some more cheering then, and then Bud leaped up on the steps and announced “Speech by McTurkle!”

Nobody except a few of us knew who McTurkle was, but everyone cheered gloriously. We conducted McTurkle gently but firmly up the steps, and when the crowd got a good look at him they simply went crazy. McTurkle was deeply affected. So was the crowd.

“Speech! speech!” they yelled. “Spe−e−eech!” McTurkle, embarrassed but courageous, his voice faint and tremulous with emotion, spoke.

“Gentlemen,” he began.

“Apologize! ... Take it back! ... Who is he? ... It's the band! ... 'Ray for the band! ... Go on! Say it!”

“Fellows,” prompted Bud.

"Fellows," repeated McTurkle.

Deafening applause.

"I wish to thank you for this—ah—this flattering evidence of—shall I say esteem?"

"Don't say it if it hurts you, old man," some one advised.

"What's he talking about?" asked another.

"I appreciate the honor you have done me," continued McTurkle, warming to his work. "And it has been a pleasure, a great pleasure, as well as a privilege, to lead you this evening in your interesting—ah—exercises."

"A−a−a−aye!" yelled the audience.

"There is to be, I understand," said McTurkle, "a game to−morrow, a contest between this college and—ah—Yale."

Laughter and deafening applause.

"While lack of opportunity has kept me from a personal participation in your games and sports, yet I am heartily in sympathy with them. Physical exercise is, I am convinced, of great benefit. In conclusion let me say that I trust that in tomorrow's game of baseball—"

"Football, you blamed fool!" whispered Bud, hoarsely.

"Ah—I should say football—the mantle of victory will fall upon the shoulders of our—ah—representatives. I thank you."

McTurkle bowed with gentle dignity.

"What's his name?" cried a chap below.

"McTurkle," answered Bud.

"Wha−a−at?"

"McTurkle!"

"Cheer for McTurkey!" demanded the questioner.

"A−a−aye!" cried the throng.

Bud leaped to the top step.

"Regular cheer, fellows, for McTurkle!" he cried. And it came.

"Har−*vard!* Har−*vard!* Har−*vard!* Rah, rah, rah! Rah, rah, rah! Rah, rah, rah! The Turkey! The Turkey! The Turkey!"

Then we went home.

I suppose this isn't much of a story, especially as there is no climax; and I've taken enough English to know that there ought to be some sort of a climax somewhere. Maybe, though, what happened next day will serve for one.

I got halfway over to the field and found I had forgotten my ticket, and had to go back to the room for it. McTurkle's door was ajar and through it came those awful sounds. I kicked it open and stuck my head in.

"Hello," I said. "Do you know what time it is? You'll be late."

McTurkle took the French horn from his face and wiped the mouthpiece gently with a silk handkerchief.

"Late?" he asked.

"Yes, for the game. You're going, of course, McTurkle?"

He shook his head, beaming affably through his glasses.

"No, no, I'm not going to attend the—ah—game." He waved a hand toward the book−covered table. "I shall be quite busy this afternoon, quite busy. But you have my—my best wishes. May the—ah—the mantle of victory fall upon the shoulders—"

Well, we got licked that day. But, say, honest now, it wasn't McTurkle's fault, was it?

THE TRIUMPH OF “CURLY”

“Curly” sat with head in hands, elbows on desk, and eyes fixed unseeingly on the half−opened door. The afternoon sunlight made golden shafts across the rows of empty seats. The windows were open, and with the sunlight came the songs of birds, the incessant hum of insects, and occasionally a quick, rattling cheer.

On the playground, under the bluest of blue skies, with a fresh, clover−perfumed breeze fanning their dripping brows, the boys of Willard's School were playing the third and deciding game of baseball with the nine of Durham Academy. But Curly neither heard the cheering nor had thought for the contest.

Curly's real name was Isaac Newton Stone. He had taken the “A.M.” degree the preceding June at a Western university, and had entered his name in the long list of those wishing to be teachers.

As the summer had advanced his hope had waned. September found him without a position. During the fall and early winter he waited with what philosophy he could summon, and had studied doggedly, having in view the attainment of a Ph. D.

Then, in February, an unforeseen vacancy at Willard's School had given him his place as instructor in Greek and German.

It is a matter of principle at Willard's to haze new teachers. No exception was made in the case of Isaac Newton Stone, A. M.

He was twenty−three years old, but looked several years younger. He was small, slight and wiry, with pale blue eyes, a tip−tilted nose and a fresh pink−and−white complexion. His hair was of an indeterminate shade between brown and sand−color, and it curled closely over his head like a baby's. Three days after his advent at Willard's he had become universally known as Curly.

Former teachers at Willard's, with experience to guide them, had tolerated the hazing process, if not with enjoyment, at least with apparent good humor. But Curly, a novice, thought he saw his authority endangered, his dignity assailed. The ringleaders in the affair, five in number, were placed upon probation in exactly two seconds.

The class gasped. Such a thing had never happened before. The hazing died a violent death, and Curly sprang into sudden fame as a tyrant.

The role of iron−heeled despot was least of all suited to Curly or desired by him, but having momentarily adopted it, he had to continue it. He dared not take the frown from his face for a moment; intimidation was his only course.

Meanwhile the faculty viewed events with dissatisfaction. Once or twice Curly's punishments were not upheld. In May he was informed that unless he could maintain discipline without such severity the faculty would be forced to the painful necessity of asking his resignation. His election, the principal explained kindly, had been in the nature of an experiment, and unsuccessful experiments must of course be terminated.

The experiment was unsuccessful. It was June now, and class day was but two weeks distant. This morning there had been trouble in the German class, and as a result, two students had been placed on probation. The fact that one of them, Rogers, was the best pitcher in school, and that the loss of his services would in all likelihood mean the defeat of Willard's nine in this decisive game was most unfortunate. To be sure, Rogers had merited his punishment, but the school failed to consider that, and indignation ran high.

Curly himself, seated in the silent class room, acknowledged failure at last. He looked at his watch. It was quarter past three. With a sigh he drew paper toward him, dipped pen in ink and began to write.

The letter was brief, yet it took him nearly ten minutes. When at last it was finished, lacking only the signature, he read it over. He had made no attempt at explanation or extenuation, but had thanked the faculty for their kindness and patience, regretted their disappointment, and begged them to accept his resignation. He subscribed himself “Respectfully yours, Isaac Newton Stone,” sealed the letter and addressed it to the principal.

This done, he gathered his books, took up his hat and stepped from the platform. Footsteps sounded in the echoing corridor, and a flushed, perspiring face peered into the room. Then a boy of sixteen hurried up the aisle.

“Mr. Stone, sir,” he cried, “will you help us? It's the beginning of the sixth inning, and the score's eight to six in our favor. They've knocked Willings out of the box, sir, and we haven't anyone else. Apthorpe's cousin says you can pitch, and—and we want to know if you won't play for us, sir?” He ended with a gasp for breath.

“But—I don't quite understand!”

“Why, sir, we held 'em down until the fifth, and then they made six runs. Maybe they've scored some more. If you could only come right away!”

“But who said I could pitch, Turner?”

“Tom Apthorpe's cousin, sir; he's down for Sunday.”

“But how did he know?”

“Why, sir, he knew you at college, and—”

“What's his name?”

“Harris, sir. He said—”

“Jack Harris!” The instructor's eyes lighted. He tossed the books on the desk. “Run back and tell them I'll come as soon as I leave this note at Dr. Willard's.”

There came a cheer from the playground. It was not a Willard cheer.

Turner listened dismayed. “Couldn't you come now, sir?” he begged. “It may be too late. They're batting like anything. Couldn't you leave the note afterwards, sir!”

“Well, may be I could,” said Curly. He dropped it into his pocket, put on his hat and strode down the aisle. “Come on, Turner!” he cried.

Along the terrace of the playground, under the elms, were gathered the spectators—the boys of both schools and their friends. At the foot of the terrace, just back of first base, a striped awning warded off the sunlight from a little group of professors and their families. On the field the blue−stockinged players of Willard's were scattered about, and on a bench behind third base a row of boys wearing the red of Durham Academy awaited their turns at bat. This much Curly saw as he crossed the terrace.

Then a tall, broad−shouldered man came toward him with a pleasant smile and outstretched hand. Curly recognized Harris, and sprang down the steps to meet him. At college they had been hardly more than acquaintances, yet to−day they met almost like fast friends.

“I never thought to find you in this part of the world, Stone,” said Harris. “I'm awfully glad to see you again. You're badly needed. Tom Apthorpe, my cousin, was bewailing the fact that he hadn't anyone to pitch. I saw that Durham was playing her professor of mathematics on first base, and asked him if there wasn't anyone in the faculty who could take Willings's place. Willings is used up, as you can see. Tom said there was no one unless ”—Harris paused and grinned—“unless it was Curly. He didn't know whether you could play or not. Inquiries elicited the astounding fact that 'Curly' was none other than Newt Stone, pitcher and star batsman on our old class nine. I told him to hurry up and get you out. And so, for goodness' sake, Stone, get into the box and strike out some of those boys from Durham! The score's eight to eight now, and if they get that man on second in they'll have a good grip on the game and championship.”

“I'm afraid I'm all out of practice,” objected Curly. “I haven't handled a ball for two years, but I'll do what I can. I wish you'd come round to my room afterwards and have a talk, if you've nothing better to do.”

Time had been called, and Apthorpe, who was both captain and catcher, ran across to them.

“It's good of you, Mr. Stone,” he said, wiping the perspiration from his face. “I don't think we fellows have much right to ask you to help us out, but if you'll do it for the school, sir, everyone will be mighty glad.”

“For the school!” Curly wondered rather bitterly what the school had done for him that he should come to her rescue. But he only answered gravely:

“I'll do what I can, Apthorpe.”

He threw aside his coat and waistcoat and tightened his belt. Then he walked across the diamond and picked the ball from the ground.

On the terrace bank a boy armed with a blue and white flag jumped to his feet, and amidst a ripple of clapping from the audience above, called for “three times three for Curl—for Mr. Stone!” There was a burst of laughter, but the cheer that followed was hearty.

The batsman stepped out of the box and Curly delivered half a dozen balls to Apthorpe to get his hand in. Then the two met and agreed on a few simple signals, the umpire called, “Play!” and the game went on again.

It was the first half of the sixth inning; the score was eight to eight; there was one man out, a runner on second, and Durham's left fielder at bat.

Curly looked over the field, glanced carelessly at the runner, turned, and sent a swift, straight ball over the

plate. Durham's players were eager for just that sort, and the batsman made a long, clean hit into the outfield between first and second.

When the new pitcher got the ball again the man on second had gone to third, and Durham's left fielder was jumping about on first.

Durham's next man up was her catcher. Curly strove to wipe out the intervening two years and to imagine himself back at college, pitching for his class in the final championship game. But alas! his arm was stiff and muscle−bound, and creaked in the socket every time he threw.

There was a wild pitch that was just saved from being a passed ball by a brilliant stop of Apthorpe's; then the batsman hit an infield fly and was caught out.

“Two gone, fellows!” shouted the captain.

The runner on first took second unmolested, and the Durham coaches yelled themselves hoarse. But Curly was not to be rattled in that way; and besides, the stiffness was wearing out of his arm. He set his lips together and pitched the ball.

“Strike!” cried the umpire. Willard's cheered vociferously. Then came a ball. Then another strike. Then the batter swung with all his might at a slow, curving ball—and missed it.

“Striker's out!” called the umpire.

Willard's rose as one man and cheered to the echo. In the tent the principal and his associates forgot their dignity for an instant, and added their shouts to the general acclaim. The new pitcher, his eyes sparkling, retired to the bench.

The fielders, as they joined him, shot curious and admiring glances toward him. Harris leaned over the bench and talked with him about the incidents of old college games. And the boys near by listened, while the curly−haired instructor grew before their eyes into an athletic hero.

The last of the sixth inning ended without a score. Pretty as it was to watch, the first of the seventh would make tame history. Not a Durham player reached first base. One—two—three was the way they struck out.

Curly's arm worked now like a well−lubricated piece of machinery, and the outshoots and incurves and drops which he sent with varying speed into Apthorpe's hands puzzled the enemy to distraction.

Nor was the second half of the inning much more exciting. To be sure, Apthorpe put a fly where the Durham right fielder could not reach it, and so got to first base, and Riding advanced him by a neat sacrifice; but he had no chance to score.

Durham's best hitter was Mansfield, the instructor, who played first base. Just when or how the peculiar custom of recruiting baseball and football players from the faculty originated at Willard's and Durham is not known; but it was a privilege that each enjoyed and made use of whenever possible.

This year, for almost the first time, Willard's team had been, until to−day, composed entirely of students. On the other hand, Mansfield had been playing with Durham all spring, and to his excellent fielding and hitting was largely due the fact that she had won the second of the three games.

He was a player of much experience, and in the eighth inning, when he came to bat, he made a three−base hit. The little knot of Durhamites shrieked joyfully and waved their cherry−and−white banners.

Curly faced the next batsman, tried him with a “drop,” at which he promptly struck and failed to hit, and then gave his attention to Mansfield on third. Curly watched him out of the corner of his eye and pitched again. The umpire called another strike.

Apthorpe threw back the ball to the pitcher; Curly dropped it, recovered it, and threw swiftly to third base.

Large bodies move slowly. Mansfield was caught a yard from the base. He retired in chagrin, while Willard's cheered ecstatically. Then the batsman struck out on a slow drop ball.

The third man made a leisurely hit and was thrown out at first.

During the next half inning Curly held his court on the players' bench. Little by little timidity wore away, and the boys gave voice to their enthusiasm. They wished they had known he was such a ball player early in the spring. Next year he would play on the team, would he not?

Curly remembered the letter in his pocket and sighed.

Again Willard's failed to get a man over the plate, although at one time there was a player on third. The ninth inning began with the score still eight to eight. The spectators suggested ten innings, and fell to recalling former long−drawn contests.

Curly had found his pace, as Harris put it. His white shirt was stained with the dust of battle; his shoes were gray and scuffed; his curly locks were damp and clung to his forehead; but his blue eyes were bright, and as he poised the ball in air, balancing himself before the throw, he no longer looked ridiculous.

Harris, observing him from the bench, rendered ungrudging admiration.

“Good old 'Newt' Stone!” he muttered. “It's the little chaps, after all, who have the pluck!”

But pluck alone would not have succeeded in shutting Durham out in that inning. Science was necessary, and science Curly had. He had not forgotten the old knack of “sizing up” the batsman. He found, in fact, that he had forgotten nothing.

Durham made the supreme effort of the contest in that first half of the ninth inning. It might be the last chance to score. The first man struck out as ingloriously as his predecessors; but the second batsman, after knocking innumerable fouls, made a slow bunt and reached his base.

At that Durham's supporters found encouragement, and her cheers rose once more. Then fate threw a sop to the wearers of the cherry and white.

The third man up was struck on the elbow with the ball, and trotted gleefully to first, the player ahead going to second. But Curly caught the runner on first napping, and the next batsman struck out. The blue−stockinged players came in from the field.

“Stone at bat!” called the scorer. “Brown on deck!”

“A run would do it, sir,” said Apthorpe, eagerly.

“One of those old−fashioned home runs, Newt,” laughed Harris.

Curly walked to the plate, and stood there, swinging the bat back of his shoulder in a way that suggested discretion to the wearied Durham pitcher.

From the bank came encouraging cheers for “Mr. Stone.” He made no offer at the first ball, which was out of reach. Then came a strike.

The spectators fidgeted in their seats; the field was almost quiet. Then bat and ball met with a sharp crack, and Curly sped toward first.

Across that base he sped, swung in a quick curve, and made for second. The center fielder had picked up the ball and was about to throw it in.

It was a narrow chance, but when Curly scrambled to his feet after his slide, the umpire dropped his hand. Curly was safe. From the bank and along the base line came loud cheers for Willard's.

But the following batsman struck out miserably. The next attempted a sacrifice, and not only went out himself, but failed to advance the runner.

Then Curly, seeing no help forthcoming, advanced himself, starting like a shot with the pitcher's arm and rising safe from a cloud of dust at third.

Apthorpe went to bat, weary but determined. Curly, on third, shot back and forth like a shuttle with every motion of the pitcher's arm. With two balls in his favor, Apthorpe thought he saw his chance, and struck swiftly at an outshoot.

The result—he swung through empty air—appeared to unnerve him. He struck again at the next ball, and again missed.

But he found the next ball, and drove it swift and straight at the pitcher.

Curly was ten feet from the base when ball met bat. He stopped, poised to go on or to scuttle back, and saw the pitcher attempt the catch, drop the ball as if it were a red−hot cinder, and stoop for it.

Then Curly settled his chin on his breast, worked his arms like pistons and his legs like driving shafts, and flew along the line.

Beside him scuttled a coach, shouting shrill, useless words. All about him were cries, commands, entreaties, confused, meaningless. Ten feet from the plate he launched himself through space, with arms outstretched. The dust was in his eyes and nostrils.

He felt a corner of the plate. At the same instant he heard the thud of the ball against the catcher's glove overhead, the swish of the down−swinging arm, and——

“Safe at the plate!” cried the umpire.

At second Apthorpe was sitting on the bag, joyfully kicking his heels into the earth. On the bench the scorer made big, trembling dots on the page. Everywhere pandemonium reigned. The home nine had won game and

championship.

Curly jumped to his feet, dusted his bedraggled clothes, and walked into the arms of Harris.

“The best steal you ever made!” cried Harris, thumping him on the back. As he went to the bench he heard an excited and perspiring youth exclaim proudly, “I have him in Greek, you know!”

Two minutes later the cherry−colored banners of Durham departed, flaunting bravely in the face of defeat.

Willard's danced across the terrace, shouting and singing. In their possession was a soiled and battered ball, which on the morrow would be inscribed with the figures “9 to 8,” and proudly suspended behind a glass case in the trophy room.

Curly and Harris sat together in the former's study. Supper was over. Curly held a sealed and addressed letter in his hands, which he turned over and over undecidedly.

“Then—if you were in my place—under the circumstances—you—you wouldn't hand this in?” he asked.

“Let me have it, please,” said Harris, with decision. He tore the letter across, and tossed the pieces into the waste basket.

“That's the only thing to do with that,” he said. And in the successful two years of teaching since then Curly has come to feel that Harris was quite right.

PATSY

He made his first appearance one afternoon a week or so before the Fall Handicap Meeting. Mosher, Fosgill, Alien, Ronimus, and several more of us were down at the end of the field putting the shot. Fosgill, who was scratch man that year, had just done an even forty feet and the shot had trickled away toward the cinder path. Whereupon a small bit of humanity appeared from somewhere, picked up the sixteen pounds of lead with much difficulty, and staggered back to the circle with it.

"Hello, kid," said Fosgill; "that's pretty heavy for you, isn't it?"

"Naw," was the superb reply; "that ain't nothin'!"

We laughed, and the youngster grinned around at us in a companionable way that won us on the spot.

"What's your name?" asked Ronimus.

"Patsy."

"Patsy what?"

"Burns."

"How old are you?"

"'Leven."

"You're a Frenchman, aren't yon?"

"Naw."

"You're not?" Ronimus pretended intense surprise.

"He's a Dutchman, aren't you, Patsy?" said Mosher.

"Naw."

"What are you then?"

"Mucker," answered Patsy with a grin.

For the rest of that day and for many days afterwards Patsy honored us with his presence. After each put he ambled forth, lifted the metal ball from the ground with two dirty little hands, snuggled it against the front of his dirty little shirt, and labored back with it. At the end of the week Patsy had become official helper.

He was a diminutive wisp of humanity, a starved, slender elf with a freckled face, wizened and peaked, which at times looked a thousand years old. It reminded you of the face of one of those preternaturally aged monkeys that sit motionless in a dark corner of the cage, oppressed with the sins and sorrows of a hundred centuries. And yet it mustn't be supposed that Patsy was either a pessimist or a misanthrope. Patsy's gray Irish eye could sparkle merrily and his thin little Irish mouth usually wore a whimsical smile. It was as though he realized that life was but a hollow mockery and yet had bravely resolved to pretend otherwise, that we, young and innocent, might still preserve our cherished illusions.

We made a good deal of Patsy. We pretended that he was very, very old and sophisticated—not a difficult task—and deferred to his judgment on all occasions. But in spite of this Patsy never became "fresh." To be sure, he speedily began calling Fosgill "Bull," but I don't think he meant the slightest disrespect; everyone called the big fellow "Bull," and it is quite possible that Patsy believed it to be a title of honor. He was attentive to all of us, but his heart was Fosgill's. He used to wait outside the Locker Building until we came out after dressing and then walk beside Fosgill until he reached the Square. Then Patsy would say:

"Good night, Bull."

And Fosgill would answer gravely:

"Good night, Patsy."

And Patsy would disappear.

But the evening of the Handicaps we took him back to the boarding house with us, and he sat beside Fosgill and ate ravenously of everything placed before him. We learned Patsy's life story that evening. He went to school—generally. He lived with Brian. Brian was his brother, eighteen years old, and a man of business; Brian drove for Connors, the teamster. Patsy wasn't sure that he had ever had a mother, but he was absolutely certain about his father. He still had vivid recollections of the night they broke down the door and put the handcuffs on father after father had laid out the lieutenant with a chair. Patsy didn't know just what father had done, but he had

an idea it was something regarding the disappearance of numerous suits of clothes from a tailor's shop. Patsy was going into business himself just as soon as they let him stop school; he was going to sell papers. He had tried several times to wean himself from education, but each time they haled him back to the schoolhouse. Patsy thought the thing was terribly wrong.

When the snow covered the field we saw Patsy only occasionally. In the spring we got to work early. We believed we had a good show to win the Dual that year and a fighting chance at the Intercollegiate. We were strong on the sprints and distances, fair at the jumps and hurdles, and rather weak at the weights. We had a good man in Fosgill at the shot put, but that's about all. Along in May we had it doped out that if we could get first in the shot put we could win out by a point or two. But there wasn't anything certain about it, for our opponent was strong on second, near−"second," and third−place men.

Patsy appeared with the first warm day, looking thinner and littler and older than ever. That first day the assistant manager was holding the tape for us, and it occurred to him to pick up the shot and toss it back. But he did it only once. The next time Patsy was astraddle of that sixteen−pound lump and was looking the assistant manager sternly in the eye.

"I'm doin' this," said Patsy.

After that he did it and no one disputed his right. When the gates were closed and fellows had to show their H. A. A. tickets to get in, Patsy was admitted without question. When all the other youngsters for miles around were gluing their faces to the iron fence watching the baseball games, Patsy's allegiance never faltered. He was somewhere around Fosgill, regarding that hero with worshiping gaze. It was in May, I think, that Patsy made his Great Resolution. He confided it to us on the steps of the Locker Building when we were waiting for one of the crowd.

"I've decided not to go into business," said Patsy.

"What are you going to do?" asked Billy Allen.

"I'm going to college," replied Patsy easily. "I'm goin' to be a shot putter."

"Good for you, kid!" said Billy. "What college you going to?"

Billy winked at us and we watched eagerly while Patsy's countenance took on its expression of lofty contempt.

"Huh!" said Patsy. That was all, but that eloquent monosyllable consigned all other colleges than ours to the nethermost regions.

"But you'll have to go to school a long time, Patsy," said I, "if you expect to get into college."

"Yep, I know. It's tough, but I guess I can do it. Was—was it hard for you?"

I was forced to acknowledge that it had been.

"An' you ain't much of a shot putter, either," said Patsy reflectively.

Fosgill had done forty−two, eight and a half that afternoon and we were feeling pretty hopeful and good−natured after dinner. Some, one mentioned Patsy, and Mosher spoke up:

"Say, fellows, let's see that that little cuss does get into college. What do you say?"

"I'll go you!" cried Fosgill. "He's an all−right kid, is Patsy, and he deserves something better than spending his life on the streets. We'll adopt him."

"Sure thing," said Allen. "But we'll have our hands full. And what's to happen when we leave college?"

"We'll get some one to look after him We'll have a talk with Brother Brian about it. But, say, Bull, imagine Patsy putting the shot!"

We laughed at that—which we wouldn't have done if Patsy had been there.

"Well, I guess he won't make much of a show at athletics," said I, "but if we keep him off the streets we'll be doing a whole lot. And I like Patsy."

We all did. And before we left the table that night we had the thing mapped out. Patsy was to be cared for and looked after. He was to finish grammar school, go to Latin school, and then to Harvard. And there were to be funds where they'd do good. Yes, we had it all fixed up for Patsy and we'd have done it just as planned if Patsy hadn't gone and spoiled it all. And it happened like this:

When the Dual Meet came along in June we were all to the good. We couldn't see how we were to lose first in anything except the quarter, the high hurdles, the hammer throw and the broad jump. And we had enough seconds and thirds in sight to make good. If Bull Fosgill could beat Tanner with the shot we were it.

That's the way we had the situation sized up, but of course things don't happen just as expected; they seldom do in athletics. Some of the firsts we had claimed went glimmering and we took in seconds and thirds where we hadn't expected them. But the final result was just about what we had figured it, and along toward five o'clock the meet depended on the outcome of one event, and that event was the shot put. To be sure, they were still fussing with the pole vault, but we were certain of first and third places and so could discount that.

By some freak of fortune I had managed to qualify with a put of thirty−eight, one and a half. There were four of us in the finals, Fosgill, Tanner and Burt of the enemy, and I. Of course Patsy was there, and he worked like a Trojan. You could see, though, that it went against the grain with him to fetch for our opponents; Patsy had a good deal of the primeval left in him. And it's safe to say that no one there was more interested. I don't think he doubted for a moment that Fosgill would win, and I fancy he thought me pretty cheeky for aspiring so far as the final round.

Fosgill was ahead with forty−one, ten and a half, Tanner had done three inches under that, and Burt and I were fighting along for third place, doing around thirty−eight, six. It was pretty close work, and even the officials were excited. We had finished one round when the accident occurred.

Tanner was in the circle. Fosgill was down near the end of the tape and Patsy was close behind him. Tanner hopped across the circle, overstepped—fouling the put—and sent the shot away at a tangent. Fosgill had turned his head to speak to the measurer and never saw his danger. Tanner let out a shout of warning, and others echoed it. But it was Patsy who acted. He threw himself like a little catapult at Fosgill and sent him staggering across the turf. Then Patsy and the shot went down together.

It was all beastly sudden and nasty. When we bent over that poor little kid he was sort of greenish−white and I'll never forget the way his freckles stood out. The shot had struck him on the breast and Patsy's weak little bones had just crushed in. Well, we did all we could; put him in a carriage at the gate and rushed him to the hospital. He was still breathing, but the doctor said he never knew anything after the shot struck him—not until evening. Well, we were all frightfully cut up, and Tanner sat down on the ground and nearly fainted. Fosgill kept saying “Poor little Patsy! Poor little kid!” half aloud and walking around in circles. He wanted to go to the hospital with him, but we told him he could do no good, and we each still had two puts.

After a while we got our nerve back after a fashion, and went on, but, thunder! not one of us was worth a hang. I did thirty−six and thirty−seven, eleven, and won third place at that. Neither Fosgill nor Tanner equaled his first records and the event went to Bull at the ridiculous figures of forty−one, ten and a half. We got the meet by four and a half points. It was almost six o'clock by that time, and Fosgill and I and three others piled into Alien's auto and raced up to the hospital.

They had just taken Patsy off the operating table and put him to bed. The doctor told us that the examination showed that there was nothing to be done; the heart had been injured and was liable to stop work any moment. Fosgill got the doctor to promise to call him up on the 'phone if Patsy showed any signs of consciousness. And he left orders that everything possible was to be done. Tanner had begged us to look after the kid and let him pay everything, but though we promised, we hadn't any idea of doing it; Patsy was our kid. We went back to training table, but we were a low−spirited lot. And just when we were finishing dinner the call came from the hospital.

We made a record trip in Billy's machine and when we tiptoed into the accident ward the nurse smiled at us. And so did Patsy. He was a pathetic−looking little wisp as he lay there with the bedclothes lifted away from his body, but he smiled and moved his head a bit on the pillow. Fosgill sat down at the head of the cot and leaned over, his mouth all atremble.

“Hello, Bull!” whispered Patsy.

“Hello, Patsy!” answered Fosgill, trying to smile.

“Did you—beat him?”

“Yes, Patsy.”

“I knew—you would. I told—him so.” He glanced at me: “Did you—beat—that—other chap?”

I nodded and Patsy looked at me with a new respect.

“Good—for you,” he whispered.

“Are you—does it hurt much, Patsy?” asked Fosgill.

“No, not much.”

“That's good. We'll have you out before long.”

Patsy grinned.

“Shut up!” he whispered. “You can't—fool me, Bull. I'm—a goner.”

Fosgill muttered something and Patsy's eyes brightened.

“Bull,” he whispered, “do you—think I—had a mother—like—other kids?”

“I know you did, Patsy.”

“That's good,” sighed the kid happily. “I guess—may be—I'll see her—where—I'm goin'.”

“You saved my life, Patsy,” muttered Fosgill, “and there isn't a thing I can do for you. I wish—oh, it's a shame, kid!”

“Huh! I'm glad—Bull. I'd—'a' done most anything—for you, Bull. You've been good—to me; so's the—others.” He closed his eyes wearily for a moment. Then, “Do you think,” he asked slowly, “I could—have learned—to put—the shot, Bull—some day?”

“Yes,” answered Fosgill sturdily. “You had the making of a great shot putter, Patsy. You'd have made a record for yourself, I'll bet!”

“Are you—kiddin'—me, Bull?”

“No, Patsy. I'll leave it to the others. Isn't it so, fellows?”

We nodded vehemently, and Patsy closed his eyes with a smile of ineffable content on his little face. Presently the eyes flickered open again.

“Anyhow,” he said quite strongly and with an approach to his old air of self−importance, “anyhow—I guess I won—for Harvard—to−day. Huh?”

“Yes, you did, Patsy,” answered Fosgill. “We've got you to thank for it, dear little kid.”

Patsy smiled. Then:

“Good−by—Bull,” he said very softly. His eyes half closed.

We waited in silence while the moments crept by, but Patsy didn't speak again.

HIS FIRST ASSIGNMENT

Tom Collins read again the inscription on the directory at the foot of the stairs:

Room 36 *City Editor and Reporters*

glanced again toward the elevator, again drew his letter of introduction from his pocket, and—again retreated to the doorway. Once more his heart had failed him.

The result of the impending interview with the city editor of the Washington Evening World meant so much to him that he feared to meet it. Another failure and—what? Surely not starvation. To a youth of nineteen, normally healthy and hopeful, the idea of starvation in a great city, surrounded by thousands of human beings, seems preposterous. And yet when the few coins yet remaining in his pocket were gone he would be absolutely at the end of his resources; unless—unless fortune favored him in the next few minutes. He had tried every newspaper office in the city with disheartening results; every office save this one. He reread, perhaps for the twentieth time, the letter he held, then placed it back in its envelope with a sigh. The words sounded so empty and perfunctory, the *World* was such a big paper, his own ignorance was so great, and—and he was discouraged. However—

He thrust the letter back into his pocket, jammed his cap resolutely onto his head, and strode determinedly to the elevator.

“City editor,” he announced gruffly.

Room 36 seemed acres big to Tom as he closed the door behind him. Some dozen men and youths occupied the apartments and to the nearest of these Tom applied. He was not much over Tom's age and was busily engaged in cutting a newspaper into shreds with a pair of extraordinarily large shears. When interrupted he looked up carelessly but good naturedly and pointed to a far corner of the room.

“That's the city ed; the fellow with the glasses.”

Tom thanked him and went on.

The man with the glasses took no notice of his approach but continued his writing, puffing the while on a very black briar pipe. He was apparently about thirty−five years of age, had a fierce and bristling mustache, and rushed his pencil vindictively across the copy paper as though he were writing the death sentence of his worst enemy.

“Well?”

Tom started. The voice was as savage as the man's appearance, and Tom's heart sank within him.

“What do you want?” The editor's forehead was a mass of wrinkles and his eyes glared threateningly from behind his glasses. Tom found his voice and laid the letter on the desk.

“Humph,” said the editor. He read the short message and tossed it aside. “Ever done newspaper work?” he asked.

“No, sir,” Tom replied.

“Then what do you want to begin for?”

“To make a living.”

“Oh,” sneered the editor, “thought perhaps you wanted to elevate the press. You're a college graduate, of course?”

“I went to college for a year and a half, sir; I had to leave then.”

The editor's face brightened.

“Did they throw you out?”

“No, I—I had no money left; my father died very suddenly, and—and so I had to leave.”

“Too bad; if you'd been fired there might have been some hope for you.” Tom tried to detect a smile somewhere on the frowning face; there was none. “So you think you can do newspaper reporting, do you?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Of course you do! I never found a college boy yet that wasn't plumb sure he could start right in on fifteen minutes' notice and beat Horace Greeley or old man Dana. It's so easy!”

“I don't think that,” answered Tom, “but I think I could do reporting— after a day or two. I'm ignorant as to the exact duties of a reporter, but I can learn, and I can write English.”

"But can you find out what other reporters can't? Can you interview the last new senator in town and make him tell you what he wouldn't have printed for a year's salary? Can you do that?" Tom hesitated; but he was gaining courage, and the other's gibes were slowly arousing his resentment.

"If those things can be done by other fellows, I can do them."

"Well, you've got confidence," acknowledged the editor, grudgingly. "But we don't break new men in here on the *World*; we wait until they have learned somewhere else, then we offer them a better salary; those are our methods. You go to work on the *Despatch* or the *Star*, or somewhere, and when you prove that you can do as good work as three or four men on our staff you'll hear from us."

The city editor went back to his pencil. Plainly the interview was at an end. Tom turned away. "Good day, sir," he muttered. There was a lump in his throat and his hand, seeking refuge in his pocket, closed on the half dozen coins. He turned suddenly and faced the city editor again.

"Look here," he said doggedly, "I've got a right to better treatment than you have given me. I handed you a letter of introduction that ought to have a little weight, and—and even if it hasn't, it entitles me to common courtesy from you. I'm not a beggar asking for alms. All I want is a chance to show that I can do your work decently. I don't even ask any pay, I—I—"

Tom's words died away. After all, what was the use? He had his answer and there could be no benefit gained from prolonging the interview. But the city editor was looking at him curiously now.

"Here, hold on there," he commanded, and when Tom again faced him: "If you'd brought me a letter from Queen Victoria or the Angel Gabriel you'd have gotten the same treatment. I talk to an average of ten men like you every day of my life; young chaps who don't know what a newspaper's run for; who don't care, either. They think reporting or editing is a nice easy way to make a living, and so they come here expecting to fall into a position. They don't get it. But when a fellow shows sense I give him a chance. And I'll give you one. Hold on," he continued as Tom opened his mouth to thank him, "I'm not offering you a place; I'm not even giving you a fair deal."

He paused and took a card from a drawer, scowling more than ever.

"Write your name there and send it up to Senator August at the Hotel Torrence. If he sees you, interview him on the decision of last night's conference; find out whether they agreed on a nominee. You read the papers? Then you'll know what we're after. Now there's your chance, just a bare fighting chance; do you want it?" The card held the single line "For *The Washington Evening World.*" Tom put it in his pocket.

"I know how desperate the chance is, sir, and I'll take it. And—and thank you."

"All right. And remember that the last edition goes to press at five o'clock," he added grimly.

As Tom passed out the youth by the railing had stopped cutting up newspapers and was writing as though his very life depended upon it. When he reached the street Tom remembered that he might have used the elevator.

"Senator August left ten minutes ago," said the hotel clerk affably as he caught sight of the inscription on the card which Tom Collins held. "A new reporter," he added to himself.

"Left?" echoed Tom in dismay. "Where has he gone?"

"New York, I think. Went to the depot for the 2.20."

Tom glanced at the clock. Another moment and he was boarding a passing car. He had six minutes to catch the 2.20. His chances of success were slim. For that matter, thought Tom, the whole undertaking was the merest forlorn hope; not even the fighting chance that the city editor of the *World* had called it. For supposing that he found Senator August and got speech with him, was it likely that he would tell an inexperienced chap like Tom what the best reporters in Washington had failed to worm out of him?

The Democratic National Convention to nominate a candidate for the presidency was but a month away. On the preceding evening, in a little room in the Hotel Torrence, Senator August, representing the sentiment of the Eastern democracy, and Senator Goodman, possessing full power to act for his party in the great West, had met to decide on a Democratic nominee. Dissension threatened. The East favored a man of moderate views on the subject of currency reform; the West and the greater portion of the South stood unanimous for a politician whose success in the coming battle would presage the most radical of measures. Final disagreement between the Democrats of East and West meant certain victory for the Republican Party. And to−day all the country was asking: Have the leaders agreed on a nominee; if so, which one? Senator Groodman, as uncommunicative as a statue, was already speeding back to the far West; and Senator August, equally silent, was on his way home. The

newspapers were hysterical in their demands for information; all day the wires leading to Washington had borne message after message imploring news, but only baseless rumors had sped back. And Tom Collins, knowing all this, realized the hopelessness of his task.

At the depot he left the car at a jump and dashed into the station. A train on the further track was already crawling from the shed. There was no time for inquiries. He ran for it and swung himself onto the platform of the Pullman. A porter was just closing the vestibule door.

"Is Senator August on board?" gasped Tom. The porter didn't know. But he assured Tom that that was the train for New York and so the latter entered the Pullman. The car held seven men and an elderly lady. Tom's idea of a senator was a big man dressed in a black frock coat, a black string tie and a tall silk hat. But there was no one in sight attired in such fashion and Tom paused at a loss. Perhaps it was chance that led him halfway down the aisle and caused him to question a military, middle−aged gentleman who wore a quiet suit of gray tweeds and was deep in a magazine. The face that looked up was shrewd but kindly, albeit it frowned a little at the interruption.

"I am Senator August," was the unexpected reply.

"Oh!" exclaimed Tom blankly. Then he pushed aside a small valise on the opposite seat and took its place. The frown on the senator's face grew.

"Reporter?" he asked laconically.

"Yes," answered Tom. "I'm from the Washington *World.* I just missed you at the hotel so I took the liberty of following you to the train." Tom thought that sounded pretty well and paused to see what impression it had created. The result was disappointing.

"Well?" asked the senator coldly.

"The *World* would like to know what decision was reached at last night's conference, senator."

"I don't doubt it," answered the senator dryly. "Look here," he continued with asperity, "I've refused to talk to at least two dozen reporters and correspondents to−day. The results of last night's conference will be made public by Senator Goodman and myself at the proper time and place; and not until then. And that is all that I can tell you."

"But—" began Tom.

"Understand me, please; I will say nothing more on the subject."

"Will you give me some idea as to when the proper time will be?" asked Tom respectfully.

"No, I can't do that either. Perhaps to−morrow; perhaps not for several days."

"Are you going to New York, sir?"

"I am on my way to my home in Massachusetts."

"Thank you. Have you any objection to my accompanying you on the same train?" Senator August opened his eyes a little.

"Is that necessary? The announcement will be made to the Associated Press and, unless I am mistaken, the *World* is a member of it."

"Very true, sir, but I was assigned to get the result of the conference and I've got to do it—that is, if I can."

"Very well, I have no objection to your traveling on the same train with me, just as long as you don't bother me. Will that do?"

"Yes, sir, thank you. I am sorry that I have troubled you."

"You're what?" asked the other.

"Sorry to have troubled you, sir."

"Hm; you're the first one to−day that has expressed such a feeling. You must be new at the business."

"I am," answered Tom. "I've been a reporter only half an hour. In fact I'm not certain that I am one at all."

"How's that?" asked the senator, turning his magazine face down on the seat beside him.

And Tom told him. Told about his three weeks of dreary search for a position, of his interview with the city editor of the *Evening World* , and of the forlorn hope upon which he was entered. And when he had finished his story, Senator August was no longer frowning; the boy's tale had interested him.

"Well, he did put you up against a hard task; doesn't seem to me to have been quite fair. He knew that every reporter had failed and he must have known that you would fail as well. Seems to have been merely a neat way of getting rid of you. What do you think?"

Tom hesitated a moment.

“I don't think it was quite that. And, anyhow, I knew what I was doing, and so it was fair enough, I guess.”

“But surely you had no idea of success?”

“I ought not to have,” answered Tom hesitatingly, “but I'm afraid I did.”

The senator looked out of the window and was silent for a moment while the express sped on through the afternoon sunlight. When he turned his face toward Tom again he was smiling.

“Well, you appear to have pluck, my lad, and that is pretty certain to land you somewhere in the end even if you miss it this time. I'm very sorry that I am obliged to be the means of destroying your chance with the *World*; but I have no choice in the matter, I——”

“Tickets, please.”

Blank dismay overspread Tom's countenance as he looked up at the conductor.

“I—I haven't any.”

“Where do you want to go?”

Tom put his hand into his pocket and brought out all his money; less than two dollars. He held it out to the gaze of the conductor.

“How far can I go for that?” he asked.

“Is that all you have?” asked the senator. Tom nodded. “All right conductor; we'll arrange this; come around again later, will you?” The conductor went on. Tom stared helplessly at his few coins and Senator August looked smilingly at Tom.

“How about following me home?” he asked.

“I—I'd forgotten,” stammered Tom.

“Well, never mind. I'll loan you enough to reach the first stop and to return to Washington. Nonsense,” he continued, as Tom began a weak objection, “I haven't offered to give it to you; you may repay it some day.” He pressed a bill into the boy's hand. “At Blankville Junction you can get a train back before long, I guess. Never mind that cold−blooded editor on the *World*; try the other papers again; keep at it; that's what I did; and it pays in the end. Hello, are we stopping here?”

The train had slowed down and now it paused for an instant beside a little box of a station. Then it started on again and a train man appeared at the far end of the car holding a buff envelope in his hand.

“Senator August in this car?” he asked.

The telegram was delivered and its recipient, excusing himself to the sad−hearted youth on the opposite seat, read the contents hurriedly. Then he glanced queerly at Tom, while a little smile stole out from under the ends of his grizzled mustache.

“You are lucky,” he said. Tom looked a question, and the senator thrust the message into his hands. “Read that,” he said; “it is from my secretary in Washington.” He pressed the electric button between the windows and waited impatiently for the porter. Tom was staring hard at the yellow sheet before him; he reread it slowly, carefully, that there might be no mistake. It was as follows:

“*Senator Harrison M. August, “On train 36, Waverly, Md.*

“Following telegram just received: 'Chicago, 8, 1.45 P.M. Have just learned reliable source Republican managers using our silence regarding conference to advance W's candidacy in Middle West and have published report that we have agreed on compromise candidate. If report goes undenied many votes will be lost, especially in Iowa and Wisconsin. Advise immediate publication of our statement to press. Answer Auditorium, Chicago. Goodman.' Have advised Goodman of delay in reaching you.

“*Billings*.”

“Do you understand what that means?” asked Senator August. Tom could only nod; he was too astounded to speak. The senator handed a message to the porter. “Get that off as soon as we reach Baltimore and bring me a receipt for it.” Then he turned again to Tom and thrust the pad of Western Union message blanks toward him.

“We reach Blankville Junction in eight minutes. Write what I dictate to you as fast as you can. You know shorthand? All the better.”

The senator leaned back and closed his eyes for a moment. Then he began to speak, rapidly but distinctly, and Tom's pencil flew over the pages, while the train sped on toward the junction.

The hands of the office clock pointed to twenty minutes after five when Tom reached the *World* building. There was no hesitancy now; he pushed open the little gate and hurried toward the city editor, who had already

placed his hat on his head and was bundling up some papers to carry home. He met Tom's advance with a frown.

"Well?" he asked coldly.

For answer Tom placed a little package of copy before him.

"What's this?" he demanded. But there was no necessity for reply for he was already reading the sheets. Halfway through he paused and lifted a tube to his mouth. "Brown? Say, Joe, get a plate ready for an extra in a hurry; about half a column of stuff going right up." Then he turned again to his reading. At the end he gathered the copy together and placed it on his desk.

"Where'd you get this?"

"On the New York express."

"What station?"

"I left the train at Blankville Junction."

The city editor dated the copy with a big black pencil, ran three strokes the length of each sheet, wrote a very long and startling head over it and thrust it into the hands of a waiting boy.

"Copy−cutter," he said. And as the boy sped off the editor turned to Tom. "How'd you do it?" he asked, frowning tremendously.

But the city editor's frowns no longer struck terror into Tom's heart, and he told the story briefly, while his hearer puffed rapidly at his pipe. Only once was he interrupted.

"Hold on there," said the editor. "Are you certain he said he'd not give out the statement again until he reached New York?"

"Quite certain," was the reply. Something almost resembling pleasure appeared on the city editor's face.

"He'll not get there until 8.30; too late for the evening papers. The biggest beat of the year, by George!" For a moment the glasses and the frown were lost in a cloud of smoke. Then "Go on," he commanded.

Tom finished his story in a few words; told how he had found a train already waiting at the Junction, how he had written out his copy on the way back to Washington; and how, had it not been for a long delay just outside the city, he would have reached the office in time for the regular edition. And when he had finished he waited for a word of commendation. But none came. Instead, the city editor nodded his head once or twice, thoughtfully, frowningly, and said: "Well, you needn't wait around any longer; there's nothing else to be done."

Tom arose, looking blankly at the speaker. Had he failed after all! Surely he was not being turned away? But the city editor's next words dispelled all doubt.

"We go to work on this paper at eight o'clock, Mr. Collins; and by eight I mean eight, and not ten minutes past. I can't have any man working for me who cannot be prompt. You understand?"

As Tom clattered happily downstairs a deep reverberation that shook the building from top to bottom told him that the presses were already printing the result of his first assignment.

PEMBERTON'S FLUKE

For an hour and a half Yale and Princeton had been battling on the gridiron; for an hour and a half the struggling lines had advanced and retreated from goal line to goal line; for an hour and a half the ball had gone arching up against the blue November sky, had been carried in short, desperate plunges or brilliant runs to and fro over the trampled white lines of Yale Field; for an hour and a half twenty−five thousand persons had watched the varying fortunes of the contest with fast−beating hearts, had waved their flags, sang their songs and shouted their cheers; and now, with the last half drawing toward its close, the score board still proclaimed: “Yale, 0; Opponents, 0.”

Pemberton had found the contest exciting, breathlessly so at moments, but disappointing. Being a freshman, as well as a 'varsity substitute of a week's standing, he was intensely patriotic, and the thought of a tie game was unbearable; to a youth of his enthusiasm a tie was virtually a defeat for the Blue; and a defeat for the Blue was something tragic, inconceivable! Pemberton was a sandy−haired, blue−eyed, round−faced chap of eighteen; in height, five feet nine; in weight, one hundred and sixty−eight; neither large nor heavy, but speedy as they make them, a bundle of nerves, endowed with a fanatical enthusiasm and a kind of brilliant, dashing recklessness that often wins where larger courage fails.

At Exeter he hadn't gone in for football until his senior year; the Physical Director couldn't see the thing from Pemberton's viewpoint; physical directors are narrow−minded souls; Pemberton will tell you so any day. With three years of lost time to make up, Pemberton had put his whole mind into football with the result that he had made the team in time to play for five short, mad minutes against Andover. This fall he had distinguished himself on the Freshmen Eleven, and the game with the Harvard youngsters, if it hadn't resulted in a victory for Yale, had, at least, made the reputation of Pemberton, left half back. In that somewhat one−sided contest he had shown such dash and pluck, had eeled himself through the Crimson's line, or shot like a small streak of lightning around the ends so frequently that he had been called to the 'varsity bench. And on the 'varsity bench, one, and quite the smallest one, of a long line of substitutes, he had sat since the beginning of the Princeton game, with an excellent chance of staying there until the whistle blew.

He wasn't a fellow to accept inactivity with gracefulness. That “they also serve who only stand and wait,” he was willing to accept as true; but that wasn't the kind of serving he hankered for; Pemberton's ideal of usefulness was getting busy and doing things—and doing them hard.

On opposite sides of the field rival bands were blaring out two−steps, the strains leaking now and then through the deep, thundering cheers. Down on Yale's thirty−five−yard line Princeton was hammering at right guard for short gains, edging nearer and nearer the goal, and thousands of eyes fixed themselves expectantly on Princeton's left half back, dreading or hoping to see him fall back for a kick. On the thirty yards Yale's line braced and held. Princeton tried a run outside of left tackle and got a yard. The ball was directly in front of goal.

“Sturgis is a dub if he doesn't try it now,” said the big fellow on Pemberton's left.

“But he couldn't do it from the forty−yard line, could he?” asked Pemberton.

“Search me; but from what he's done so far to−day I guess he could kick a goal from the other end of the field. Nothing doing, though; they're trying right guard again. There goes Crocker.”

Yale's line gave at the center and a Princeton tackle fell through for two yards. The Princeton cheers rang out redoubled in intensity, sharp, entreating, only to be met with the defiant slogan of Yale. Pemberton shuffled his scarred brown leather shoes uneasily and gnawed harder at his knuckles. Princeton was playing desperately, fighting for the twenty−yard line. A play that looked like a tandem at right guard resolved itself into a plunge at left tackle and gave them their distance. The Yale stands held staring, troubled faces. The Princeton stands were on their feet, shouting, waving, swaying excitedly; score cards were sailing and fluttering through the air; pandemonium reigned over there. Pemberton scowled fiercely across. His left−hand neighbor whistled a tune softly. Princeton piled her backs through again for a yard.

“Oh, thunder!” muttered Pemberton.

The other nodded sympathetically.

“Here's where Old Nassau scores,” he said.

A last desperate plunge carried the little army of the Orange and Black over the coveted mark. The left half walked back; there were cries, entreaties, commands; the cheering died away and gave place to the intense silence of suspense; Pemberton could hear the little Princeton quarter back's signals quite plainly. Then, after a moment of breathless delay, the ball sped back, was caught breast high by the left half, was dropped on the instant and shot forward from his foot, and went rising toward the goal. The Yale forwards broke through, leaping with upstretched hands into the path of the ball, yet never reaching it. The field was a confusion of writhing, struggling bodies, but the ball was sailing straight and true, turning lazily on its shorter axis, over the cross bar.

Over on the Princeton side of the field hats were in flight, slicing up and down and back and forth across the face of the long slope of yellow and black; flags were gyrating crazily; the space between seats and barrier was filled with a leaping, howling mass of humanity, and all the while the cheers crashed and hurtled through the air. Well, Princeton had something to cheer for; even Pemberton grudgingly acknowledged that.

"Have we time to score?" he asked despondently.

His neighbor turned, stretching out his long, blue−stockinged legs.

"There's about five or six minutes left, I guess," he answered. "We've got *time* to score, but will we?"

Pemberton didn't think they would. Life seemed very cruel just then.

"Hello," continued the other, "Webster's coming out! I guess here's where your Uncle Tom gets a whack at Old Nassau—maybe." He sat up and watched the head coach alertly. The next moment Pemberton was peeling off his sweater for him.

Princeton ran Yale's kick−off back to her forty yards. The Blue's right guard was taken out, white and wretched, after the first scrimmage. Princeton started at her battering again, content now to make only sufficient gains to keep the ball. But with a yard to gain on the third down a canvas clad streak broke through and nailed her tackle behind the line. Pemberton, shouting ecstatically, saw that the streak was his erstwhile neighbor, and was proud of the acquaintance. Then Yale, with the ball once more in possession, started to wake things up. Past the forty yards again she went, throwing tackles and full back at every point in the Tiger's line for short gains, and showing no preference. But, all said, it was slow work and unpromising with the score board announcing five minutes to play. The Yale supporters, however, found cause for rejoicing, and cheered gloriously until there was a fumble and the Blue lost four yards on the recovery. Time was called and the trainers and water carriers trotted on the field. The head coach and an assistant came toward the bench, talking earnestly, the former's sharp eyes darting hither and thither searchingly. Pemberton watched, with his heart fluttering up into his throat. The head coach's gaze fixed itself upon him, passed on up the line, came back to him and stayed. Pemberton dropped his eyes. It isn't good form to stare Fate in the face. Was it a second later or an age that his name was called?"

"Go in at left half; tell Haker to come out. And—er—Pemberton, here's a pretty good chance to show what you can do."

Pemberton peeled off his white jersey with the faded "E" and raced into the field. Haker looked down uncomprehendingly at him from the superior height of six feet when he delivered his message. Pemberton repeated it. Haker shoved him aside, mumbling impatient words through swollen lips. It was only when he saw the head coach beckoning him from the side line that he yielded and took himself off with a parting insult to Pemberton:

"All right, Kid."

Pemberton's eyes blazed and his fists clenched. Kid! Well, he'd show Haker and everyone else whether he was a kid! Then he looked at the score board with sinking heart. Only four minutes left! Four minutes! But he took heart; after all, four minutes was two hundred and forty seconds, and if they'd only give him the ball! He had run a mile in 4:34 1−5! Suddenly the whistle blew and the players staggered to their places. It was second down now, with nine yards to gain. The tandem formed on the left, and Pemberton ranged himself behind the big tackle disapprovingly. Where was the use, he asked himself, of wasting a down by plunging at the line? What had they put him in there for if not to take the ball? Then the signal came and the next moment he was in the maelstrom. When the dust of battle lifted, the ball was just one yard nearer the Princeton goal.

Princeton expected Yale to kick, for it was the third down and there was still eight yards wanted, and so the Princeton right half trotted tentatively to join the quarter. Yale placed a tackle, full back and left half behind her tackle guard hole on the left. Her right half fell back about six yards to a position behind quarter. It might mean a kick or a tandem, or a run around left end; Princeton's right half hesitated and edged back toward his line.

Pemberton, puzzled, awaited the signal. Of course the ball was his, but why was he placed so far away from it? The only play from just this formation that he was acquainted with was one in which he merely performed the inglorious part of interference. However, maybe the quarter knew his business, though deep down in his soul he doubted it.

Now, for an understanding of the remarkable events which followed, it is necessary to take the reader into the confidence of the Yale quarter back. Despite Pemberton's misgivings he really did know his business, which was to get that pigskin over the Tiger's goal line in the next four minutes, taking any risk to do it. And the present play was a risk. As planned it was this: at the snapping of the ball the head of the tandem, the tackle, was to plunge straight through the line between tackle and guard as though leading a direct attack at that point; full back and left half were to turn sharply to the left before reaching the line and clear out a hole between end and tackle; right half back, standing well behind the quarter, was to receive the ball on a toss and follow the interference; quarter was to stop tacklers coming around the right end of his line; in short, it was a play apparently aimed at the left center of Yale's line, but in reality going through at the left end. But the Yale quarter had reckoned without Pemberton.

The play started beautifully. The ball was snapped back into quarter's waiting hands, tackle plunged madly ahead into the Princeton's defenses, the quarter swung around back to the line, ready for the toss to the right half, who was on his toes, waiting to dash across to where the hole was being torn open for him. And then something went wrong! A figure sped across toward the right end of the line between quarter and right half just as the ball left the former's hands. The ball disappeared from sight; and so, in a measure, did Pemberton.

His excited brain had confused the 'varsity with the freshman signals. Starting on the supposition that he was to receive the ball, the numbers had somehow conveyed to him the idea that the play was around right end. The fact that he was to be practically unprovided with interference did not bother him; if he had had time to consider the matter he would probably have decided that they knew his ability and were not going to insult him by offering assistance. But Pemberton wasn't one to be worried over details. What was wanted was a touchdown, or, failing that, a good long gain. So, with the rest of the back field plunging toward the left, Pemberton started on his own hook toward the right.

He was glad the quarter tossed the ball so exactly; otherwise he would have had to slow down. As it was he was going like an express train by the time he swept around the Princeton line outside of end. Pemberton could not only run like the wind, but could start like a shot from a rifle. That he got clean away before the opponents had found the location of the ball was partly due to this fact and partly to the fact that Yale's backs were messing around in a peculiarly aimless manner which, to the Princeton players, suggested a delayed pass or some equally heinous piece of underhand work. So Princeton piled through Yale's line to solve the difficulty, thinking little of the absurd youth who had shot around her left end without interference.

From Princeton's center to her right end everything was confusion. It was a glorious struggle, but futile. For the ball was snuggled in Pemberton's right elbow, and Pemberton was down near the thirty yards sprinting for goal. In front of him was the Princeton quarter back; behind him, racing madly, came a Princeton half. To his left was a long, dark bank splotched and mottled with blue; from it thundered down a ceaseless cataract of sound that held as a motif entreaty and encouragement. Pemberton saw the waving flags from the corner of his eyes; and the chaos of cheers and shouts drowned the thumping of his heart and the *pat, pat* of his feet on the trampled turf. Pemberton was enjoying himself immensely, and was grateful in a patronizing way for the coach's confidence in him. Then the quarter back engaged his attention. He glanced back. The foremost of the pursuers—for now the whole field was racing after him—was still a good ten yards behind. Pemberton was relieved. The twenty−yard line, dim and scattered, passed under his feet, and the Princeton quarter was in his path, white and determined, with fingers curved like talons in anticipation of his prey. Pemberton increased his speed by just that little that is always possible, feinted to the left, dug his shoes sharply in the turf and went by to the right, escaping the quarter's diving tackle by the length of a finger. The quarter dug his face in the ground, scrambled somehow to his feet, and took up the chase. But now he was second in pursuit, for the half back had passed him and was pressing Pemberton closely. If the latter had been content to make straight for the nearest point of the goal line the result would never have been in doubt; but Pemberton was not one to be satisfied with bread when there was cake in sight. Nothing would do but the very center of the goal line, and for that he was headed, running straight at top speed.

There the pursuing half back found his advantage, for he held a course nearer the center of the field. It was a

pretty race, but agonizing to the friends of Yale and Princeton alike. At the ten−yard line the flying Yale man was a yard to the good; at the five−yard line the Princeton. player had him by the thighs and was dragging like a ton of lead.

Pemberton's fighting spirit came to his rescue. Did that idiot whose arms were slipping down around his legs think that he was going to be stopped here on the threshold of success? Did he know he was trying to hold *Pemberton*? Gosh! He'd show him! Every stride now was like pushing his knees into a stone wall; one, two, three, four, and still the line was three yards away. And now the tackler's arms had slipped down about his knees, holding them together as though with a vise. For an instant Pemberton fought on—a foot, half a foot—then further progress was impossible and he crashed over on his face, midway between the goal posts, the ball held at arms' length, his knuckles digging into the last streak of lime. Some one thumped down on to his head and strove to pull the ball back. But he locked his joints and strained forward until somewhere behind him a whistle shrilled. Then he rolled over on his back, closed his eyes and fought for breath.

Few could have missed that goal; certainly not Yale's quarter back. Once more the ball went over the exact center of the goal line, but this time above the cross bar; and wherever one or more Yale men were gathered together there was rejoicing loud and continued. For the figures on the score board told a different story: Yale, 6; Opponents, 5.

A few minutes later, in the car that was to take them back to town, Pemberton allowed the head coach to shake him by the hand, and strove to bear his honors becomingly. Congratulations roared in his ears like a torrent until he was moved to an expression of modest disclaim:

“Oh, it wasn't anything much,” said Pemberton. “I ought not to have allowed that Princeton chap to get near me. But the fact is”—he addressed the head coach confidentially—“the fact is, you see, I didn't quite understand that signal.”

THE SEVENTH TUTOR

"I'm being perfectly honest with you," said dad. "I tell you frankly that I don't expect you to succeed, Mr. Wigg——"

"Twigg," corrected the chap in the basket chair.

"Pardon me; Twigg. The boy is simply unmanageable, especially where study is concerned. He—but, there, perhaps it will be best if I don't prejudice you too much. You'll have a free hand; I shan't interfere between you. The last tutor came to me every day with the story of his troubles. I paid him to keep them to himself; I don't want to hear them. I simply hand the boy over to you and say: 'Here he is; make a gentleman of him if you can, and incidentally get him ready for college. Punish him whenever you see fit. Take any method in doing it you like, so long as you don't forget you're a gentleman; brutality I won't stand.'"

I wished I could see the chap's face; but I couldn't; just his feet. He wore low patent leathers.

"If at the end of one month," dad went on, "you have managed to get the upper hand, we'll continue the arrangement. If you have failed I shall have no further need of you. In the meanwhile, until then, you're a member of the family, free to come and go as you like. See that you're comfortable. That's all, I guess. Want to try it?"

"Yes," said the chap. I didn't like the way he said it, though; it sounded so kind of certain. All the others had been a bit nervous when dad got to that point.

"Very well," dad answered. "We'll call it settled. As—er—as a—sidelight on Raymond's code of honor, Mr. Twigg—you said Twigg?—I'll mention that for the last few minutes he has been listening to our conversation from behind the hall door. You may come out now, Raymond."

I went out, grinning. It was all well enough for dad to talk about "the last few minutes," but I was sure he hadn't known I was there until I kicked the door after the chap said "yes" like that. The chap got out of his chair and looked at me as though they hadn't been talking about me for half an hour.

"Raymond, this is Mr. John Twigg, your new tutor," said dad.

"Thought it was about time for another," I said. Twigg held out his hand, and so I shook with him. He shook different from the others; sort of as though he had bones and things inside his fingers instead of cotton wool.

"Glad to see you," he said. "Hope we'll get on together."

"Oh, I'll get on," said I; "but I don't know about you."

"That'll do, Raymond," said dad angrily. "I don't expect you to act like a gentleman; but you might at least be less of a cad."

"I ain't a cad!" I muttered.

"What else are you when you listen behind doors to things you're not expected to hear? When you talk like a gutter snipe and act—"

"You're a liar!" I shouted. "Liar! Liar! Liar!"

Dad's face got purple like it always does when he's mad, and his hands shook. For a moment I thought he was going to jump for me; he never has, no matter how mad he gets. Then he leaned back again in his chair and turned to Twigg with a beast of a sneer on his face.

"You see?" he asked, with a shrug. "Nice, sweet−tempered, clean−tongued youth, isn't he? Want to call it off?"

I looked scowlingly at Twigg. He was leaning back, hands in pockets, looking at me through half−closed eyes as though I was a side show at a circus. I stared back at him defiantly. "Have a look," I jeered. He raised a finger and scratched the side of his nose without taking his eyes off me, just as though he was a doctor trying to decide what nasty stuff to give me. After a bit I dropped my eyes; I tried not to, but they got to blinking.

"No," said Twigg. "If you don't mind I'll walk back to the station and telegraph for my trunk."

"Sit still," said dad, "and I'll get the cart around. Or you can write your message and I'll have Forbes send it."

"Thanks," said Twigg, "I'd like the walk." He turned to me. "Want to go along?"

I grinned at him.

"No, I don't want to go along," I said mockingly.

He didn't seem to notice.

“Luncheon is at—?”

“Two o'clock,” said dad.

Dad went into the house, and Twigg put a gray felt hat on his head and strode off down the drive. I sat on the porch rail and watched him. He looked about five feet eight inches, and was broad across the shoulders. He had a good walk. I slouched when I walked. After he was out of sight I rather wished I'd gone along. There wasn't anything particular to do at home, and I could have told him about the other tutors; there's some things that dad doesn't know.

I found Twigg kept a diary. He went to the city on the Wednesday afternoon after he came, and I rubbered around to see what I could find. The diary was in his table drawer. It was awful dull rot until I got to the last page or two. The day before he'd written a lot about me. This was it; I copied it:

“June 1st.

“Fourth day at Braemere. First desire to throw it up and acknowledge defeat quite gone. Am determined to see it through. I think I can win. At all events the thing won't lack interest. Can't flatter myself that I've made much headway. R. is like a rhinoceros. Can't find a vulnerable spot anywhere. He seems morally calloused. I say seems because I can scarcely believe that a boy of sixteen can really be as absolutely unmoral as he appears. Perhaps, eventually, I will find an Achilles' heel.

“Mr. Dale stands by his agreement. He never offers to interfere. So much the better. Mr. D.'s attitude toward R. is humorous as well as lamentable. He views the boy as though he were entirely irresponsible for his being. It is plain that he sees no connection between the boy's extraordinary character and his own; yet they are alike in many particulars; one could almost express my meaning by saying that R. is his father in an uncultivated state. Mr. D. ascribes the boy's faults to the other side of the house; he is convinced that the ungovernable temper and lack of moral sense are unfortunate inheritances from the late Mrs. D. Probably this is true in a measure. R. was the only child. The mother died at his birth. Mr. D, returned to this country when R. was four years old, and purchased this estate. Here the boy has grown up practically neglected. During twelve years Mr. D. has been out of the country the better part of eight. The boy has been left to the care of servants. For the past three years he has been in the hands of tutors, whose periods of service ran from one week to three months. I am the seventh in line to attempt the work.

“Physically R. is in good shape. He is fond of outdoor life; likes horses, dogs and animals generally; rides well; shoots and fishes. Mentally he is decidedly above normal, but quite untrained. Hates study. Would grade about third year in Latin school. I shall begin at the bottom with him. It's going to be a hard pull, but I'm going to win out.”

I was going to empty the ink bottle over the pages; but I knew if I did he'd hide the book or lock it up, and I wanted to see what else he'd write. So I put it back in the drawer. I was sure I'd have him done to a turn in a month. But it was going to take longer than with the other fools, though.

“That'll do,” said Twigg. “You haven't studied a lick, have you?”

“Not a lick,” I answered.

“When do you think of beginning?” he asked.

“Not going to begin at all.”

“Oh, poppycock, my boy.” He tossed down the Latin book and yawned. “Don't you want to go to college?”

“No; not if I've got to study all that darned stuff.”

“What kind of stuff?”

“Darned stuff, I said. You heard me, didn't you?”

“Yes; but I thought perhaps I'd mistaken. Well, we'll try this again to−morrow. How about mathematics?”

I winked.

“Not prepared? German ditto, I presume?”

“I haven't studied at all, I tell you.”

“Well, we know where to begin to−morrow, don't we? Is there any decent fishing around here?”

“Find out,” I muttered.

“Oh, well, I didn't suppose there was,” he answered. “It's an out−of−the−way spot up here, anyway.”

“That's a lie! There's as good trout and pickerel fishing here as there is anywhere in the State, if you know the proper place to look for it.”

"Maybe; maybe there are lions and tigers if you know where to look for them. But I'll believe it when I see them."

He yawned again and looked out the window and drummed on the desk. After a bit I said:

"You city fellows think you know it all, don't you? If you want fishing I'll take you where you'll get it."

"I'm not particular about it," he said. "I know about what that sort of fishing is; sit on a bank or stand up to your waist in water all day, and catch two little old four−ounce trout and a sunfish."

I jumped up.

"I guess I know more about this place than you do," I cried angrily. "You come with me and I'll show you fish."

"Too sunny, isn't it?" he asked.

"Not for where I mean."

"Got an extra rod?"

"Yes; you can take my split bamboo—if you won't go and bust it."

"All right; if I break it I'll buy you another. Fish from the bank, do you? or shall I put boots on?"

"Boots. Got any?"

"Yes. I'll go up and put them on. Take those books off with you, please. You won't have time for studying before night."

"I won't then, either," I said.

"Well, anyhow, we won't leave them here. Let's keep the shop looking ship−shape. By the way, it's a bit late, isn't it? How about lunch?"

"Take some grub with us. I'll tell Annie to put some up. I'll meet you on the steps in ten minutes."

"All right; I'll be there. Er—Raymond!"

"Huh?" said I.

"You've forgotten the books."

"Oh, let 'em wait."

"All right." He sat down at the desk again.

"Ain't you going fishing?" I asked.

"No. I think not," he answered. "Somehow, while those books are here I feel that we ought to stay at home and study. I dare say the fish will be there to−morrow as well as to−day, eh?"

"Oh, all right," I said sulkily. "Only you can't make me study, you know."

I sat down and put my hands in my pockets. I looked at him out of the corners of my eyes. He didn't seem to have heard me.

"Let's see," he said after a moment. "How many lines were we to have in this?"

"I don't remember," I growled. Then I jumped up and grabbed the books. "You make me sick," I said. "I'm going fishing."

I took the books out and slammed the door as hard as it would slam.

The day after we went fishing, and got fourteen trout, I had early breakfast and rode Little Nell over to Harrisbridge and played pool with Nate Golden, whose dad has the livery stable, all morning. We had dinner at the inn, and when I got back it was nearly three o'clock. Tommy, the stable boy, told me as I rode in that Twigg had left word he wanted to see me when I got back. Well, I didn't want to see him. So I went in the kitchen way and up the back stairs to my room. When I opened the door there was Twigg, sitting in the rocker with the books all spread out on the center table.

"Hello," he said. "I'm making myself at home, you see. We're a bit late with lessons, Raymond, so I thought we might have them up here; then we won't interfere with your father's writing."

"I don't know 'em," I said.

"I'm afraid you haven't studied them. Never mind; when you get your boots off we'll go over them together. Here, hold them up. There's no use bothering with jacks when you've got some one to pull them off for you."

I let him do it. He sort of takes you by surprise sometimes and you don't know just what to say or do. Afterwards I threw myself onto the bed and lighted a cigarette. Twigg looked at me and raised his eyebrows.

"Don't smoke while lessons are going on, please," he said.

"Will if I like," I said.

“I'm afraid I can't have that.”

“Well, if you don't like it you can lump it.” But just the same I kept a sharp eye on him.

“Well, you're the host up here,” he answered calmly. “I suppose I must consider that.” Then what did he do but take out that reeking briar pipe of his, ram it full of nasty strong tobacco and begin to smoke! “One thing at a time, eh? We'll have a quiet smoke first and lessons afterwards. Tell me what you've been doing.”

“None of your darned business,” I said warmly.

“I suppose it isn't.” He took up a book, one of Marryat's, crossed his legs and began to read. Gee! how that old pipe smelled! I laid on the bed and watched him blowing big gray clouds out under the corner of his mustache. When I'd smoked three cigarettes he looked over at me.

“Ready?” he asked.

“No, I'm not ready.”

“Let me know when you are,” he said. Then he filled the pipe again and went on reading. After a bit I crawled off the bed. My head felt funny, and I was almost choking with the smoke. He laid down the book and looked up at me.

“Shall we begin?” he asked.

“I don't care what you do,” I growled. “I'm going outdoors.”

“Not yet,” said he. He got up and locked the door and put the key in his pocket. “You forget the lesson.”

“You let me out, darn you!” I yelled. “I'm not going to study. You can keep me here all night and I won't study. You see if I do!”

“Don't be silly,” he said, just as though he were talking to a kid. “You and I are going over those lessons if it takes to−night and to−morrow and the rest of the week. When you're ready to begin let me know; I shan't ask you again.” And then he went back to that book.

After a while it began to get darkish. I went back to the bed and tried to sleep, but I couldn't. I could have killed Twigg; but there wasn't any way to do it. He kept on reading and smoking. About six o'clock he said:

“This is quite a yarn, isn't it? Somehow I never seemed to find time for Marryat when I was a boy. You've read this, of course?”

“Yes,” I muttered.

“Like it?”

“Yes.”

“What's your favorite book?”

“I dunno; Froissart, I guess.”

“Yes, that's a good one. Ever read 'Treasure Island'?”

“No; who's it by?”

“Stevenson; know him at all?”

“Did he write 'Tower of London' and those things?”

“No, he didn't. He wrote 'Kidnapped' and 'The Black Arrow' and 'David Balfour,' and a lot of other bully ones.”

“'Kidnapped'?” I said. “I'd like to read that. It sounds fine.”

“I'll get it for you, if you like.”

“You needn't; if I want it I can get it myself, I guess.”

“Certainly.”

About seven I began to get awfully hungry. Twigg lighted the gas and filled his pipe again. It made me feel sick and funny inside just to see him do it.

“You stop smoking that smelly thing in my room,” I said.

“I beg your pardon, I'm sure,” he said. “Just remember, however, that it was I who objected to smoking in the first place.” He put his pipe down. There was a knock at the door and Annie asked if we were there.

“Yes, all right,” Twigg said. “Please tell Mr. Dale that Raymond and I are going to do some studying before dinner, and ask him not to wait.”

“It's a lie!” I yelled. “He's locked me in. You tell my father he's locked me in, and won't let me have any dinner. Do you hear, Annie?”

“Yes, Mr. Raymond.” It sounded as though she was giggling.

"You might leave some cold meat and a pitcher of milk on the sideboard, Annie; enough for two," said Twigg. "If we get through by nine we'll look for it."

"Very well, sir," she answered.

"You—you think you're smart, don't you?" I sobbed. "I'll—I'll get even for this, you bet!"

I don't care! I was hungry, and the wretched old tobacco smoke made me feel funny. You'd have cried, too. He made believe he didn't hear me.

"You're just a big, ugly bully! If I was bigger I'd smash your face! Do you hear me?"

"Yes, my boy, and——"

"I'm not your boy! I hate you, you—you——"

"And let me remind you that you're wasting time." He took out his watch. "It's now a quarter after seven. If we're not through up here by nine, there'll be no dinner for either of us."

"Glad of it! Hope you'll starve to death. I'm—I'm not hungry. I had dinner at Harrisbridge with Nate Golden."

"Who's Nate Golden?" he asked.

"None of your business. If he was here I'd get him to lick you!"

"Lucky for me he isn't here, eh?" Then he went back to reading. I got hungrier and hungrier and had little pains inside me. I put a pillow over my head so he wouldn't hear me crying. Then, after a long while I got up and went to the table and took up a book. He didn't pay any attention. I went back and sat on the bed for a minute. Then I took up the book again and threw it down so it would make a noise. He looked around.

"Ah, Raymond," he said, "all ready? Suppose we start with the Latin!"

There wasn't any use not studying, because he didn't play fair. No man has any right to starve you. So I studied some every day after that. Old Gabbett, the chap I had before Twigg, used to shrug his shoulders when I wouldn't study, and tell me I was a good−for−nothing and would live to be hung. Then he'd go off to his room and let me alone. Browning, the chap before old Gab, used to get jolly mad and throw books at me, and swear to beat the band. I used to swear back and call him Sissy. He was a Sissy; he was about nineteen and didn't have any mustache or muscle, and he couldn't do a thing except study and play patience. It was rather good fun, though, getting him mad; it was mighty easy, too. But Twigg was different from any of them. When he wasn't putting it onto me he wasn't such a bad sort—for a tutor.

Anyhow, he wasn't a Sissy. He could catch fish and ride fine, and he could beat me at target shooting with a .32 rifle. He told me one day that he was stroke on his crew for two years. I guess that's where he got his big shoulders and muscles. You ought to see his muscles. We went in swimming one day and I saw them. I'll bet he was the strongest chap up our way. After he had been there a couple of weeks he went to the city again; and I read his diary. But there wasn't anything in it about me except one thing which he had written on June 15th. It said:

"R.'s propensity for eavesdropping and similar ungentlemanly actions renders it unadvisable to write anything here that I do not want read by others. Were it not for the aforesaid propensity and one or two lesser faults I could like the boy immensely. I have hopes, however, that when he realizes how contemptible and petty these things are he will cease doing them. He told me once that his favorite book was Froissart. I wonder if he thinks Froissart was ever guilty of listening behind doors, spying into others' diaries and swearing like a tough?"

Wonder how he knew?

* * * * *

Two days after he went to town I met him going out of the house with some golf sticks. I went along with him to the meadow and watched him hitting the little white ball. After a bit he let me try it. It wasn't easy, though, you bet! But when I'd sort of got the hang of it I could hit them right well. He said I did bully and if I liked I could help him lay out a nine−hole course the next afternoon and we'd have some games. So we did. We paced off the distances between the holes and put up sticks with bits of white cloth on them. The housekeeper gave us an old sheet. And the next day we played a game. Of course he beat me. But he said I would make a good player if I tried hard and kept at it. After that we used to play almost every day, if it wasn't too hot. Only if I didn't have my lessons good he wouldn't play.

One day I got behind the stone wall—we called it Stoney Bunker—and couldn't get out, and said "darn." And Twigg picked up the balls and started back to the house.

"Golf's a gentleman's game, Raymond," he said. "We'll wait until yon get your temper back."

That made me mad and I swore some more. And there wasn't any more golf for nearly a week. He won't get

mad, too; that's what makes it so beastly. It got pretty hot the last of the month and there wasn't much to do except lay around and read. We had lessons before breakfast sometimes while it was nice and cool on the veranda; and in the forenoon we went swimming. One day he asked if I wanted him to read to me. I said he could if he liked. I wanted him to, but I didn't want him to know it. So we sat on the lawn and he read “Kidnapped,” the book he'd spoken about. It was a Scotch story and simply great. After that when the afternoons were too hot for golf or riding he'd read.

I forgot to say that dad went away about the middle of the month and stayed a week, I guess.

“Hello,” said Twigg, “where are you going?”

“Oh, just for a ride,” I said. He was on the porch and so I pulled Little Nell up alongside the rail.

“All right; wait a minute, and I'll go along. Do you mind?”

“She doesn't like to stand,” I muttered.

“She won't have to long.” He grabbed the railing and vaulted over onto the drive, and I saw that he had his riding breeches and boots on.

“All right,” I said. “I'll wait here.”

He nodded and went over to the stables. When he was out of sight I jammed Little Nell with the spurs and tore down the drive lickety−cut. I was going over to Harrisbridge to see Nate Golden, but I didn't want to tell Twigg because he was so cranky; always trying to keep me at home. It was Sunday morning, and kind of cloudy and sultry. When I got to the road I turned Nell to the right before I remembered that I'd be in sight of the house for a quarter of a mile. But I wasn't going to turn back then, so I made for the beginning of the woods as fast as Nell could make it. I knew it would take Twigg two or three minutes to saddle Sultan, and by that time I could be out of reach.

But Twigg is always doing things you don't expect him to. When I got to the edge of the woods I looked toward the house and what did I see but Twigg on Sultan trying to head me off by riding across the meadow. Just as I looked Sultan took the panel fence with a rush, got over finely and came thundering across the turf.

“All right,” I said to myself. “If it's a race you're after you can have it with me now!”

Through the woods the road is a bit soft and spongy in places and so I pulled Nell down a little. Then came a long hill; and by the time I was on top of that I could hear Sultan rushing along behind. I gave Nell her head then, for it was a good, solid road and straight as a die for over a mile. She hadn't been out of the stall for two days, and maybe she didn't tear things up! Pretty soon I looked back. There was Twigg and Sultan just coming up over the hill. They'd gained some. I touched Nell with the spur and she laid back her ears and just flew! That mile didn't last long, I tell you. When I got to the Fork I switched off to the left toward Harrisbridge; it was dusty, and I was pretty sure Twigg wouldn't know which way I'd gone. The road wound sharp to the left and I'd be out of sight before Twigg reached the Fork. Two or three minutes later I pulled up a bit and listened. I couldn't hear a sound. I chuckled and let Nell come down to a trot, thinking, of course, Twigg had kept the right−hand road and was humping it away toward Evan's Mills. Then I got to thinking about it and somehow I kind of wished I hadn't been so darned smart. It seemed sort of mean because I'd said I'd wait for him and I hadn't. You see, Twigg had such fool ideas on some things, like keeping his word to you and all that. I had half a mind to turn around and go back and look for him. But just then I heard a crashing in the brush on the left and looked back and there was Twigg and Sultan trotting through the woods toward the road. He'd cut the corner on me! I made believe I didn't see him, and pretty soon he rode up to the stone wall and jumped Sultan over into the road almost beside me.

“Well,” he said, smiling, “you gave me quite a run!”

“Yes; but I knew Nell could beat that beast and so I slowed down.”

“That's all right, then. I thought at first you were trying to give me the slip, but I knew you'd said you'd wait and so I concluded you wanted some fun.”

“Yes,” I said.

“This is the Harrisbridge road, isn't it?” he asked.

“It goes to lots of places.”

“Harrisbridge among them?”

“Yes.”

“Then we can keep on, eh? We might call on that friend of yours; what's his name? Nate something?”

“Nate Golden,” I muttered.

"That's it. I suppose he'd be at home?"

"He doesn't like swells," I said.

"Am I a swell?"

"Yes, you are."

"And he wouldn't like me?"

"No."

"Why?"

"Oh, just because he wouldn't; that's why. I'm going back now."

"Very well; Harrisbridge some other day, Raymond."

We turned the nags and walked them back toward the country road. Nell was puffing hard and Sultan was in a lather; he was a bit soft. Pretty soon Twigg said:

"I'm going in to town to−morrow, Raymond; want to come along?"

"Yes," I said. Dad never would let me go to the city more than once in six months.

"Good enough; glad to have you. I'm going to run out to college in the afternoon to get some things from my trunk. Ever been out there?"

I shook my head.

"Maybe it'll interest you," he said. "I suppose you'll go there when you're ready, eh?"

"Might as well go to one as another, I guess," said I.

"Perhaps; but I'd like you to go to mine," he answered, kind of gravely. "I think it's a little better than the others, you see."

"I suppose you won't be there," I said, flicking Nell's ear with my crop.

"I'm not so sure," he said. "I'm trying for an instructorship. I get my Ph. D. next year. Then I want to go to Germany for a year to study. You're helping to pay for that," he said with a smile.

"I am?"

"Yes; the money I get for your tutoring is to go for that."

"Oh," I said. "Then—then you're coming back to college?"

"If they'll have me."

"Hope they won't," I said.

But I didn't.

The next Wednesday we had lessons after breakfast, because it was a good deal cooler. Twigg said I had studied first rate, and if I liked we'd have a go at golf. So we did. I beat him one up and two to play. I thought at first he was just letting me win, but he wasn't. He didn't seem to be thinking of golf and looked sort of sober all the way round. When we'd finished he said:

"Raymond, I don't think I'll have an opportunity to use my clubs again this summer, and so, if you'd like me to, I'll leave them here. I dare say you could get some fun out of them. You could get a good deal of practice that would help you a lot later on."

"Leave them?" I asked. "I—I didn't know you were going away."

"You forget that my month's up to−morrow," he answered quietly. "I was to have a month in which to see what I could do. If by the end of that time I had managed to get you in control I was to stay on. That was the agreement with your father."

"Oh," I muttered. We were sitting under the big maple tree on the lawn. I had an iron putter and was digging a hole in the turf.

"Yes," he continued, "to−morrow ends the present arrangement. I wish very much that I could go to Mr. Dale and tell him that I had won. But I can't. I haven't won, Raymond. I have gained ground, but the victory is still a long way off."

"You—you've done better than the others," I muttered.

"Have I? Well, I'm glad of that; that's something, isn't it? No man likes to acknowledge utter defeat; I'm certain I don't."

I dug away with the putter for a minute. Then I said:

"If I asked dad to let you stay, don't you think he would?"

"Perhaps; but I wouldn't want to."

"Oh, if you want to go away, all right," I grumbled.

"I meant that I wouldn't care to remain just because of a whim of yours. If I believed that by staying I could accomplish something; if I thought that you wanted me to stay, knowing that it meant hard study—much harder than any you've been doing—and cheerful obedience; in short, Raymond, if I knew that I could honestly earn my salary, I'd stay."

He took out his pipe and filled it. I shoved the earth back into the hole in the turf. Nobody said anything for a while.

"I don't mind study—much," I said presently.

"It hasn't been hard yet," he answered.

"And I don't mind doing what you tell me to. You're—you're not like Simpkins, Browning, and Gabbett."

"I haven't pulled on the curb yet," he said.

I started a new hole.

"There'd be no more Harrisbridge and Nate Golden," he said, after a bit, watching the smoke from his pipe.

I stopped digging.

"No more cigarettes; pipes are better."

"Huh," I muttered.

"No more swearing; there'd be a fine for swearing."

"I—I wouldn't care," I said.

"Sure?"

"Sure!" I looked over at him. He was kind of smiling at me through the smoke. I tried to grin back, but my face got the twitches and there was a lump in my throat.

"You—you just stay here," I muttered.

A RACE WITH THE WATERS

Roy Milford pulled the brim of his faded sombrero further over his blue eyes and urged Scamp into a trot, though it was broiling hot. Roy had left the town two miles behind, and three more miles stretched between him and home. From the cantle of his saddle hung the two paper parcels which, with the mail in his pocket, explained his errand.

Not a breath of air stirred the dusty leaves of the cottonwoods along the road. Roy was barely fourteen years old; but his six years in Colorado had taught him what such weather foretold, and there were plenty of other signs of the approaching storm. In the uncultivated fields the little mounds before the prairie dog holes were untenanted; the silver poplars, weather wise, were displaying the under sides of their gleaming leaves; the birds were silent; and the still, oppressive air was charged with electricity. But, most unmistakable sign of all, over the flat purple peaks of the Mesa Grande, hung a long bank of sullen, blackish clouds. There was the storm, already marshaling its forces. Roy was certain that, after the month of rainless weather just passed, the coming deluge would be something to wonder at.

Where the road crossed the railroad track Roy touched his buckskin pony with the quirt and loped westward until he reached a rail gate leading into an uncultivated field. Here he leaped nimbly out of the saddle, threw open the gate, sent Scamp through with a pat on the shoulder, closed the bars again, remounted, and trotted over the sun−cracked adobe. Two hundred yards away a fringe of greasewood bushes marked what, at this distance, appeared to be a water course. Such, in a way, it was. But Roy had never seen more water in it than he could have jumped across. It was a narrow arroyo or gully, varying in width from twelve to twenty feet, and averaging fifteen feet in depth. It ran almost due north and south for a distance of five miles, through a bare, level prairie tenanted only by roving cattle and horses—if one excepts rabbits, prairie dogs, rattlesnakes, owls, lizards, and scorpions. There was no vegetation except grease−wood, cactus, and sagebrush. In heavy rains or during sudden meltings of the snow back on the mountains, each of several small gullies bore its share of water to the junction at the beginning; of the arroyo, from whence it sped, tumbling and churning through the miniature gorge, southward to the river.

To Roy, who loved adventure, the arroyo was ever a source of pleasure, with its twilit depths and firm sandy bed. He knew every inch of it. Many were the imaginary adventures he had gone through in its winding depths, now as a painted Arapahoe on the warpath, now as a county sheriff on the trail of murderous desperadoes, again as a mighty hunter searching the sandy floor for the tracks of bears and mountain lions. He had found strange things in the arroyo—rose−quartz arrow heads, notched like saws; an old, rusted Colt's revolver, bearing the date 1858, and a picture of the holding up of a stagecoach engraved around the chamber; queer, tiny shells of some long gone fresh−water snail; bits of yellow pottery, their edges worn smooth and round by the water; to say nothing of birds' nests, villages of ugly water−white scorpions; and lizards, from the tiny ones that change their color, chameleonlike, to “racers” well over a foot long.

From end to end of the arroyo there were but two places where it was possible to enter or leave. Both of these had been made by cattle crossing from side to side. One was just back of Roy's home and the other was nearly two miles south. It was toward the latter that Roy was heading his horse. He thought with pleasure of the comparative comfort awaiting him in the shaded depths. Brushing the perspiration out of his eyes, he glanced northward. Even as he looked the summits of the peaks were blurred from sight by a dark gray veil of rain. Above, all was blackness save when for an instant a wide, white sheet of lightning blazed above the mesa, and was followed a moment later by the first tremendous roar of thunder. Scamp pricked up his drooping ears and mended his pace.

“We are going to get good and wet before we get home,” muttered Roy. “Come on, Scamp!”

They reached the edge of the arroyo and the little pony, lurching from side to side, clambered carefully down the narrow path to the bottom. Once there, Roy used his quirt again, and the horse broke into a gallop that carried them fast over the sandy bed. On both sides the walls of adobe and yellow clay rose as straight as though of masonry. Along the brink grew stunted bushes of greasewood and of sage. Here and there the tap root of a greasewood was half exposed for its entire length, just as it had been left by the falling earth. Many of these yellow−brown roots, tough as hempen rope, descended quite to the bottom of the arroyo, for the greasewood

perseveres astonishingly in its search for moisture.

As Scamp hurried along the brown and gray lizards darted across his path, and the mother scorpions, taking the air at the entrances of their holes, scuttled out of sight. Roy took off his hat and let the little draught of air that blew through the chasm dry the perspiration on face and hair. Presently the sunlight above gave way to a sullen, silent shadow. The air grew strangely quiet; even the lizards no longer moved. Roy gazed straight upward into the slowly rolling depths of a dark cloud, and heartily wished himself at home. He had seen many a storm; but the one that was approaching now made him almost afraid. The little twigs of greasewood shivered and bent, and a cool breath fanned his cheek. There came a great drop, splashing against his bare brown hand; then another; then many, each leaving a spot of moisture on the dry sand as big as a silver dollar. Roy put his sombrero on and drew the string tightly back of his head. He buttoned his blue−flannel shirt at the throat, patted Scamp encouragingly on his reeking neck, and rode on.

For the last ten minutes the thunder had been roaring at intervals, drawing nearer and nearer, and now it crashed directly overhead with a mighty sound that shook the earth and sent Scamp bounding out of his path in terror. Then down came the rain. It was as though a million buckets had been emptied upon him; it fell in livid, hissing sheets and walls, taking strange shapes, like pillars and columns that came from a dim nowhere and rushed past him into the gray void behind. He was drenched ere he could have turned in his saddle; his eyes were filled with rain, it ran dripping from his soaking hat brim and coursed down his arms and chest and back. For a moment even Scamp, experienced cow pony that he was, plunged and snorted loudly, until Roy's voice shouted encouragement. Then he raced forward again. But almost at once his gait shortened; the bed of the arroyo was running with water and the softened sand made heavy going. Roy could scarcely distinguish the walls on either side; but he knew that when the storm had broken the path leading up out of the arroyo was about a half mile ahead of him.

As suddenly as it had begun the deluge lessened. The walls, running with mud, were crumbling and falling here and there in miniature landslides. Scamp was plunging badly in the soft ground, and so Roy slowed him down to a trot. He could not, he told himself grimly, get one speck wetter. There was little use in hurrying. With sudden recollection of his bundles, Roy glanced back. Only a wisp of wet brown paper sticking to the cantle remained; the water had soaked the wrappings—baking powder, flavoring extract, dried fruit, and all the rest of it, had utterly disappeared.

But Roy's regrets were cut short by Scamp. That animal suddenly stopped short, pricked his ears forward, and showed every symptom of terror. Roy, wondering, urged him onward. But two steps beyond the horse again stopped and strove to turn. Roy quieted him and, peering forward up the gully, through the driving mist of rain, tried to account for the animal's fright. Was it a bear? he wondered. He knew that there were some in the foothills, and it was quite possible that one had taken shelter here in the arroyo. Then, as he looked, a roaring sound, which the boy had mistaken for the beat of the rain, rose and grew in volume until it drowned the hissing of the storm and filled the arroyo. Around a bend of the gully only a few yards ahead came a wave of turbid, yellow water, bearing above it a great rolling bank of white froth.

For an instant Roy gazed. Then, heart in mouth, he swung Scamp on his haunches and tore madly back the way he had come. He knew on the instant what had happened. There had been a cloud−burst on the mesa or among the foothills, and all the little gullies had emptied their water into the mouth of the arroyo. He knew also that if the flood caught him there between those prisonlike walls he would be drowned like a rat. The nearest place of refuge was a mile and a half away!

After the first moment of wild terror he grew calm. On his courage and coolness rested his chance for life. He crouched far over the saddle horn and lashed Scamp with the dripping quirt. Urging was unnecessary, for it seemed the horse knew that Death was rushing along behind them. He raced as Roy had never seen him run before. The walls rushed by, dim and misty. In a minute Boy gathered courage to glance back over his shoulder. His heart sank—only a yard or two behind them rushed the foam−topped wave. Here and there the sides of the arroyo melted in the flood and toppled downward, yards at a time, sending the yellow water high in air, but making no sound above its roaring. Behind the first wave, perhaps a half hundred feet to the rear, came a second, showing no froth on its crest, but higher and mightier. And farther back the arroyo seemed filled almost to the tops of the banks with the rushing waters. Roy used the quirt ruthlessly, searching the banks as they sped by in the forlorn hope of finding some place that would offer a means of egress, yet knowing well as he did so that the

nearest way out was still a full mile distant.

He wondered what death by drowning was like. Somewhere he had read that it was painless and quick; but that was in a story. Then he wondered what his mother would do without him to fetch the water from the cistern back of the kitchen, and feed the chickens and look after the hives. He wondered, too, if they would ever find his body—and Scamp's! The thought that poor, gallant old Scamp must die too struck him as the hardest thing of all. He loved Scamp as he loved none else save father and mother; they had had their little disagreements, when Scamp refused to come to the halter in the corral and had to be roped, but they always made up, with petting and sugar beets from Roy and remorseful whinnies and lipping of the boy's cheek from Scamp. And now Scamp must be drowned!

It was difficult going now, for the turbid stream reached above the horse's knees; but the animal was mad with fright, and he plunged desperately onward. Roy looked up toward the gray skies, through a world of gleaming rain, and said both the prayers he knew. After that he felt better, somehow, and when the second wave caught them, almost bearing Scamp from his sturdy feet, he looked calmly about him, searching the uncertain shadows which he knew were the walls of the chasm. He had made up his mind to give Scamp a chance for life. He tossed aside his quirt, patted the wet neck of the plunging animal and whispered a choking "Good−by." Then, as the flood swept the horse from his feet and swung him sideways against one wall, Roy kicked his feet from the stirrups and sprang blindly toward the bank, clutching in space.

He struck against the soggy earth and, still clutching with his hands, sank downward inch by inch, his crooked fingers bringing the moist clay with them and his feet finding no lodgment. The water swept him outward then, tearing at his writhing legs. Just as his last clutch failed him his other hand encountered something that was not bare, crumbling earth, and held it desperately. The flood buffeted him and tossed the lower half of his body to and fro like a straw. The muddy water splashed into his face, blinding, choking him. But the object within his grasp remained firm. For a moment he swung there, gasping, with closed eyes. Then he blinked the water from his lids and looked. His left hand was clutching the thick tap root of a greasewood. In an instant he seized it with his other hand as well, and looked about him. Scamp was no longer in sight. The water was rising rapidly. The noise was terrific. All about him the walls, undermined by the flood, were slipping down in wet, crumbling masses. He wondered if the root would hold him, and prayed that it might. Then the water came up to his breast, and he knew that if he were to save himself he must manage somehow to crawl upward. Perhaps—perhaps he might even climb quite out of the chasm! If only the earth and the root would hold!

Taking a deep breath he clutched the tap root a foot higher and tried his weight upon it. It held like a rope. He pulled himself a foot higher from the waters. Once more, and then he found that he had command of his legs and could dig his feet into the unstable clay. Then, inch by inch, scarce daring to hope, he pulled himself up, up until he was free of the flood and between him and the ground above only a scant yard remained. Below him the rushing torrents roared, as though angry at his escape, and tossed horrid yellow spray upon him.

Once more he took fresh grip of the slippery root, watching anxiously the low bush at the edge of the bank. Each moment he thought to see it give toward him and send him tossing back into the water. But still it held. At last, hours and hours it seemed since he had first begun his journey, his hand clutched the edge of the bank, but the earth came away in wet handfuls at every clutch. At length his fingers encountered a sprawling root or branch, he knew not which, just beyond his sight; and, digging his toes into the wall in a final despairing effort, he scrambled over the brink and rolled fainting to the rain−soaked ground.

How long he lay there he never knew. But presently a tremor of the earth roused him. Stumbling to his feet, he rushed away from the arroyo just as the bank, for yards behind him, disappeared. After that he struggled onward through the driving rain until he sank exhausted to the ground, burying his head in his arms.

They found him there, hours afterwards, fast asleep, his wet clothes steaming in the hot afternoon sunlight. They put him into the wagon of the nearest rancher and jolted him home, his head in his father's lap and the great horse blankets thrown over him, making him dream that he was a loaf of bread in his mother's oven.

"When Scamp came in, wet and almost dead, we feared you were gone." They were sitting about the supper table. Roy had told his story to a wondering audience, and now, with his plate well filled with mother's best watermelon preserve and citron cake, he was supremely contented, if somewhat tired and sobered. His father continued, his rugged face working as he recalled the anxiety of the day: "I can't see how that broncho ever got out of there alive; can you, boys? And to think," he added wonderingly, "that it was the root of a pesky

greasewood bush that saved your life! Boy, I don't reckon I'll ever have the heart again to grub one of 'em up!”

A COLLEGE SANTA CLAUSE

Satherwaite, '02, threw his overcoat across the broad mahogany table, regardless of the silver and cut−glass furnishings, shook the melting snowflakes from his cap and tossed it atop the coat, half kicked, half shoved a big leathern armchair up to the wide fireplace, dropped himself into it, and stared moodily at the flames.

Satherwaite was troubled. In fact, he assured himself, drawing his handsome features into a generous scowl, that he was, on this Christmas eve, the most depressed and bored person in the length and breadth of New England. Satherwaite was not used to being depressed, and boredom was a state usually far remote from his experience; consequently, he took it worse. With something between a groan and a growl, he drew a crumpled telegram from his pocket. The telegram was at the bottom of it all. He read it again:

E. SATHERWAITE,

Randolph Hall, Cambridge.

Advise your not coming. Aunt Louise very ill.

Merry Christmas.

PHIL.

"' Merry Christmas!'" growled Satherwaite, throwing the offending sheet of buff paper into the flames. "Looks like it, doesn't it? Confound Phil's Aunt Louise, anyway! What business has she getting sick at Christmas time? Not, of course, that I wish the old lady any harm, but it—it—well, it's wretched luck."

When at college, Phil was the occupant of the bedroom that lay in darkness beyond the half−opened door to the right. He lived, when at home, in a big, rambling house in the Berkshires, a house from the windows of which one could see into three states and overlook a wonderful expanse of wooded hill and sloping meadow; a house which held, besides Phil, and Phil's father and mother and Aunt Louise and a younger brother, Phil's sister. Satherwaite growled again, more savagely, at the thought of Phil's sister; not, be it understood, at that extremely attractive young lady, but at the fate which was keeping her from his sight.

Satherwaite had promised his roommate to spend Christmas with him, thereby bringing upon himself pained remonstrances from his own family, remonstrances which, Satherwaite acknowledged, were quite justifiable. His bags stood beside the door. He had spent the early afternoon very pleasurably in packing them, carefully weighing the respective merits of a primrose waistcoat and a blue−flannel one, as weapons wherewith to impress the heart of Phil's sister. And now—!

He kicked forth his feet, and brought brass tongs and shovel clattering on the hearth. It relieved his exasperation.

The fatal telegram had reached him at five o'clock, as he was on the point of donning his coat. From five to six, he had remained in a torpor of disappointment, continually wondering whether Phil's sister would care. At six, his own boarding house being closed for the recess, he had trudged through the snow to a restaurant in the square, and had dined miserably on lukewarm turkey and lumpy mashed potatoes. And now it was nearly eight, and he did not even care to smoke. His one chance of reaching his own home that night had passed, and there was nothing for it but to get through the interminable evening somehow, and catch an early train in the morning. The theaters in town offered no attraction. As for his club, he had stopped in on his way from dinner, and had fussed with an evening paper, until the untenanted expanse of darkly furnished apartments and the unaccustomed stillness had driven him forth again.

He drew his long legs under him, and arose, crossing the room and drawing aside the deep−toned hangings before the window. It was still snowing. Across the avenue, a flood of mellow light from a butcher's shop was thrown out over the snowy sidewalk. Its windows were garlanded with Christmas greens and hung with pathetic looking turkeys and geese. Belated shoppers passed out, their arms piled high with bundles. A car swept by, its drone muffled by the snow. The spirit of Christmas was in the very air. Satherwaite's depression increased and, of a sudden, inaction became intolerable. He would go and see somebody, anybody, and make them talk to him; but, when he had his coat in his hands, he realized that even this comfort was denied him. He had friends in town, nice folk who would be glad to see him any other time, but into whose family gatherings he could no more force himself to−night than he could steal. As for the men he knew in college, they had all gone to their homes or to

those of somebody else.

Staring disconsolately about the study, it suddenly struck him that the room looked disgustingly slovenly and unkempt. Phil was such an untidy beggar! He would fix things up a bit. If he did it carefully and methodically, no doubt he could consume a good hour and a half that way. It would then be half past nine. Possibly, if he tried hard, he could use up another hour bathing and getting ready for bed.

As a first step, he removed his coat from the table, and laid it carefully across the foot of the leather couch. Then he placed his damp cap on one end of the mantel. The next object to meet his gaze was a well−worn notebook. It was not his own, and it did not look like Phil's. The mystery was solved when he opened it and read, “H.G. Doyle—College House,” on the fly leaf. He remembered then. He had borrowed it from Doyle almost a week before, at a lecture. He had copied some of the notes, and had forgotten to return the book. It was very careless of him; he would return it as soon as—Then he recollected having seen Doyle at noon that day, coming from one of the cheaper boarding houses. It was probable that Doyle was spending recess at college. Just the thing—he would call on Doyle!

It was not until he was halfway downstairs that he remembered the book. He went back for it, two steps at a time. Out in the street, with the fluffy flakes against his face, he felt better. After all, there was no use in getting grouchy over his disappointment; Phil would keep; and so would Phil's sister, at least until Easter; or, better yet, he would get Phil to take him home with him over Sunday some time. He was passing the shops now, and stopped before a jeweler's window, his eye caught by a rather jolly−looking paper knife in gun metal. He had made his purchases for Christmas and had already dispatched them, but the paper knife looked attractive and, if there was no one to give it to, he could keep it himself. So he passed into the shop, and purchased it.

“Put it into a box, will you?” he requested. “I may want to send it away.”

Out on the avenue again, his thoughts reverted to his prospective host. The visit had elements of humor. He had known Doyle at preparatory school, and since then, at college, had maintained the acquaintance in a casual way. He liked Doyle, always had, just as any man must like an honest, earnest, gentlemanly fellow, whether their paths run parallel or cross only at rare intervals. He and Doyle were not at all in the same coterie, Satherwaite's friends were the richest, and sometimes the laziest, men in college; Doyle's were—well, presumably men who, like himself, had only enough money to scrape through from September to June, who studied hard for degrees, whose viewpoint of university life must, of necessity, be widely separated from Satherwaite's. As for visiting Doyle, Satherwaite could not remember ever having been in his room but once, and that was long ago, in their Freshman year.

Satherwaite had to climb two flights of steep and very narrow stairs, and when he stood at Doyle's door, he thought he must have made a mistake. From within came the sounds of very unstudious revelry, laughter, a snatch of song, voices raised in good−natured argument. Satherwaite referred again to the fly leaf of the notebook; there was no error. He knocked and, in obedience to a cheery “Come in!” entered.

He found himself in a small study, shabbily furnished, but cheerful and homelike by reason of the leaping flames in the grate and the blue haze of tobacco smoke that almost hid its farther wall. About the room sat six men, their pipes held questioningly away from their mouths and their eyes fixed wonderingly, half resentfully, upon the intruder. But what caught and held Satherwaite's gaze was a tiny Christmas tree, scarcely three feet high, which adorned the center of the desk. Its branches held toy candles, as yet unlighted, and were festooned with strings of crimson cranberries and colored popcorn, while here and there a small package dangled amidst the greenery.

“How are you, Satherwaite?”

Doyle, tall, lank and near−sighted, arose and moved forward, with outstretched hand. He was plainly embarrassed, as was every other occupant of the study, Satherwaite included. The laughter and talk had subsided. Doyle's guests politely removed their gaze from the newcomer, and returned their pipes to their lips. But the newcomer was intruding, and knew it, and he was consequently embarrassed. Embarrassment, like boredom, was a novel sensation to him, and he speedily decided that he did not fancy it. He held out Doyle's book.

“I brought this back, old man. I don't know how I came to forget it. I'm awfully sorry, you know; it was so very decent of you to lend it to me. Awfully sorry, really.”

Doyle murmured that it didn't matter, not a particle; and wouldn't Satherwaite sit down?

No, Satherwaite couldn't stop. He heard the youth in the faded cricket−blazer tell the man next to him, in a

stage aside, that this was “Satherwaite, '02, an awful swell, you know.” Satherwaite again declared that he could not remain.

Doyle said he was sorry; they were just having a little—a sort of a Christmas−eve party, you know. He blushed while he explained, and wondered whether Satherwaite thought them a lot of idiots, or simply a parcel of sentimental kids. Probably Satherwaite knew some of the fellows? he went on.

Satherwaite studied the assemblage, and replied that he thought not, though he remembered having seen several of them at lectures and things. Doyle made no move toward introducing his friends to Satherwaite, and, to relieve the momentary silence that followed, observed that he supposed it was getting colder. Satherwaite replied, absently, that he hadn't noticed, but that it was still snowing. The youth in the cricket−blazer fidgeted in his chair. Satherwaite was thinking.

Of course, he was not wanted there; he realized that. Yet, he was of half a mind to stay. The thought of his empty room dismayed him. The cheer and comfort before him appealed to him forcibly. And, more than all, he was possessed of a desire to vindicate himself to this circle of narrow−minded critics. Great Scott! just because he had some money and went with some other fellows who also had money, he was to be promptly labeled “snob,” and treated with polite tolerance only. By Jove, he would stay, if only to punish them for their narrowness!

“You're sure I shan't be intruding, Doyle?” he asked.

Doyle gasped in amazement. Satherwaite removed his coat. A shiver of consternation passed through the room. Then the host found his tongue.

“Glad to have you. Nothing much doing. Few friends, Quiet evening. Let me take your coat.”

Introductions followed. The man in the cricket−blazer turned out to be Doak, '03, the man who had won the Jonas Greeve scholarship; a small youth with eaglelike countenance was Somers, he who had debated so brilliantly against Princeton; a much−bewhiskered man was Ailworth, of the Law School; Kranch and Smith, both members of Satherwaite's class, completed the party. Satherwaite shook hands with those within reach, and looked for a chair. Instantly everyone was on his feet; there was a confused chorus of “Take this, won't you?” Satherwaite accepted a straight−backed chair with part of its cane seat missing, after a decent amount of protest; then a heavy, discouraging silence fell. Satherwaite looked around the circle. Everyone save Ailworth and Doyle was staring blankly at the fire. Ailworth dropped his eyes gravely; Doyle broke out explosively with:

“Do you smoke, Satherwaite?”

“Yes, but I'm afraid—” he searched his pockets perfunctorily—“I haven't my pipe with me.” His cigarette case met his searching fingers, but somehow cigarettes did not seem appropriate.

“I'm sorry,” said Doyle, “but I'm afraid I haven't an extra one. Any of you fellows got a pipe that's not working?”

Murmured regrets followed. Doak, who sat next to Satherwaite, put a hand in his coat pocket, and viewed the intruder doubtingly from around the corners of his glasses.

“It doesn't matter a bit,” remarked Satherwaite heartily.

“I've got a sort of a pipe here,” said Doak, “if you're not overparticular what you smoke.”

Satherwaite received the pipe gravely. It was a blackened briar, whose bowl was burned halfway down on one side, from being lighted over the gas, and whose mouthpiece, gnawed away in long usage, had been reshaped with a knife. Satherwaite examined it with interest, rubbing the bowl gently on his knee. He knew, without seeing, that Doak was eying him with mingled defiance and apology, and wondering in what manner a man who was used to meerschaums and gold−mounted briars would take the proffer of his worn−out favorite; and he knew, too, that all the others were watching. He placed the stem between his lips, and drew on it once or twice, with satisfaction.

“It seems a jolly old pipe,” he said; “I fancy you must be rather fond of it. Has anyone got any 'baccy?”

Five pouches were tendered instantly.

Satherwaite filled his pipe carefully. He had won the first trick, he told himself, and the thought was pleasurable. The conversation had started up again, but it was yet perfunctory, and Satherwaite realized that he was still an outsider. Doyle gave him the opportunity he wanted.

“Isn't it something new for you to stay here through recess?” he asked.

Then Satherwaite told about Phil's Aunt Louise and the telegram; about his dismal dinner at the restaurant and the subsequent flight from the tomblike silence of the club; how he had decided, in desperation, to clean up his study, and how he had come across Doyle's notebook. He told it rather well; he had a reputation for that sort of

thing, and to−night he did his best. He pictured himself to his audience on the verge of suicide from melancholia, and assured them that this fate had been averted only through his dislike of being found lifeless amid such untidy surroundings. He decked the narrative with touches of drollery, and was rewarded with the grins that overspread the faces of his hearers. Ailworth nodded appreciatingly, now and then, and Doak even slapped his knee once and giggled aloud. Satherwaite left out all mention of Phil's sister, naturally, and ended with:

"And so, when I saw you fellows having such a Christian, comfortable sort of a time, I simply couldn't break away again. I knew I was risking getting myself heartily disliked, and really I wouldn't blame you if you arose *en masse* and kicked me out. But I am desperate. Give me some tobacco from time to time, and just let me sit here and listen to you; it will, be a kindly act to a homeless orphan."

"Shut up!" said Doyle heartily; "we're glad to have you, of course." The others concurred. "We—we're going to light up the tree after a bit. We do it every year, you know. It's kind of—of Christmassy when you don't get home for the holidays, you see. We give one another little presents and—and have rather a bit of fun out of it. Only—" he hesitated doubtfully—"only I'm afraid it may bore you awfully."

"Bore me!" cried Satherwaite; "why, man alive, I should think it would be the jolliest sort of a thing. It's just like being kids again." He turned and observed the tiny tree with interest.

"And do you mean that you all give one another presents, and keep it secret, and—and all that?"

"Yes; just little things, you know," answered Doak deprecatingly.

"It's the nearest thing to a real Christmas that I've known for seven years," said Ailworth gravely. Satherwaite observed him wonderingly.

"By Jove!" he murmured; "seven years! Do you know, I'm glad now I am going home, instead of to Sterner's for Christmas. A fellow ought to be with his own folks, don't you think?"

Everybody said yes heartily and there was a moment of silence in the room. Presently Kranch, whose home was in Michigan, began speaking reminiscently of the Christmases he had spent when a lad in the pine woods. He made the others feel the cold and the magnitude of the pictures he drew, and, for a space, Satherwaite was transported to a little lumber town in a clearing, and stood by excitedly, while a small boy in jeans drew woolen mittens—wonderful ones of red and gray—from out a Christmas stocking. And Somers told of a Christmas he had once spent in a Quebec village; and Ailworth followed him with an account of Christmas morning in a Maine−coast fishing town.

Satherwaite was silent. He had no Christmases of his own to tell about; they would have been sorry, indeed, after the others; Christmases in a big Philadelphia house, rather staid and stupid days, as he remembered them now, days lacking in any delightful element of uncertainty, but filled with wonderful presents so numerous that the novelty had worn away from them ere bedtime. He felt that, somehow, he had been cheated out of a pleasure which should have been his.

The tobacco pouches went from hand to hand. Christmas−giving had already begun; and Satherwaite, to avoid disappointing his new friends, had to smoke many more pipes than was good for him. Suddenly they found themselves in darkness, save for the firelight. Doyle had arisen stealthily and turned out the gas. Then, one by one, the tiny candles flickered and flared bluely into flame. Some one pulled the shades from before the two windows, and the room was hushed. Outside they could see the flakes falling silently, steadily, between them and the electric lights that shone across the avenue. It was a beautiful, cold, still world of blue mists. A gong clanged softly, and a car, well−nigh untenanted, slid by beneath them, its windows, frosted halfway up, flooding the snow with mellow light. Some one beside Satherwaite murmured gently:

"Good old Christmas!"

The spell was broken, Satherwaite sighed—why, he hardly knew—and turned away from the window. The tree was brilliantly lighted now, and the strings of cranberries caught the beams ruddily. Doak stirred the fire, and Doyle, turning from a whispered consultation with some of the others, approached Satherwaite.

"Would you mind playing Santa Claus—give out the presents, you know; we always do it that way?"

Satherwaite would be delighted; and, better to impersonate that famous old gentleman, he turned up the collar of his jacket, and put each hand up the opposite sleeve, looking as benignant as possible the while.

"That's fine!" cried Smith; "but hold on, you need a cap!"

He seized one from the window seat, a worn thing of yellowish−brown otter, and drew it down over Satherwaite's ears. The crowd applauded merrily.

"Dear little boys and girls," began Satherwaite in a quavering voice.

"No girls!" cried Doak.

"I want the cranberries!" cried Smith; "I love cranberries."

"I get the popcorn, then!" That was the sedate Ailworth.

"You'll be beastly sick," said Doak, grinning jovially through his glasses.

Satherwaite untied the first package from its twig. It bore the inscription, "For Little Willie Kranch." Everyone gathered around while the recipient undid the wrappings, and laid bare a penwiper adorned with a tiny crimson football. Doak explained to Satherwaite that Kranch had played football just once, on a scrub team, and had heroically carried the ball down a long field, and placed it triumphantly under his own goal posts. This accounted for the laughter that ensued.

"Sammy Doak" received a notebook marked "Mathematics 3a." The point of this allusion was lost to Satherwaite, for Doak was too busy laughing to explain it. And so it went, and the room was in a constant roar of mirth. Doyle was conferring excitedly with Ailworth across the room. By and by, he stole forward, and, detaching one of the packages from the tree, erased and wrote on it with great secrecy. Then he tied it back again, and retired to the hearth, grinning expectantly, until his own name was called, and he was shoved forward to receive a rubber pen−holder.

Presently, Satherwaite, working around the Christmas tree, detached a package, and frowned over the address.

"Fellows, this looks like—like Satherwaite, but—" he viewed the assemblage in embarrassment—"but I fancy it's a mistake."

"Not a bit," cried Doyle; "that's just my writing."

"Open it!" cried the others, thronging up to him.

Satherwaite obeyed, wondering. Within the wrappers was a pocket memorandum book, a simple thing of cheap red leather. Some one laughed uncertainly. Satherwaite, very red, ran his finger over the edges of the leaves, examined it long, as though he had never seen anything like it before, and placed it in his waistcoat pocket.

"I—I—" he began.

"Chop it off!" cried some one joyously.

"I'm awfully much obliged to—to whoever—"

"It's from the gang," said Doyle.

"With a Merry Christmas," said Ailworth.

"Thank you—gang," said Satherwaite.

The distribution went on, but presently, when all the rest were crowding about Somers, Satherwaite whipped a package from his pocket and, writing on it hurriedly, was apparently in the act of taking it from the tree, when the others turned again.

"Little Harry Doyle," he read gravely.

Doyle viewed the package in amazement. He had dressed the tree himself.

"Open it up, old man!"

When he saw the gun−metal paper knife, he glanced quickly at Satherwaite. He was very red in the face. Satherwaite smiled back imperturbably. The knife went from hand to hand, awakening enthusiastic admiration.

"But, I say, old man, who gave—?" began Smith.

"I'm awfully much obliged, Satherwaite," said Doyle, "but, really, I couldn't think of taking—"

"Chop it off!" echoed Satherwaite. "Look here, Doyle, it isn't the sort of thing I'd give you from choice; it's a useless sort of toy, but I just happened to have it with me; bought it in the square on the way to give to some one, I didn't know who, and so, if you don't mind, I wish you'd accept it, you know. It'll do to put on the table or—open cans with. If you'd rather not take it, why, chuck it out of the window!"

"It isn't that," cried Doyle; "it's only that it's much too fine——"

"Oh, no, it isn't," said Satherwaite. "Now, then, where's 'Little Alfie Ailworth'?"

Small candy canes followed the packages, and the men drew once more around the hearth, munching the pink and white confectionery enjoyingly. Smith insisted upon having the cranberries, and wore them around his neck. The popcorn was distributed equally, and the next day, in the parlor car, Satherwaite drew his from a pocket together with his handkerchief.

Some one struck up a song, and Doyle remembered that Satherwaite had been in the Glee Club. There was an instant clamor for a song, and Satherwaite, consenting, looked about the room.

“Haven't any thump box,” said Smith. “Can't you go it alone?”

Satherwaite thought he could, and did. He had a rich tenor voice, and he sang all the songs he knew. When it could be done, by hook or by crook, the others joined in the chorus; not too loudly, for it was getting late and proctors have sharp ears. When the last refrain had been repeated for the third time, and silence reigned for the moment, they heard the bell in the near−by tower. They counted its strokes; eight—nine—ten—eleven—twelve.

“Merry Christmas, all!” cried Smith.

In the clamor that ensued, Satherwaite secured his coat and hat. He shook hands all around. Smith insisted upon sharing the cranberries with him, and so looped a string gracefully about his neck. When Satherwaite backed out the door he still held Doak's pet pipe clenched between his teeth, and Doak, knowing it, said not a word.

“Hope you'll come back and see us,” called Doyle.

“That's right, old man, don't forget us!” shouted Ailworth.

And Satherwaite, promising again and again not to, stumbled his way down the dark stairs.

Outside, he glanced gratefully up at the lighted panes. Then he grinned, and, scooping a handful of snow, sent it fairly against the glass. Instantly, the windows banged up, and six heads thrust themselves out.

“Good night! Merry Christmas, old man! Happy New Year!”

Something smashed softly against Satherwaite's cheek. He looked back. They were gathering snow from the ledges and throwing snowballs after him.

“Good shot!” he called. “Merry Christmas!”

The sound of their cries and laughter followed him far down the avenue.

THE TRIPLE PLAY

“If they hadn't gone and made Don captain last year,” said Satterlee, 2d, plaintively. “That's where the trouble is.”

“How do you mean?” asked Tom Pierson, looking up in a puzzled way from the hole he was digging in the turf in front of the school hall.

“Why,” answered Satterlee, 2d, with a fine air of wisdom, “I mean that it doesn't do for a fellow to have his brother captain. Don's been so afraid of showing me favoritism all spring that he hasn't given me even a fair chance. When I came out for the nine in March and tried for second he was worried to death. “Look here, Kid,” he said, “there's no use your wanting to play on second because there's Henen and Talbot after it.” “Well, how do you know I can't play second as well as they?” says I. He was—was horrified. That's it; a fellow can't understand how a member of his own family can do anything as well as some one else. See what I mean?”

Tom Pierson nodded doubtfully.

“'You try for a place in the outfield,' said Don. 'But I don't want to play in the outfield.' I told him. But it didn't make any difference. 'There's three fellows for every infield position.' said Don, 'and I'm not going to have the fellows accuse me of boosting my kid brother over their heads.' Well, so I did as he said. Of course I didn't have any show. There was Williams and Beeton and 'Chick' Meyer who could do a heap better than I could. They'd played in the outfield ail their lives and I'd always been at second—except one year that I caught when I was a kid. Well, maybe next year I'll have a better show, for a whole lot of this year's team graduate to−morrow. Wish I did.”

“I don't,” said Tom. “I like it here. I think Willard's the best school in the country.”

“So do I, of course,” answered Satterlee, 2d. “But don't you want to get up to college?”

“I'm in no hurry; you see, there's math; I'm not doing so badly at it now since Bailey has been helping me, but I don't believe I could pass the college exam in it.”

“You and 'Old Crusty' seem awfully thick these days,” mused the other. “Wish he'd be as easy on me as he is on you. You were fishing together yesterday, weren't you?”

Tom nodded. “Sixteen trout,” he said promptly.

“Wish I'd been along,” sighed Satterlee, 2d. “All I caught was flies during practice. Then when they played the second I sat on the bench as usual and looked on.”

“But Don will put you in this afternoon, won't he?”

“I dare say he will; for the last inning maybe. What good's that? Nothing ever happens to a chap in center field. And when a fellow's folks come to visit him he naturally wants to—to show off a bit.”

Tom nodded sympathetically.

“Hard lines,” he said. “But why don't you ask your brother to give you a fair show; put you in the sixth or something like that?”

“Because I won't. He doesn't think I can play baseball. I don't care. Only I hope—I hope we get beaten!”

“No, you don't.”

“How do you know?” asked the other morosely.

“Because you couldn't,” Tom replied. “Is 'Curly' going to pitch?”

“No, Durham's agreed not to play any of her faculty. Willings is going to pitch. I'll bet”—his face lost some of its gloom—“I'll bet it will be a dandy game!”

“Who's going to win?” asked Tom anxiously.

“You can search me!” answered Satterlee, 2d, cheerfully. “Durham's lost only two games this season, one to St. Eustace and one to us. And we've lost only the first game with Durham. There you are, Tommy; you can figure it out for yourself. But we won last year and it's safe to say Durham's going to work like thunder to win this. What time is it?”

“Twenty minutes to twelve,” answered Tom.

“Gee! I've got to find Don and go over to the station to meet the folks. Want to come along? Dad and the mater would like to meet you; you see I've said a good deal about you in my letters.”

"Won't I be in the way?"

"Not a bit. In fact—" Satterlee, 2d, hesitated and grinned—"in fact, it would make it more comfortable if you would come along. You see, Tom, Don and I aren't very chummy just now; I—I gave him a piece of my mind last night; and he threw the hairbrush at me." He rubbed the side of his head reflectively. Tom laughed and sprang to his feet.

"All right," he said. "I'll go, if just to keep you two from fighting. We'll have to hurry, though; you don't want to forget that dinner's half an hour earlier to−day."

"Guess you never knew me to forget dinner time, did you?" asked Satterlee, 2d, with a laugh.

Three hours later the two boys sat nursing their knees on the terrace above the playground. Behind them in camp chairs sat Mr. and Mrs. Satterlee. To right and left stretched a line of spectators, the boys of Willard's and of Durham surrounded by their friends and relatives. Tomorrow was graduation day at the school and mothers and fathers and sisters and elder brothers—many of the latter "old boys"—were present in numbers. At the foot of the terrace, near first base, a red and white striped awning had been erected and from beneath its shade the principal, Doctor Willard, together with the members of the faculty and their guests, sat and watched the deciding game of the series. The red of Willard's was predominant, but here and there a dash of blue, the color of the rival academy, was to be seen. On a bench over near third base a line of blue−stockinged players awaited their turns at bat, for it was the last half of the third inning and Willard's was in the field. Behind the spectators arose the ivy−draped front of the school hall and above them a row of elms cast grateful shade. Before them, a quarter of a mile distant, the broad bosom of the river flashed and sparkled in the afternoon sunlight. But few had eyes for that, for Durham had two men on bases with two out and one of her heavy hitters was at bat. Thus far there had been no scoring and now there was a breathless silence as Willings put the first ball over the plate.

"Strike!" droned the umpire, and a little knot of boys on the bank waved red banners and cheered delightedly. Then ball and bat came together and the runner was speeding toward first. But the hit had been weak and long before he reached the bag the ball was snuggling in Donald Satterlee's mitten, and up on the terrace the Willardians breathed their relief. The nines changed sides.

"That's Fearing, our catcher, going to bat, sir," said Satterlee, 2d, looking around at his father. Mr. Satterlee nodded and transferred his wandering attention to the youth in question. Mr. Satterlee knew very little about the game and was finding it difficult to display the proper amount of interest. Mrs. Satterlee, however, smiled enthusiastically at everything and everybody and succeeded in conveying the impression that she was breathlessly interested in events.

"Er—is he going to hit the ball?" asked Mr. Satterlee in a heroic endeavor to rise to the requirements of the occasion.

"He's going to try," answered his youngest son with a smile. "But he isn't going to succeed, I guess," he muttered a minute later. For the catcher had two strikes called on him and was still at the plate. Then all doubt was removed. He tossed aside his bat and turned back to the bench.

"And who is that boy?" asked Mrs. Satterlee.

"That's Cook," answered Tom. "He plays over there, you know; he's shortstop."

"Of course," murmured the lady. "I knew I had seen him."

Cook reached first, more by good luck than good playing, and the Willard supporters found their voices again. Then came Brown, third base−man, and was thrown out at first after having advanced Cook to second.

"Here comes Don," announced his younger brother with a trace of envy in his tones.

"I do hope he'll hit the ball!" cried his mother.

"Oh, he'll hit it all right," answered Satterlee, 2d, "only maybe he won't hit it hard enough."

Nor did he. Durham's third baseman gathered in the short fly that the batsman sent up and so ended the inning.

"Something's going to happen now, I'll bet," said Tom. "Carpenter's up."

"He didn't do much last time," objected Satterlee, 2d, "even if he is such a wonder. Willings struck him out dead easy."

Carpenter, who played third base for the visitors, was a tall, light−haired youth with a reputation for batting prowess. In the first game of the series between the two schools Carpenter's hitting had been the deciding feature. Three one−baggers, a two−bagger, and a home−run had been credited to him when the game was over, and it was the home−run, smashed out with a man on third in the eighth inning, which had defeated Willard's. In the second

game, played a fortnight ago, Carpenter had been noticeably out of form, which fact had not a little to do with Willard's victory. To−day the long−limbed gentleman, despite his retirement on the occasion of his first meeting with Willings, was in fine fettle, and scarcely had Satterlee, 2d, concluded his remark when there was a sharp *crack* and the white sphere was skimming second baseman's head. It was a clean, well−placed hit, and even the wearers of the blue had to applaud a little. Carpenter's long legs twinkled around the bases and he was safe at third before the ball had returned to the infield. Then things began to happen. As though the spell had been broken by the third baseman's three−bagger, the following Durhamites found the ball, man after man, and ere the inning was at an end, the score book told a different tale. On Durham's page stood four tallies; Willard's was still empty. And Willard's supporters began to look uneasy. Then there was no more scoring until the sixth inning, when a single by Donald Satterlee brought in Cook who had been taking big risks on second and who reached the plate a fraction of a second ahead of the ball. Willard's got the bases full that inning and for a time it seemed that they would tie the score, but Beeton popped a fly into shortstop's hands and their hopes were dashed.

Durham started their half of the sixth with Carpenter up and that dependable youth slammed out a two−base hit at once. The flaunters of the red groaned dismally. Then the Durham pitcher fouled out and the next man advanced Carpenter but was put out at first. Willard's breathed easier and took hope. Over on third base Carpenter was poised, ready to speed home as fast as his long legs would carry him. Willings, who had so far pitched a remarkable game, suddenly went “into the air.” Perhaps it was the coaching back of third, perhaps it was Carpenter's disconcerting rushes and hand−clapping. At all events, the Durham first baseman, who was a cool−headed youth, waited politely and patiently and so won the privilege of trotting to first on four balls. Fearing, Willard's catcher, walked down to Willings, and the two held a whispered conversation. They didn't lay any plots, for all Fearing wanted to do was to steady the pitcher.

Then came a strike on the next batsman, and the Willardians cheered hopefully. Two balls followed, and Carpenter danced about delightedly at third and the two coaches hurled taunting words at the pitcher. The man on first was taking a long lead, pretty certain that Willings would not dare to throw lest Carpenter score. But Willings believed in doing the unexpected. Unfortunately, although he turned like a flash and shot the ball to Satterlee, the throw was wide. The captain touched it with his outstretched fingers but it went by. The runner sped toward second and Carpenter raced home. But Beeton, right−fielder, had been wide−awake. As Willings turned he ran in to back up Satterlee, found the ball on a low bounce and, on the run, sent it to the plate so swiftly that Fearing was able to catch Carpenter a yard away from it. The Durham third baseman picked himself up, muttering his opinion of the proceedings and looking very cross. But what he said wasn't distinguishable, for up on the terrace the red flags were waving wildly and the boys of Willard's were shouting themselves hoarse.

When, in the beginning of the seventh inning, Durham took the field and Willings went to bat, Captain Don Satterlee came up the bank and threw himself on the grass by his father's side. He looked rather worried and very warm.

“Well, my boy,” said Mr. Satterlee, “I guess you're in for a licking this time, eh?”

“I'm afraid so,” was the morose reply. “We can't seem to find their pitcher for a cent.” He turned to his brother. “I'll put you in for the ninth, if you like,” he said.

“Oh, don't trouble yourself,” answered the other. “You've got along without me so far and I guess you can finish.”

“Well, you needn't be so huffy,” answered the elder. “You can play or not, just as you like. But you don't have to be ugly about it.”

“I'm not,” muttered Satterlee, 2d.

“Sounds mighty like it. Want to play?”

The other hesitated, swallowed once or twice and kicked the turf with his heel.

“Of course he wants to play, Don,” said Tom Pierson. “Give him a chance, like a good chap.”

“Well, I've offered him a chance, haven't I?” asked Don ungraciously. “I guess it doesn't make much difference who plays this game.” He scowled at Willings who had been thrown out easily at first and was now discouragedly walking back to the bench. “You can take Williams's place when the ninth begins,” he added, turning to his brother. The latter nodded silently. A slightly built, sandy−haired man, with bright blue eyes and a look of authority, approached the group and Don, with a muttered apology, joined him.

“That's our coach,” explained Tom to Mrs. Satterlee. “He's instructor in Greek and German, and he's a peach!

The fellows call him 'Curly' on account of his hair. He pitched for us last year and he won the game, too! I guess he and Don are trying to find some way out of the hole they're in. If anyone can do it he can, can't he?"

Thus appealed to, Satterlee, 2d, came out of his reverie.

"Yes, I guess so. I wish he was pitching, that's all I wish! I'll bet Carpenter wouldn't make any more of those hits of his!"

Willard's third out came and once more the teams changed places. The sun was getting low and the shadows on the terrace were lengthening. Durham started out with a batting streak and almost before anyone knew it the bases were full with but one out. Then, just when things were at their gloomiest, a short hit to second baseman resulted in a double play, and once more Willard's found cause for delight and acclaim.

The eighth inning opened with Don Satterlee at bat. Luck seemed for a moment to have made up its mind to favor the home team. An in−shoot caught the batsman on the thigh and he limped to first. Meyer—"Chick" Meyer, as Tom triumphantly explained—sent him to second and gained first for himself, owing to an error. Then came an out. Beeton followed with a scratch hit just back of shortstop and the bases were full. Up on the terrace the cheering was continuous. Williams was struck out. Then came Willings with a short hit past third and Don scored. And the bases were still full. But the next man flied out to left fielder and the cheering died away. But 2 to 4 was better than 1 to 4, and the supporters of the home team derived what comfort they could from the fact.

In the last of the eighth, the doughty Carpenter started things going by taking first on balls. It was apparent that "Willings had given it to him" rather than risk a long hit. The next man was less fortunate and was thrown out after a neat sacrifice which put Carpenter on second. Then a pop−fly was muffed by Willings and there were men on first and second. But after that Willings, as though to atone for an inexcusable error, settled down to work and struck out the next two Durhamites, and the red flags were suddenly crazy.

Satterlee, 2d, peeled off his sweater and trotted down to the bench. The ninth inning opened inauspiciously for the home nine. Willard's shortstop fell victim to the rival pitcher's curves and third baseman took his place. With two strikes called on him he found something he liked and let go at it. When the tumult was over he was sitting on second base. Don Satterlee stepped up to the plate and the cheerers demanded a home−run. But the best the red's captain could do was a clean drive into right field that was good for one base for himself and a tally for the man on second. That made the score 3 to 4. It seemed that at last fortune was to favor the red. The cheering went on and on. Meyer sent the captain to second but was thrown out at first. Another tally would tie the score, but the players who were coming to bat were the weakest hitters, and Willard's hopes began to dwindle. But one can never tell what will happen in baseball, and when Fearing lined out a swift ball over second baseman's head and Don Satterlee romped home, the wearers of the red shrieked in mingled delight and surprise. The score was tied. But there was more to come. Beeton waited, refusing all sorts of tempting bait, and during that waiting Fearing stole second. With three balls and two strikes called on him, Beeton let the next one go by, and——

"Four balls!" decided the umpire.

Satterlee, 2d, felt rather limp when he faced the pitcher. His heart was pounding somewhere up near his mouth and it made him feel uncomfortable. Down on second Fearing was watching him anxiously. On first Beeton was dancing back and forth, while behind him Brother Don coaching hoarsely and throwing doubtful glances in the direction of the plate.

"He thinks I can't hit," thought Satterlee, 2d, bitterly. "He's telling himself that if he'd left Williams in we might have tallied again."

Satterlee, 2d, smarting under his brother's contempt, felt his nerves steady and when the second delivery came he was able to judge it and let it go by. That made a ball and a strike. Then came another ball. They had told him to wait for a good one, and he was going to do it. And presently the good one came. The pitcher had put himself in a hole; there were three balls against him and only one strike. So now he sent a swift straight one for a corner of the plate and Satterlee, 2d, watched it come and then swung to meet it. And in another moment he was streaking for his base, while out back of shortstop the left fielder was running in as fast as he might. And while he ran Fearing and Beeton were flying around the bases. The ball came to earth, was gathered up on its first bound and sped toward the plate. But it reached the catcher too late, for Fearing and Beeton had tallied. And down at second a small youth was picking himself out of the dust. But Satterlee never got any farther, for the next man struck out. No one seemed to care, however, except Satterlee, for the score had changed to 6−4, and the 6 was Willard's!

But there was still a half inning to play and Durham had not lost hope. Her center fielder opened up with a hit

and a moment later stole second. Then came a mishap. Willings struck the batsman and, although Fearing claimed that the batsman had not tried to avoid the ball, he was given his base.

Things looked bad. There on second and first were Durham runners and here, stepping up to the plate with his bat grasped firmly in his hands, was Carpenter, and there was none out. A two−base hit would surely tie the score, while one of the home−runs of which Carpenter was believed to be capable—such a one as he made in the first game of the series—would send Willard's into mourning.

The terrace was almost deserted, for the spectators were lined along the path to first base and beyond. Don was crying encouragement to his players, but from the way in which he moved restively about it could be seen that he was far from easy in his mind. As for Satterlee, 2d—well, he was out in center field, hoping for a chance to aid in warding off the defeat that seemed inevitable, but fearing that his usefulness was over. Willings turned and motioned the fielders back, and in obedience Satterlee, 2d, crept farther out toward the edge of the field. But presently, when a ball had been delivered to the batsman, Satterlee, 2d, quite unconsciously, moved eagerly, anxiously in again, step by step. Then came a strike and Carpenter tapped the plate with the end of his bat and waited calmly. Another ball. Then a second strike. And for a brief moment Willard's shouted hoarsely. And then——

Then there was a sharp sound of bat meeting ball and Carpenter was on his way to first. The ball was a low fly to short center field and it was evident that it would land just a little way back of second base. Neither Carpenter nor the runners on first and second dreamed for a moment that it could be caught. The latter players raced for home as fast as their legs would take them.

Meanwhile in from center sped Satterlee, 2d. He could run hard when he tried and that's what he did now. He was almost too late—but not quite. His hands found the ball a bare six inches above the turf. Coming fast as he was he had crossed second base before he could pull himself up.

From all sides came wild shouts, instructions, commands, entreaties, a confused medley of sounds. But Satterlee, 2d, needed no coaching. The runner from second had crossed the plate and the one from first was rounding third at a desperate pace, head down and arms and legs twinkling through the dust of his flight. Now each turned and raced frantically back, dismay written on their perspiring faces. But Satterlee, 2d, like an immovable Fate, stood in the path. The runner from first slowed down indecisively, feinted to the left and tried to slip by on the other side. But the small youth with the ball was ready for him and had tagged him before he had passed. Then Satterlee, 2d, stepped nimbly to second base, tapped it with his foot a moment before the other runner hurled himself upon it, tossed the ball nonchalantly toward the pitcher's box and walked toward the bench. The game was over.

But he never reached the bench that day. On the way around the field he caught once a fleeting vision of Brother Don's red, grinning countenance beaming commendation, and once a glimpse of the smiling faces of his father and mother. He strove to wave a hand toward the latter, but as it almost cost him his position on the shoulders of the shrieking fellows beneath, he gave it up. Social amenities might wait; at present he was tasting the joys of a victorious Caesar.

THE DUB

"BRIGGS, Bayard Newlyn, Hammondsport, Ill., I L, H 24."

That's the way the catalogue put it. Mostly, though, he was called "Bi" Briggs. He was six feet and one inch tall and weighed one hundred and ninety−four pounds, and was built by an all−wise Providence to play guard. Graduate coaches used to get together on the side line and figure out what we'd do to Yale if we had eleven men like Bi.

Then after they'd watched Bi play a while they'd want to kick him.

He got started all wrong, Bi did. He came to college from a Western university and entered the junior class. That was his first mistake. A fellow can't butt in at the beginning of the third year and expect to trot even with fellows who have been there two years. It takes a chap one year to get shaken down and another year to get set up. By the time Bi was writing his "life" he had just about learned the rules.

His second mistake was in joining the first society that saw his name in the catalogue. It was a poor frat, and it queered Bi right away. I guess he made other mistakes, too, but those were enough.

In his junior year Bi was let alone. He was taking about every course any of us had ever heard of—and several we hadn't—and had no time for football. We got licked for keeps that fall, and after the *Crimson* and the *Bulletin* and the *Graduates' Magazine* and the newspapers had shown us just what ailed our system of coaching, we started to reorganize things. We hadn't reorganized for two years, and it was about time. The new coach was a chap who hadn't made the Varsity when he was in college, but who was supposed to have football down to a fine point; to hear the fellows tell about the new coach made you feel real sorry for Walter Camp. Well, he started in by kidnaping every man in college who weighed over a hundred and sixty−five. Bi didn't escape. Bi had played one year in the freshwater college at left tackle and knew a touchdown from a nose−guard, and that was about all. Bi was for refusing to have anything to do with football at first; said he was head−over−ears in study and hadn't the time. But they told him all about his Duty to his College and Every Man into the Breach, and he relented. Bi was terribly good−natured. That was the main trouble with him.

The fellows who did football for the papers fell in love with him on the spot. He was a good−looker, with sort of curly brown hair, nice eyes, a romantic nose, and cheeks like a pair of twenty−four−dollar American Beauties, and his pictures looked fine and dandy in the papers. "Bayard Briggs, Harvard's new candidate for guard, of whom the coaches expect great things." That's the way they put it. And they weren't far wrong. The coaches did expect great things from Bi; so did the rest of us. When they took Bi from the second and put him in at right guard on the Varsity we all approved.

But there was trouble right away. Bi didn't seem to fit. They swapped him over to left guard, then they tried him at right tackle, then at right guard again. Then they placed him gently but firmly back on the second. And Bi was quite happy and contented and disinterested during it all. *He* didn't mind when six coaches gathered about him and demanded to know what was the matter with him. He just shook his head and assured them good−naturedly that he didn't know; and intimated by his manner that he didn't care. When he came back to the second he seemed rather glad; I think he felt as though he had got back home after a hard trip. He stayed right with us all the rest of the season.

I think the trouble was that Bi never got it fully into his fool head that it wasn't just fun—like puss−in−the−corner or blind−man's−buff. If you talked to him about Retrieving Last Year's Overwhelming Defeat he'd smile pleasantly and come back with some silly remark about Political Economy or Government or other poppycock. I fancy Bi's father had told him that he was coming to college to study, and Bi believed him.

Of course, he didn't go to New Haven with us, He didn't have time. I wished afterwards that I hadn't had time myself. Yale trimmed us 23 to 6.

The papers threshed it all out again, and all the old grads who weren't too weak to hold pens wrote to the *Bulletin* and explained where the trouble lay. It looked for a while like another reorganization, but Cooper, the new captain, was different. He didn't get hysterical. Along about Christmas time, after everyone had got tired of guessing, he announced his new coach. His name was Hecker, and he had graduated so far back that the *Crimson* had to look up its old files to find out who he was. He had played right half two years, it seemed, but hadn't made

any special hit, and Yale had won each year. The *Herald* said he was a successful lawyer in Tonawanda, New York. He didn't show up for spring practice; couldn't leave his work, Cooper explained. Bi didn't come out either. He couldn't leave *his* work. At the end of the year he graduated *summa cum laude*, or something like that, and the *Crimson* said he was coming back to the Law School and would be eligible for the team. Just as though it mattered.

We showed up a week before college began and had practice twice a day. At the end of that week we knew a whole lot about Hecker. He was about thirty−six, kind of thin, wore glasses, and was a terror for work. When we crawled back to showers after practice we'd call him every name we could think of. And half an hour later, if we met him crossing the Square, we'd be haughty and stuck−up for a week if he remembered our names. He was a little bit of all right, was Hecker. He was one of the quiet kind. He'd always say “please,” and if you didn't please mighty quick you'd be sitting on the bench all nicely snuggled up in a blanket before you knew what had struck you. That's the sort of Indian Hecker was, and we loved him.

Ten days after college opened we had one hundred and twenty men on the field. If Hecker heard of a likely chap and thought well of his looks, it was all up with Mr. Chap. He was out on the gridiron biting holes in the sod before he knew it. That's what happened to Bi. One day Bi wasn't there and the next day he was.

We had two or three weeding−outs, and it got along toward the middle of October, and Bi was still with us. We were shy on plunging halfs that fall and so I got my chance at last. I had to fight hard, though, for I was up against Murray, last year's first sub. Then a provisional Varsity was formed and the Second Team began doing business with Bi at right guard again. The left guard on the Varsity was Bannen—“Slugger" Bannen. He didn't weigh within seven pounds of Bi, but he had springs inside of him and could get the jump on a flea. He was called “Slugger" because he looked like a prizefighter, but he was a gentle, harmless chap, and one of the Earnest Workers in the Christian Association. He could stick his fist through an oak panel same as you or I would put our fingers through a sheet of paper. And he did pretty much as he pleased with Bi. I'll bet, though, that Bi could have walked all over “Slugger” if he'd really tried. But he was like an automobile and didn't know his own strength.

We disposed of the usual ruck of small teams, and by the first of November it was mighty plain that we had the best Eleven in years. But we didn't talk that way, and the general impression was that we had another one of the Beaten But Not Humiliated sort.

A week before we went to Philadelphia I had a streak of good luck and squeezed Murray out for keeps. Penn had a dandy team that year and we had to work like anything to bring the ball home. It was nip and tuck to the end of the first half, neither side scoring. Then we went back and began kicking, and Cooper had the better of the other chap ten yards on a punt. Finally we got down to their twenty yards, and Saunders and I pulled in eight more of it. Then we took our tackles back and hammered out the only score. But that didn't send our stock up much, because folks didn't know how good Penn was. But the Eli's coaches who saw the game weren't fooled a little bit; only, as we hadn't played anything but the common or garden variety of football, they didn't get much to help them. We went back to Cambridge and began to learn the higher branches.

We were coming fast now, so fast that Hecker got scary and laid half the team off for a day at a time. And that's how Bi got his chance again, and threw it away just as he had last year. He played hard, but—oh, I don't know. Some fellow wrote once that unless you had football instinct you'd never make a real top−notcher. I think maybe that's so. Maybe Bi didn't have football instinct. Though I'll bet if some one had hammered it into his head that it was business and not a parlor entertainment, he'd have buckled down and done something. It wasn't that he was afraid of punishment; he'd take any amount and come back smiling. I came out of the Locker Building late that evening and Hecker and Cooper were just ahead of me.

“What's the matter with this man”—Hecker glanced at his notebook—“this man Briggs?” he asked.

“Briggs?” answered Cooper. “He's a dub; that's all—just a dub.”

That described him pretty well, I thought. By dub we didn't mean just a man who couldn't play the game; we meant a man who knew how to play and wouldn't; a chap who couldn't be made to understand. Bi was a dub of the first water.

We didn't have much trouble with Dartmouth that year. It was before she got sassy and rude. Then there were two weeks of hard practice before the Yale game. We had a new set of signals to learn and about half a dozen new plays. The weather got nice and cold and Hecker made the most of it. We didn't have time to feel chilly. One week went by, and then—it was a Sunday morning, I remember—it came out that Corson, the Varsity right guard,

had been protested by Yale. It seemed that Corson had won a prize of two dollars and fifty cents about five years before for throwing the hammer at a picnic back in Pennsylvania. Well, there was a big shindy and the athletic committee got busy and considered his case. But Hecker didn't wait for the committee to get through considering. He just turned Corson out and put in Blake, the first sub. On Tuesday the committee declared Corson ineligible and Blake sprained his knee in practice! With Corson and Blake both out of it, Hecker was up against it. He tried shifting "Slugger" Bannen over to right and putting the full back at left. Jordan, the Yale left guard, was the best in the world, and we needed a man that could stand up against him. But "Slugger" was simply at sea on the right side of center and so had to be put back again. After that the only thing in sight that looked the least bit like a right guard was Bayard Newlyn Briggs.

They took Bi and put him on the Varsity, and forty−'leven coaches stood over his defenseless form and hammered football into him for eight solid hours on Wednesday and Thursday. And Bi took it all like a little woolly lamb, without a bleat. But it just made you sick to think what was going to happen to Bi when Jordan got to work on him!

We had our last practice Thursday, and that night we went to the Union and heard speeches and listened to the new songs. Pretty poor they were too; but that's got nothing to do with the story. Friday we mooned around until afternoon and then had a few minutes of signal practice indoors. Bi looked a little bit worried, I thought. Maybe it was just beginning to dawn on Me that it wasn't all a lark.

What happened next morning I learned afterwards from Bi. Hecker sent for him to come to his room, put him in a nice easy−chair, and then sat down in front of him. And he talked.

"I've sent for you, Mr. Briggs," began Hecker in his quiet way, "because it has occurred to me that you don't altogether understand what we are going to do this afternoon."

Bi looked surprised.

"Play Yale, sir?"

"Incidentally; yes. But we are going to do more than play her; we are going to beat her to a standstill; we are going to give her a drubbing that she will look back upon for several years with painful emotion. It isn't often that we have an opportunity to beat Yale, and I propose to make the best of this one. So kindly disabuse your mind of the idea that we are merely going out to play a nice, exhilarating game of football. We are going to simply wipe up the earth with Yale!"

"Indeed?" murmured Bi politely.

"Quite so," answered the coach dryly, "I suppose you know that your presence on the team is a sheer accident? If you don't, allow me to tell you candidly that if there had been anyone else in the college to put in Corson's place, we would never have called on you, Mr. Briggs."

He let that soak in a minute. Then:

"Have you ever heard of this man Jordan who will play opposite you to−day?" he asked.

"Yes, sir; a very good player, I understand."

"A good player! My dear fellow, he's the best guard on a college team in twenty years. And you are going to play opposite him. Understand that?"

"Er—certainly," answered Bi, getting a bit uneasy.

"What are you going to do about it?"

"Do? Why, I shall do the best I can, Mr. Hecker. I don't suppose I am any match for Jordan, but I shall try——"

"Stop that! Don't you dare talk to me of doing the best you can!" said the coach, shaking a finger under Bi's nose—"for all the world," as Bi told me afterwards, "as though he was trying to make me mad!" "'Best you can' be hanged! You've got to do better than you can, a hundred per cent better than you can, ever did, or ever will again! That's what you've got to do! You've got to fight from the first whistle to the last without a let−up! You've got to remember every instant that if you don't, we are going to be beaten! You've got to make Jordan look like a base imitation before the first half is over! That's what you've got to do, my boy!"

"But it isn't fair!" protested Bi. "You know yourself that Jordan can outplay me, sir!"

"I know it? I know nothing of the sort. Look at yourself! Look at your weight and your build! Look at those arms and legs of yours! Look at those muscles! And you dare to sit there, like a squeaking kid, and tell me that Jordan can outplay you! What have you got your strength for? What have we pounded football into you for?"

Over went his chair and he was shaking his finger within an inch of Bi's face, his eyes blazing behind his glasses.

"Shall I tell you what's the matter with you, Briggs? Shall I tell you why we wouldn't have chosen you if there had been anyone else? Because you're a coward—a rank, measly coward, sir!"

Bi's face went white and he got up slowly out of his chair.

"That will do, sir," he said softly, like a tiger−puss purring. "You've done what no one else has ever done, Mr. Hecker. You've called me a coward. You're in authority and I have no redress—now. But after to−day—" He stopped and laughed unpleasantly. "I'll see you again, sir."

"Heroics!" sneered the coach. "They don't impress me, sir. I've said you're a coward, and I stand by it. I repeat it. You are a coward, Briggs, an arrant coward."

Bi gripped his hands and tried to keep the tears back.

"Coward, am I? What are you, I'd like to know? What are you when you take advantage of your position to throw insults at me? If you weren't the head coach, I'd—I'd——"

"What would you do?" sneered Hecker.

"I'd kill you!" blazed Bi. "And I'll do it yet, you—you——"

"Tut, tut! That's enough, Briggs. You can't impose on me that way. I haven't watched you play football all the fall to be taken in now by your melodrama. But after to−day you will find me quite at your service, Mr.—Coward. And meanwhile we'll call this interview off, if you please. The door, Mr. Briggs!"

Bi seized his hat from the table and faced Hecker. He was smiling now, smiling with a white, set, ugly face.

"Perhaps I am wrong," he said softly with a little laugh. "I think I am. Either that or you are lying. For if you are really willing to meet me after to−day's game you are no coward, sir."

Then he went out.

We lined up at two o'clock.

There was a huge crowd and a band. I didn't mind the crowd, but that band got me worried so, that I couldn't do a thing the first ten minutes. It's funny how a little thing like that will queer your game. One fellow I knew once was off his game the whole first half because some idiot was flying a kite over the field advertising some one's pills.

We had the ball and began hammering at the Yale line and kept it up until we had reached her fifteen yards. Then she got together and stopped us; held us for downs in spite of all we could do. Then she kicked and we started it all over again. It wasn't exciting football to watch, maybe, but it was the real thing with us. We had to work—Lord, how we had to work! And how we did work, too! We made good the next time, but it took us fifteen minutes to get back down the field. Cooper himself went over for that first touchdown. Maybe the crowd didn't shout! Talk about noise! I'd never heard any before! It was so unexpected, you see, for almost everyone had thought Yale was going to do her usual stunt and rip us to pieces. But in that first half she was on the defensive every moment. Seven times she had the ball in that first thirty−five minutes, but she could no more keep it than she could fly. Altogether she gained eighteen yards in that half.

It was one−sided, if you like, but it was no picnic. It was hammer and tongs from first to last—man's work and lots of it.

We didn't rely on tricks, but went at her center and guards and just wore them down. And when that first half was over—11−0 was the score—the glory of one Jordan was as a last season's straw hat. A new star blazed in the football firmament; and it was in the constellation of Harvard and its name was Bi Briggs. What I'm telling you is history, and you needn't take my word alone for it. I never really saw a man play guard before that day—and I'd watched lots of fellows try. Bi was a cyclone. To see him charge into Jordan—and get the jump on him every time—was alone worth the price of admission. And as for blocking, he was a stone wall, and that's all there is to it. Never once did the Elis get through him. He held the line on his side as stiff as a poker until quarter had got the ball away, and then he mixed things up with the redoubtable Jordan, and you could almost see the fur fly! Play? O my! He was simply great! And the rest of us, watching when we had a chance, just felt our eyes popping out. And all the time he smiled; smiled when he went charging through the blue line, smiled when he took Toppan on his shoulder and hurled him over the mix−up for six yards, smiled when we pulled him out of a pile−up looking like a badly butchered beef, and still smiled when we trotted of the field in a chaos of sound. But that smile wasn't pretty. I guess he was thinking most of the time of Hecker; and maybe sometimes he got Hecker and Jordan

mixed up.

When we came back for the second half we weren't yet out of the woods, and we knew it. We knew that Yale would forget that she was bruised and battered and tired and would play harder than ever. And she did. And for just about ten minutes I wouldn't have bet a copper on the game. Yale had us on the run and plugged away until we were digging our toes into our twelve−yard line. Then we held her. After that, although she still played the game as though she didn't know she was beaten, she was never dangerous. We scored twice more in that half. When there was still ten minutes of play the whistle blew, and Jordan, white, groggy, and weepy about the eyes, was dragged off the field. Bi had sure used him rough, but I'm not pretending Jordan hadn't come back at him. Bi's face was something fierce. The blood had dried in flakes under his nose, one eye was out of commission, and his lip was bleeding where his tooth had gone through it. But he still smiled. When we trotted off for the last time the score board said: “Harvard, 22; Opponents, 0.” And those blurry white figures up there paid for all the hard work of the year.

It was past seven when we assembled for dinner. About all the old players for twenty years back were there and it sounded like a sewing circle. Bi was one of the last to come in. He pushed his way through the crowd about the door, shaking off the fellows' hands, and strode across to where Hecker was standing. Hecker saw him coming, but he only watched calmly. Bi stopped in front of him, that same sort of ugly smile on his face.

“We've broken training, sir?” he asked quietly.

“Yes,” answered the coach.

Then Bi's hand swung around and that slap was heard all over the room. There was a moment of dead silence; then half a dozen of us grabbed Bi. We thought he'd gone crazy, but he didn't try to shake us off. He just stood there and looked at Hecker. The coach never raised a hand and never changed his expression—only one cheek was as red as the big flag at the end of the room. He held up his hand and we quieted down.

“Gentlemen,” he said, “Mr. Briggs was quite within his rights. Please do not interfere with him.”

We let Bi go.

“The incident demands explanation,” continued the coach. “As you all know, we were left in a hole by the loss of Corson and Blake, and the only man who seemed at all possible was Mr. Briggs. But Mr. Briggs, playing as he had been playing all year, would have been no match for Jordan of Yale. We tried every means we could think of to wake Mr. Briggs up. He had, I felt certain, the ability to play football—winning football—but we couldn't get it out of him. As a last resort I tried questionable means. I asked Mr. Briggs to call on me this morning. I told him we must win to−day, and that in order to do so he would have to play better than he'd been doing. He told me that he would do his best, but that he knew himself no match for Jordan. That spirit wouldn't have done, gentlemen, and I tried to change it. I told Mr. Briggs that he was a coward, something I knew to be false. I insulted him over and again until only my authority as head coach kept him from trying to kill me. He told me he would do so when we had broken training and I promised to give him satisfaction. What I did is, I am well aware, open to criticism. But our necessity was great and I stand ready to accept any consequences. At least the result of today's contest in a measure vindicates my method. You who saw Mr. Briggs play will, I am sure, find excuses for me. As for the gentleman himself, it remains with him to say whether he will accept my apology for what passed this morning, taking into consideration the strait in which we were placed and the results as shown, or whether he will demand other satisfaction.”

Half a hundred surprised, curious faces turned toward Bi, who, during Hecker's statement, had looked at first contemptuous, then bewildered, and finally comprehending. For about ten seconds the room was as still as a graveyard. Then Bi stepped up with outstretched hand like a little man, and for the second time that day we went crazy!

Bi was hailed as the greatest guard of the year, and they put him on the All−American team, but I don't think Bi cared a button. Anyhow, when they tried to get him to come out for the eleven the next fall he absolutely refused, and nothing anyone could say would budge him. He said he was too busy.

THE END