The Project Gutenberg eBook of Quarter-Back Bates, by Ralph Henry Barbour

This ebook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this ebook or online at www.gutenberg.org. If you are not located in the United States, you'll have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

Title: Quarter-Back Bates

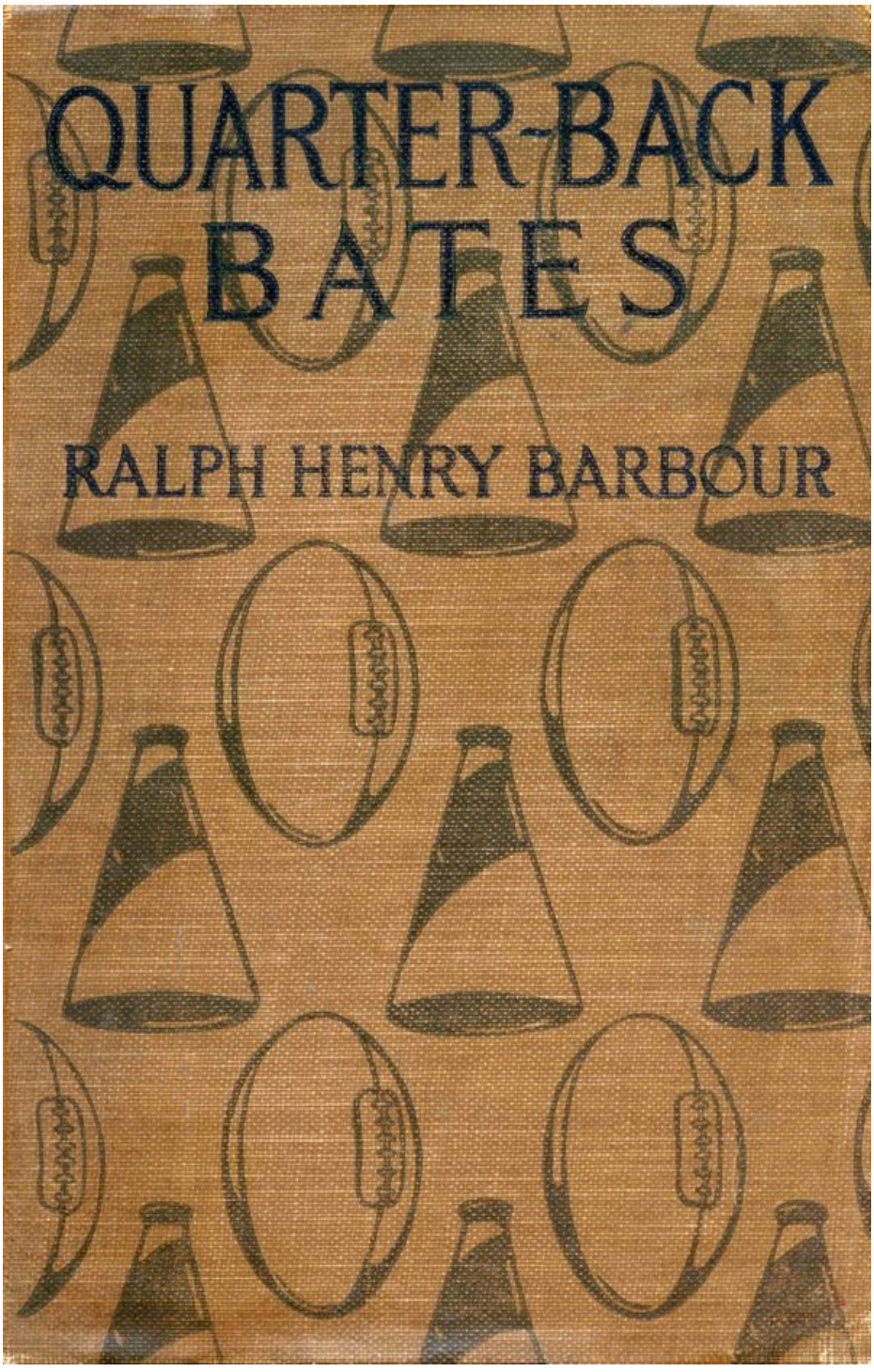
Author: Ralph Henry Barbour
Illustrator: Francis J. Rigney

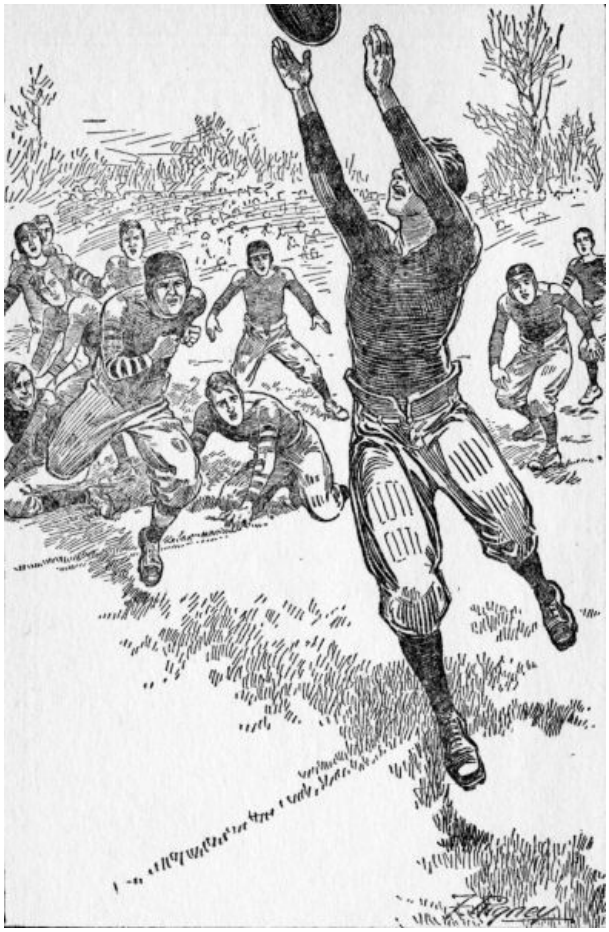
Release date: October 15, 2014 [EBook #47120]

Language: English

Credits: Produced by Donald Cummings and the Online Distributed
Proofreading Team at http://www.pgdp.net

*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK QUARTER-BACK BATES ***





That second pass was fairly high and it seemed that Kirkendall would reach the receiver in time to spoil it

QUARTER-BACK BATES

BY

RALPH HENRY BARBOUR

AUTHOR OF

LEFT END EDWARDS,
LEFT TACKLE THAYER,
FULL-BACK FOSTER, ETC.

ILLUSTRATED BY

FRANK J. RIGNEY

GROSSET & DUNLAP
Publishers New York

Made in the United States of America

Copyright, 1920
By DODD, MEAD AND COMPANY, Inc.

CONTENTS

ILLUSTRATIONS

QUARTER-BACK BATES

[1]

CHAPTER I

THE DEPARTURE OF A HERO

It cannot be truthfully said that Dick Bates was overwhelmingly surprised when he reached the railroad station that September morning and found fully a score of his schoolmates assembled there. Wally Nourse had let the cat out of the bag the day before. Wally was one of those well-

meaning but too talkative youths such as we have all met. But Dick played the game perfectly this morning, descending from the carriage—Mr. Bates was one of the very few persons left in Leonardville who could afford an automobile and still drove horses—with an expression of questioning surprise. He realized that too much surprise would suggest that he knew the assemblage was there to do him honour; and if, as some said, Dick was conceited, at least he was always careful not to seem so.

Mr. Bates handed the lines to Hogan, the coachman, who had ridden in the back seat surrounded by Dick's luggage, and followed his son to the platform with a satisfied smile on his [2] seamed, good-humoured countenance. It pleased him that this younger son of his should be popular and sought after. To a certain extent he accepted it as a compliment to himself. Dick was already surrounded by the little throng of high school boys and girls—for the gentle sex was well represented, too—and his father heard him telling them in that pleasant, rather deep voice of his how unsuspected and undeserved it all was. Mr. Bates wasn't deceived, however. Dick had confided to him on the way from the house that there might be a few of the fellows there to see him off. Instead, he chuckled to himself. "You can't beat him at the diplomatic stuff," he thought proudly. Then his smile faded. "Wonder if he isn't a little *too* good at it!" Then Doris Ferguson had spied him and was clinging to his arm and telling him how mean and horrible he was to let Dick go away and leave them, and the other girls, seven in all, were chiming in, and everyone was talking at once. And that pleased Mr. Bates, too, for he liked Doris and, having no daughters of his own, wished he had a girl just like her. He patted her hand and beamed down at her from his six-foot height.

"Now don't you take on so, young lady. Just you remember you've still got me. Course, I can't [3] play one of those half-portion banjos like Dick can, but I'm just as nice as he is other ways!"

Sumner White had drawn Dick apart. Sumner was this year's football captain, and the other boys, watching and trying to appear not to be, felt that words of weight and wisdom were being exchanged over there by the baggage-room door, and wouldn't have interrupted for worlds. What Sumner was saying just then may have contained wisdom, but certainly wasn't very weighty.

"If you run across any real good plays or wrinkles, Dick, I wish you'd put me on, eh? I guess they play pretty near college football at Parkinson, and you know how it is here. If Murphy ever had a new idea he'd drop dead! Of course I wouldn't give anything away. You can trust me to keep mum, old chap."

"Why, yes, I will, Sum, if I can. But I may not get near the team, you know. I guess they have a raft of corking good players at Parkinson, and——"

"Oh, pickles!" jeered Sumner. "I guess they won't have so many good quarters that you'll be passed up! Bet you anything you'll be playing on the Parkinson team before you've been there a week! Gee, I sort of wish you weren't going, Dick. It's leaving us in a beast of a hole. Say, honest, [4] do you think Rogers could ever learn?"

"I think Sam's the best we—the best you've got, Sum. All he needs is a whole lot of work. Of course you can try Littleton if you like, but you know my opinion of him."

"Ye-es, I know. But Sam's so blamed dumb! Gee, you have to use a sledge to knock anything into—There's your train, I think. She whistled down by the crossing. Well, say, Dick old scout, I sure wish you the best of luck and everything. You're going to make us all mighty proud of you, or I miss my guess! We'll all be rooting for you, you know that. Well, guess the others'll want to say good-bye. Wish you'd drop me a line some time, eh? I'll write, too, when I get a chance. But you know how it's going to be this fall, with a lot of new fellows to break in and Murphy away more'n half the time, and——"

"Sure, Sum, I know, but you'll get by all right. I wish I could be here when you play Norristown, but I suppose I'll be busy myself. So long!"

After that there was much confusion. Wade Jennings shoved a package tied with blue and white ribbon, the high school colours, into Dick's hands and tried to make the presentation speech he had been practising for two days. But everyone talked at once, the train came thundering in, and [5] his stammers were drowned in the tumult. Dick had to shake hands all around, darting across the platform at the last moment to say good-bye to Hogan, and then listening to his father's final instructions as to tickets and changing at Philadelphia. A grinning porter took charge of his luggage and Dick followed him up the car steps and from the platform smilingly surveyed the laughing crowd below. Afterwards it came to him that Wally Nourse had been the only one who had looked really sorry, that the others were merely merry and excited! Of course he excepted his father. Poor old dad had really looked quite down at the mouth when, pursued by the high school cheer, the train had pulled out. Tommy Nutting, true to the last to his rôle of school jester, had blown kisses from the summit of a baggage truck, and Doris Ferguson had pretended to wipe tears from her eyes. The rest was a confused memory.

Dick found his seat in the parlour car and watched the frayed and tattered hem of Leonardville disappear: the brick-yards, the carpet factory, the blocks of monotonous, square, lead-hued houses of the operatives, the tumble-down quarter known as Povertyville, and then, at last, the open country still green and smiling. His last glimpse was of the slender steeple of the Baptist [6] church, white above the old elms around it. He changed his straw hat for a light-weight cap and opened a magazine he had tossed into his bag at the last moment. Then, however, his eyes fell on the ribboned package and he picked it up eagerly. The next moment he remembered his neighbours up and down the aisle and so he pretended to suppress a yawn as he struggled with the entwined ribbons. When the covering was off he found a pair of silver-backed military

brushes hidden amidst much rustling white tissue and a folded sheet of paper. The brushes weren't half bad, and although he already had a pair, he made up his mind to use them. The message read: "To Richard Corliss Bates from his friends and fellow-members of the L. H. S. M. C." Then followed some thirty names, the complete roster of the High School Musical Club, and, in a lower corner, in Wade Jennings' uncertain writing, the further message: "There wasn't time to have them marked, but they'll do it the first time you come home."

Dick was pleased in a complacent way. The brushes were nicer, in better taste than he had expected they would be. Of course he had known they were coming: trust Wally for that! But even if Wally hadn't talked, Dick would have expected a gift of some sort. He was the sort who [7] got gifts, not through any effort of his, but because folks liked him and seemed to want to do things for him. He never went out of his way to gain popularity. He didn't have to. But he enjoyed it thoroughly, and, having known it for some time, had become to regard it as his right. Today, the silver brushes pleased him not because of their value, which, after all, wasn't great, but because they stood as a further tribute to his popularity.

Dick was seventeen, the right height for his age, slender in a well-muscled, athletic way, and undeniably good-looking. His features were regular, with a rather high forehead and a well-cut straight nose. His eyes were brown, a warm brown that held a suggestion of red, and matched his hair. He had a fair complexion with plenty of healthy colour in the cheeks. It was one of the few sorrows of his life that he didn't tan readily, that he had to go through a beastly period of sunburn and peeling skin before he could attain a decent shade of brown. He seemed unaware of his personal attractions, whether he was or not, and his smile, which was not the least of them, won where mere good looks failed. He always stood high in his class, for he learned easily. He [8] had a gift for music and could play any instrument at least passably after a surprisingly short acquaintance. He had a pleasant speaking voice and sang an excellent tenor on the school Glee Club. But it was perhaps in the less polite pursuits that he excelled. He had a record of ten and two-fifths for the hundred yards and had done the two-twenty under twenty-four. He was a fair high-jumper, usually certain of third place in the Dual Meet. In the water he was brother to a fish. He had played baseball one season not at all badly and could fill in at basket ball if needed. But, when all is said, Dick's line was football. He had played two years on the High School Team at quarter-back. Last year he had been offered the captaincy without a dissenting voice and had refused it, announcing, what he had kept a secret until then, that he was leaving at the end of the school year, and nominating Sumner White. That Sumner was promptly elected was a further proof of Dick's popularity, for ordinarily Sumner would scarcely have been thought of. As a football player Dick was really brilliant. He had a collection of fourteen epistles, which he was not averse to showing to close friends, from as many preparatory schools and smaller colleges urging him to consider their advantages to a person of his scholastic attainments. Parkinson School, [9] however, was not represented in that collection, perhaps because Parkinson was too far away for his fame to have reached it. Dick had chosen Parkinson for the completion of his preparation for college only because his brother Stuart had graduated from there some five years before. Stuart had talked of Parkinson so much that Dick felt that he knew the school and that he was certain to like it. He might have entered two years ago, but had chosen to remain at the high school until he could go to the preparatory school with a fair chance of making the football team. He believed now that the time had arrived. Although he had belittled his chances in conversation with Sumner White, secretly Dick entertained few doubts of his ability to make the Parkinson team.

He was entering the Third Class and had been assigned a room in Sohmer Hall. Brother Stuart had advised Sohmer, since it was the newest of the dormitory buildings, and Dick had made application the year before. To his regret, he had not been able to get a room to himself, but the fact didn't trouble him greatly. In fact he recognised certain advantages accruing from a room-mate. Who that person was to be he had not yet learned.

His train reached Philadelphia at a few minutes before eleven and he had just time to buy a [10] morning paper before the New York Express left. He didn't waste much time on the front page of the journal, soon turning to the football and athletic news. A hair-breadth connection in New York put him on the last lap of his journey, and, after a deliberative meal in the diner and the perusal of one story in the magazine, it was time to gather his luggage together. The train slid into Warne at three-fifty, and Dick, not a little excited under his appearance of perfect calm, alighted.

CHAPTER II [11]

"WASHINGTON P. QUIGGLE"

Stuart had instructed him so thoroughly that Dick knew just which way to turn in order to find a conveyance to carry him to the school, but Stuart had spoken of carriages and Dick found nothing but chugging "flivvers" manned by eager and noisy youths to whom he hesitated to entrust his life. Automobiles, he presumed, had arrived since Stuart's time. Dick remained so long in doubt that, almost before he knew it, all but one of the throbbing taxies had found their loads and gone rattling off over the cobbles. He made his way to the remaining conveyance quickly then, but not so quickly as to reach it first. A boy a year or so older already had a hand on the door when Dick arrived.

"Goss, Eddie," Dick heard the boy say. "And don't spare the horses!"

But Eddie, who Dick had earlier decided was the least attractive of the half-dozen drivers, was not losing any chances.

"Yes, sir! Parkinson School? Step right in. The gentleman inside won't mind. What building, sir?" [12]

"Sohmer," answered Dick. And then, to the occupant: "Mind if I go along?" he asked. "This seems to be the only taxi left."

"Not a bit. The more the merrier! Besides," he continued as the car shot away from the platform with a jerk, wheeled suddenly to the left and dashed headlong over the cobbles, "it makes for economy. They put the fare up last spring. It would have cost me a half if I'd gone alone. By the way, are you in a great hurry?"

"Why, no," answered Dick.

"Well, I am." He leaned toward the open window in front. "Take me to Goss first, Eddie," he directed.

He was a tall, rather thin and very long-legged youth with a nose that matched the other specifications, and a pair of blue-grey eyes that, in spite of their owner's grave and serious expression, seemed to hold a twinkle of amusement or perhaps of mischief. He had placed a very battered suit-case before him on the floor of the car and now put his feet on it, settled to the small of his back and turned a look of polite inquiry on Dick.

"My name's Quiggle," he said, "Washington P. Quiggle." He made a feeble motion toward a [13] pocket. "I haven't a card with me, I fear. I have, believe me, no desire to thrust my acquaintance on you, but since Fate has thrown us together like this——" He paused apologetically.

"That's all right," said Dick. "Very glad to meet you. My name is Bates." He smiled. Rather to his surprise Washington Quiggle didn't smile back. Instead, he put his head a bit on one side and seemed to regard Dick speculatingly.

"Showing the teeth slightly," he murmured. At least, that's what Dick thought he said, but as there was no sense in the remark, perhaps he was mistaken.

"I beg pardon?"

"Oh, did I speak?" asked Quiggle. "A lamentable habit of mine, Mr. Bates, unconsciously giving utterance to my thoughts. A habit inherited from my grandfather on my mother's side. Most annoying at times and likely to lead to an erroneous impression of my mentality. And speaking of my grandfather, a most worthy and respected citizen in spite of the misfortune that overtook him in his later years: I refer, of course, to the loss of his mind, accompanied, or should I say superseded, by homicidal mania; speaking of him, then, suppose I relieve myself of my portion of the expenses of this placid journey, thus." He dug a hand into a trousers pocket and produced a [14] twenty-five cent piece which he handed to Dick. "It will save time and—I was about to say money —and trouble if you will settle with Edward for us both. I thank you."

"Of course," murmured Dick. By now he was rather hoping that Goss Hall would be reached before his companion's perfectly evident insanity took a violent turn! For there was no doubt in Dick's mind but that Mr. Washington P. Quiggle was what in the everyday language of Leonardville was known as a "nut." Quiggle had closed his eyes and appeared to be on the verge of slumber, and after a moment's concerned observation of him Dick turned his gaze to the town through which the car was speeding. The cobbles had given place to asphalt and while Quiggle's choice of the word "placid" was not entirely justified, at least the car was running much more quietly and far more smoothly. There were some decent looking shops on each side of the street and a fairly imposing office building occupied one corner of the street into which the taxi suddenly and disconcertingly turned. The lurch may have brought momentary consciousness back to Quiggle, for his eyes opened and closed and he remarked quite distinctly:

"Hard a lee! Man the water-butt! Aye, aye, sir!" [15]

A pleasant wide thoroughfare opened to view right and left at the end of a block, and Dick caught sight of attractive houses set back from the street and lawns and gardens between. Then, without diminishing it's twenty-five-miles-an-hour speed, the taxi dashed between two stone gate posts and scurried up a gravelled road bisecting a wide expanse of level turf. Trees grew on each side, but between them Dick had occasional glimpses of the school buildings which, for the most part, were spaced along the further side of the campus. Parkinson Hall he recognised readily from the picture in the school catalogue, a white marble edifice surmounted by a glassed dome, but which was Sohmer he wasn't certain. Having crossed the width of the campus, the taxi swerved perilously to the right in front of Parkinson and dashed on until, with a sudden and unexpected application of the brakes, the driver brought it to a tottering stand-still before the entrance of a brick building. The jar aroused Quiggle and he sat up.

"Ah! Home again as we perceive! Back to the classic shades of our dear old Alma Mater!" he exclaimed as he opened the door on his side by the pressure of one bony knee against the handle [16] and seized his bag. "Mr. Bates, I sincerely trust that we shall meet again. Should you care to pursue the acquaintance so—so—dare I say—fortunately brought about, you have but to inquire of any resident of this palatial dwelling in order to learn of my place of abode. I'd tell you the number of my room were it not that, owing to an inherited weakness of memory, I cannot at the moment recall it. Eddie, the gentleman within will pay your outrageous charge."

"Yeah, I know, but——"

“Edward,” interrupted Quiggle sternly, “the gentleman has my fare and will deliver it to you with his own. Drive on!”

After a moment of indecision and muttering, Edward drove on. Looking back through the rear window of the car, Dick saw Quiggle wave grandly, beneficently ere, bag in hand, he disappeared into Goss.

There was another turn, again to the right, and once more the car stopped. “Here you are, sir,” announced the driver. “Sohmer Hall. You’ll excuse me if I don’t take your bag in for you, but we ain’t allowed to leave the car.”

“That’s all right,” said Dick, emerging. “Here you are.” He held forth a half-dollar. The driver observed it coldly and made no effort to take it. “Quit your kiddin’,” he said. [17]

“Well, that’s all you’ll get,” replied Dick warmly. “That’s the legal fare.”

“It is, eh? Say, where do you get that stuff? Listen, kid. The fare’s fifty cents a person, seventy-five for two. Get me?”

“What! Why, that other fellow said it was—Anyway, he gave me a quarter for his share of it!”

The driver nodded wearily. “Sure he would! That’s him all over. You’re lucky he didn’t stick you for the whole racket. Come across with another quarter, young feller!”

Grudgingly, Dick did so. “If you knew Quiggle was that sort——” he began aggrievedly.

“Who?” asked the driver, a grin growing about his mouth.

“Quiggle. The fellow you left at Goss Hall. I say, if you knew——”

“His name ain’t Quiggle,” jeered the driver. “Gee, that’s a peach! Quiggle! What do you know about that?”

“What is his name then?” demanded Dick haughtily.

“His name’s—Well, it ought to be Slippery Simpson, but it ain’t!”

Whereupon there was a deafening grinding of gears, a snort, and the “flivver” swung about on two wheels and went charging off. [18]

Dick looked after it disgustedly and then, taking up his suit-case, mounted the steps of Sohmer.

“I’ll Quiggle him when I catch him!” he muttered. “Fresh chump!”

In consequence of the episode, Dick reached his room on the second floor decidedly out of sorts. He didn’t mind being cheated out of twelve or thirteen cents, but it disgruntled him to be made a fool of. He wasn’t used to it. At home no one would have though of attempting such a silly trick on him. He experienced, for the first time since leaving Leonardville, a qualm of apprehension. If Quiggle, or whatever his silly name really was, was a fair sample of the fellows he was to meet at Parkinson, the outlook for being treated with the respect that he was accustomed to was not at all satisfactory. Unconsciously he had journeyed to Warne under the impression that his appearance at school would be hailed with, if not excited acclaim, at least with measurable satisfaction. And here the first fellow he had run across had played a perfectly rotten joke on him! Dick’s dignity was considerably ruffled.

Number 14 proved to be a corner study, but not on the front. It wasn’t a bad room, Dick decided a bit patronisingly, and the view from the windows was satisfactory. On one side he looked across a bit of the campus and over to the wide street that was lined with gardens and lawns: Faculty Row it was called, although Dick didn’t know it then. From the other window he saw a tree-shaded, asphalt-paved road and one or two old-fashioned white dwellings beyond, and a corner of a square brick building set at a little distance just inside the grounds. That, unless he was mistaken, was the Administration Building, and he must go there shortly and register. [19]

Dick turned to the alcove bedroom divided from the study by curtains. There were two single beds there, two dressers and two chairs, and a single window gave light. Also, on one of the beds was an open suit-case, its contents tumbling over onto the white counterpane. One battered end showed the initials “S. G.” Dick wondered if the S stood for Sam. Approaching footsteps in the corridor turned his eyes toward the door, but the steps stopped at a room across the way. There followed the sound of a bag dropped to the floor and then the opposite door banged shut. Dick, back in the study, viewed it without enthusiasm. It was smaller than he liked and the furniture, while there was plenty of it—two small study tables, each under its own side-light, what he mentally dubbed a “near-leather” couch, two easy-chairs and two straight-backed chairs—was very evidently far from new. There was a faded blue carpet-rug on the floor and a short window-seat occupied the embrasure that held the end window. The original colour-scheme had been brown and blue, but the deep tan cartridge paper had faded, as had the alcove curtains and the rug. Here and there, on the walls, a square or oblong of a deeper shade showed where a picture had hung. [20]

Dick had left the hall door ajar and now he was aware of much noise and bustle throughout the building. Doors in the various corridors opened and shut, voices called, someone further along the hall was singing, while, outside, a taxi chugged before the entrance. Dick put his hat on and went out, passing several new arrivals on the way and exchanging with them swiftly appraising glances. The Administration Building stood only a few rods away and Dick’s business was soon attended to, for only a half-dozen or so were before him. Having paid his term bill and inscribed his name on a card that was handed him, he was given a booklet containing the school regulations and general information, a receipt for his money and a ruled card on which to [21]

schedule his recitations. Beside the door was a bulletin board and he paused to read some of the notices posted there. There was a reception to new students that evening at the Principal's residence, a half-year course in geometrical drawing would be conducted by Mr. McCreedy for First and Second Class students and those wishing to sign on should notify him by Saturday, Mr. Nolan would not be able to see students in his advisory capacity until Thursday, subscriptions to *The Leader* could be left at the office here or at the room of the publication, and so on. But the notice that interested Dick most ran as follows:

> "Candidates for the First Football Team should report on the field, dressed to play, not later than Wednesday. Attention is called to the school regulation requiring the candidate to pass a satisfactory physical examination before joining the squad.
>
> "Stearns Whipple, Mgr."

Outside, Dick pulled the booklet from his pocket and sought information regarding physical examinations. He found a whole page on the subject. It was necessary, it appeared, to go to the Physical Director's office in the gymnasium and make application for an appointment. Students [22] failing to keep appointments promptly were required to make new ones. There was much more, but that was sufficient for the present, and Dick made his way back along the road to the gymnasium. Inside, he had to take his place in a line of nearly a dozen boys, and progress toward the wicket, behind which a youth not much older than Dick supplied information or made out appointment cards, was slow. Eventually, though, Dick reached the window, made known his wants and was given a slip of pasteboard which informed him that the Physical Director would see him at five-fifteen on Wednesday. That was the day after tomorrow. It looked to Dick as if he could not report for football until he had been passed by the Physical Director and could not be passed by the director until it was too late to report for football! Perhaps, however, that notice in the Administration Building didn't mean quite what it said. He would ask someone when he found the chance.

With an hour remaining before supper time and nothing better to do, he wandered across to where a score of fellows were trotting about the gridiron or kicking and catching at the further end of it. That first uninterrupted sight of Parkinson Field greatly increased his respect for the [23] school, and he paused at a corner of the big grand stand and admired. Nearly twelve acres of level turf stretched before him. There were three gridirons, that of the First Team enclosed by a quarter-mile track, as well as several baseball diamonds and numerous tennis courts, both dirt and grass. A handful of onlookers were scattered over the stand and another handful stood along the side-line. A stout, round-faced man in an old sweater and a pair of frayed trousers had "Trainer" written all over him, and since at the moment he was occupied only in juggling a football from one hand to the other, Dick decided to seek information of him.

"My name's Bates," announced Dick, "and I'm going to try for the team, but I understand that I've got to take my physical examination first. Is that correct?"

Billy Goode viewed him critically before he answered. Rather to Dick's surprise the trainer seemed not at all impressed by what he saw. "You can report as soon as you like," he replied at last, "but you can't play until you've been o. k.'d, my friend. What's your name?"

"Bates," answered Dick. He had already given it once, but perhaps the other hadn't caught it. "I'm from Leonardville High."

"Uh-huh. Played, have you?" [24]

"Yes." It seemed to Dick that any live, wide-awake football trainer should have been aware of the fact. "Yes, I've played quite a little."

"Uh-huh. Well, you see the manager; he's around here somewhere, or he was; he'll look after you. Chandler! That'll do for today. Jog the track once and go on in." Billy Goode turned away to meet the remonstrances of a big, heavily-built youth who had been catching punts and returning them a little further along the field, leaving Dick a trifle ruffled. This was not just the sort of reception he had expected. Of course, it was understandable that the Philadelphia papers didn't penetrate to Warne, Massachusetts, in which case the trainer wouldn't have read of him, but it did seem that a fellow who had received offers from fourteen schools and colleges should have been heard of even in this corner of the world! Dick put the trainer down as a person of a low order of mentality.

He went into the stand and sat down there and watched the practice. Evidently most of the fellows at work were last year players, for they handled the ball in a knowing way that precluded their being beginners. No one who looked anything like a coach was on hand, but a dark-haired [25] fellow of eighteen, perhaps, who appeared in command, was probably the captain. And a short, stocky, important-looking youth who had discarded his jacket and was wandering around in a very blue silk shirt was just as probably the manager. Dick didn't seek him, for there would be plenty of time to do that tomorrow. At intervals the trainer summoned one of the candidates and sent him off, usually prescribing a round of the running track first. Dick was glad he did not have to swallow that medicine today, for the weather was extremely warm and humid. He thought that the candidates averaged both heavier and older than he had expected, and he wondered if by any chance his lack of weight would be against him. One of the quarter-backs out there, chasing a squad about in signal drill, was, however, no bigger than he, and possibly no older. Dick guessed he needn't trouble about lack of weight. Quarters didn't have to be big in order to make good. Presently the practice ended and he followed the squad toward the gymnasium and then went back to Sohmer and climbed the slate stairway to the second floor.

He remembered having closed the door of Number 14 on going out, and since it now stood wide open it was fair to assume that the unknown “S. G.” had returned, and Dick entered the study eager, in spite of his seeming indifference, to find out what Fate, in the shape of the school office, had assigned to him as a room-mate. [26]

CHAPTER III [27]

ROOM-MATES

The appearance of the study seemed to have been changed in his absence, and Dick’s second glance showed that the change was in the shape of several pictures on the wall, some books on one of the study tables and a large packing case in the centre of the floor from which emerged the corner of a brilliant blue cushion and the lower half of a boy. While Dick looked the rest of the youth emerged slowly until at last, somewhat flushed of face, he stood entirely revealed, clutching triumphantly a pair of battered running shoes. At that moment his eyes fell on Dick and a surprised and very pleasant smile came to his face. He tossed the shoes to the floor, dusted his hands by a simple expedient of rubbing them on his trousers, and nodded, stepping around a corner of the big box.

“Hello!” he said. “I suppose you’re Bates. My name’s Gard.”

He held out a hand and Dick took it as he answered: “Yes. Glad to meet you. We’re in here together, I take it.”

Gard nodded. “Yes. I got here this noon and helped myself to a desk, but I’m not particular which I have. Same about the beds. We can toss up, if you like.” [28]

“It doesn’t matter to me,” Dick replied. “Suppose you take the first choice of a desk and I’ll take the bed I want. That suit?”

“Sure.” Gard was looking at Dick with frank interest, leaning against the packing case, his arms, on which he had rolled up the sleeves of a good-looking shirt, folded. “Yes, that’s fair enough. I took that desk because it happened to be nearest the box, and I’ll keep it.”

Dick laid his hat down and seated himself on the window-seat.

“It’s smaller than I thought it would be,” he said, looking about the study.

“Oh, big enough, isn’t it? It is one of the small ones, though. Some of the rooms on the front are corkers, Bates. I couldn’t afford one of those, though, and this is a lot better than the room I had last year in Goss.”

“Then you—you’re not a new fellow?”

Gard shook his head. “This is my second year. I’m in the Third Class. Are you?”

“Yes. I think I could have passed for the Fourth, but I guess I’d had to work mighty hard to keep up, and I want to play football, you see. So——” [29]

“Of course! There’s no sense rushing through things too much, Bates. If you’d gone into the Fourth you’d have been through just when you were beginning to like the school. You will like it, I’m sure.”

“I expect to. I had a brother here five or six years ago, and he’s always cracked it up high.”

“That so?” Gard pulled the blue cushion from the box and tossed it across the room. “Put that behind you. Guess I’ll leave the rest of this truck until after supper.” He seated himself in one of the easy chairs and stretched a pair of rather long legs across the carpet. “Let’s get acquainted,” he added, smiling.

Dick liked that smile and answered it. But for a moment neither followed the suggestion. Gard was looking critically at the pictures he had hung, and Dick had a good chance to size him up. His room-mate was a bit taller than Dick, with rather a loose-jointed way of moving. He didn’t look exactly thin, but there certainly wasn’t any excess flesh about him. The running shoes suggested that he was a track athlete, and Dick surmised that he was a good one. You couldn’t call Gard handsome; perhaps he wasn’t even good-looking in the general acceptance of the word; but Dick liked his face none the less. The forehead was high and the lightish hair of a rather indeterminate shade of brown was brushed straight back from it. That happened to be a style of wearing the hair that Dick had always objected to, but he had to own that the fashion suited Gard very well. It emphasised the lean length of the face and added to the sharp, hawk-like appearance produced by a curved beak of a nose, thin and pointed, and the narrow jaws. But if Gard reminded Dick of a hawk, it was a gentle and kindly one, for the mouth was good-natured and the eyes, darkly grey, were soft and honest. Gard wore good clothes with no suggestion of extravagance. In age he was fully seventeen, perhaps a year more. He moved his gaze from the wall and it met Dick’s. Involuntarily both boys smiled. Then each began to speak at once, stopped simultaneously and laughed. [30]

“You say it,” said Gard.

“I was going to ask if you were a runner.”

"I'm a hurdler. I've tried the sprints, but I'm only as good as a dozen others. Sometimes I 'double' in the broad-jump if we need the points. You look as if you might be fast on the track, Bates. By the way, what's the rest of your name?"

"Richard C. The C's for Corliss." [31]

"That means Dick, doesn't it?"

"Surely," laughed the other.

"All right. Mine's Stanley; usually abbreviated to Stan. Have you ever done any running, Dick?"

"Yes, I've done some sprinting. What's the hundred-yards record here?"

"A fifth. It hasn't been bettered in years."

"That's a fifth better than I can do."

"Same here. I tried often enough, too, but I only did it once, and that was in practice, with a hard wind at my back. You play football, you said?"

"Yes, do you?"

Stanley shook his head. "Too strenuous for me. I like baseball pretty well, but it interferes with track work. Guess we're going to have a corking good eleven this year, and I hope you'll make it, Dick."

"Thanks. I may. The fellows look a bit older and bigger than I expected they would, though."

"Well, they say you have a good deal of fun on the Second Team, if you don't make the first. And next year you'll probably be a lot heavier. I don't know many of the football crowd, or I'd [32] take you around and introduce you. I wonder if Blash would do you any good."

"Who is he?"

"Wallace Blashington's his full name. He plays tackle on the team; right, I think. He might be a good fellow for you to know if——" Stanley's voice trailed into silence.

"If what?" prompted Dick.

"Well, Blash is a queer customer. He's really a corking chap, but doesn't take to many fellows. That's no insult to you, Dick. He—he's just funny that way. And he's the sort that won't do a thing if he thinks you're trying to pull his leg. Blash hated me—well, no, he didn't hate me; he didn't take the trouble to do that; but he certainly had no use for me the first of last year. We get along all right now, though."

"What happened? To make him change his mind, I mean."

"That was sort of funny." Stanley smiled reminiscently. "We had some scrub skating races last winter on the river and Blash and I were entered in the two-mile event. There were about twenty starters altogether, but we had them shaken at the beginning of the last lap and Blash and I hung on to each other all the way up the river to the finish. I just managed to nose him out at the line, [33] and he was a bit peeved, I guess. He didn't let on, but he was. So, a little while later, when we were watching the other events, he came over where I was and said: 'I believe I could beat you another time, Gard.' 'Well, perhaps you could,' I answered. 'Maybe you'll have a chance to find out.' I wasn't cross, but I thought it was a bit unnecessary, if you see what I mean. 'Wouldn't care to try it now, I suppose?' he said. I told him I was tired out, but I'd race him if he liked as soon as the programme was finished. 'Oh, never mind the rest of it,' he said. 'We're both through. Say we skate down the river a ways and settle the question by ourselves.' So we did. We went about a mile down, beyond the flag, and Blash said we'd skate a mile down and a mile back, and that we'd turn at the old coal wharf. So we went off together, Blash trying to make me set the pace. But I wouldn't and so we lagged along abreast for half a mile or so. Then Blash laughed and spurted and I went after him and we had it nip and tuck all the way to the wharf. Coming back there was a wind blowing down on us and we had harder work. Blash was a half-dozen yards ahead and when we came to a turn in the river he stayed along the bank, thinking he'd be more out of the wind. That seemed good sense and I hugged in close behind him. Then, first thing I [34] knew, the ice went crack, and down went Blash. I managed to swerve out and get by, but of course I had to go back and see if he was all right.

"He was about ten feet from shore, flapping around in a little squarish hole he'd made for himself. I asked him if he could break the ice and get ashore and he said he couldn't, that it was too thick to break with his hands. So I laid down on the ice and crawled over to him, and he got hold of my hands and I had him pretty nearly out when the crazy ice broke again and we were both in there! In fact, I went down so far that I came up under the ice and Blash had to pull me out to the hole. By that time we were both laughing so we could hardly keep our heads out. The water was just over our depth and the ice was too hard to break with our hands, and we didn't have anything else until I thought of using a skate. That meant getting boot and all off, and Blash sort of held me up while I tried to untie the laces and everything. We were getting pretty stiff with the cold by then, Blash especially, but I finally managed to get one boot off and began hacking at the ice with the skate blade. It was slow work until I had chopped off about a yard. Then we got our toes on the bottom and after that it was easy and we crawled out. I wanted to [35] beat it back to school as fast as I could, but Blash said that we'd catch cold and have pneumonia and die. He said the best thing to do was light a fire. Of course, I thought he was joking, but he pulled out one of those patent water-proof match-safes and if you'll believe it the matches were perfectly dry!

“But the awful thing was that there were only two matches there! However, we got a lot of wood together and some dry marsh grass and twigs, and all this and that, and I kept the wind off, and we made the second match do the trick. In about two minutes we had a dandy hot fire going, took off our outer things and hung them around and we sat there with our backs to the mud bank and steamed. I don’t believe any fire ever felt as good as that one did, Dick! Well, that’s all of it. Just before dark, we started back and we never told anyone about falling into the river for months afterwards. We never found out which is the best two-mile skater, but we did a lot of chinning and got to know each other, and since then Blash and I have been quite pally.”

“Quite an adventure,” said Dick. “It’s a wonder you didn’t catch cold, though.”

[36] Stanley laughed. “We did! For a week we were both sneezing and snuffling horribly. Tell you what, Dick. If you haven’t got anything better to do, we might go over and see Blash after supper. I guess this truck can wait until tomorrow. Only don’t say anything about football to him. If you do he will think I brought you over on purpose, so as to—well, you see what I mean.”

“Yes, I see. He might think I was swiping,” Dick laughed. “But, look here, Stan, what could he do, anyway? A fellow has got to make his own way, hasn’t he?”

“Why, yes, I suppose so. But it does help—somehow—to know the crowd if you’re going in for football. At least, it does with making the track team. I don’t mean that there’s favouritism, but—oh, I suppose if you happen to know a fellow and know that he’s all right, you just naturally take a bit more interest in him. That’s the way I figure it out, anyway.”

“Yes, but suppose this fellow Blash—er——”

“Blashington. Quite a mouthful, isn’t it?”

“Suppose he asks me if I play football? Then what?”

[37] “Oh, just say you do and change the subject. By Jupiter, Dick, it’s ten after six! Let’s beat it over and get some supper. Say, if you see the steward tonight maybe you can get at my table, if you’d like to. Tell him you’ve got friends there. It’s Number 9. You can sit there tonight, anyway, for Eaton’s not back yet, and you can have his place. Know where the lavatory is? Got any towels? Here, take one of mine. Your trunk won’t get up until morning, probably. They have so many of them that they can’t begin to handle them all today. If you need anything let me know and I’ll dig it out of the box for you.”

“I’ve got everything I want in my bag, I think. Much obliged just the same, Stan.”

Five minutes later the new friends closed the door of Number 14 and made their way along The Front, as the brick walk leading from side to side of the campus was called. Stanley named the buildings for Dick as they went along: the gymnasium, then Goss Hall, Parkinson, Williams and Alumni. Their journey ended there, but there was still another dormitory nearby, Leonard, and, beyond that, the residence of the Principal. Dick nodded, but it was food he was thinking of just then.

---

[38]

CHAPTER IV

BLASHINGTON

“Of course,” said Stanley, “you can go to ‘Jud’s’ reception if you’d rather, but you’ll have a poor time. You just shake hands with Jud and a bunch of the faculty and Mrs. Jud and stand around until you get tired and go home again.”

“Jud being Doctor Lane?” asked Dick.

“Right! The idea is that you’re to become acquainted with the other fellows and the instructors, but the old boys fight shy of it and the new boys just stand and look at each other, and the faculty always forgets your name the next morning.”

“Well, it doesn’t sound exciting,” acknowledged Dick, “and I’m for cutting it out unless it’s required.”

“It isn’t, it’s elective,” laughed Stanley. “We’ll blow over to Blash’s room presently. He may not be there, but we can try.”

[39] They had finished supper and were strolling along the walk toward the west gate. Windows were open in the dormitories and from the nearer ones came the sound of voices and laughter. Occasionally someone hailed Stanley and they stopped for a moment while the latter held conversation. There were groups of fellows on the turf along The Front, for the evening was warm and still. A bluish haze softened the twilight distances and somewhere toward the centre of the town a church bell was ringing. It was all very peaceful and homey, and Dick felt no regrets for Leonardville. At the gate which led onto the junction of Linden and Apple Streets they paused a moment. A belated arrival climbed tiredly out of a decrepit taxi in front of Williams and staggered up the steps bearing suit-case and golf-bag. Along the streets and less frequently across the campus the lights gathered brightness in the deepening twilight, although westward the sky was still faintly aglow.

“Where does Blashington room?” asked Dick as they turned their steps back the way they had

come.

"Goss," answered Stanley. "He rooms with Sid Crocker, this year's baseball captain."

"Goss?" Recollection came to Dick. "I wonder if you know a fellow named Quiggle—no, that's not his name. I don't know what his name is, but he rooms in Goss. He's a tall, lanky chap with a long nose."

"Where'd you meet him?" asked Stanley, interestedly. [40]

Dick recounted the incident and, since he didn't happen to look at Stanley's countenance while doing so, was not aware of the smile that trembled about the hearer's lips. "He's going to pay me the rest of that money when I find him," ended Dick resolutely. "I thought maybe you'd know who he is."

"Well, the description isn't very—er—whatyoucallit, Dick," replied the other gravely. "I dare say the fellow was just having a joke with you."

"I dare say, but he was too fresh. I felt like an awful fool when the taxi driver called me down for offering him half a dollar instead of seventy-five cents. Well, I suppose I'll run across him pretty soon."

"Oh, you will," Stanley assured him almost eagerly "You're absolutely certain to, Dick!"

"What's the joke?"

"Joke?"

"Yes, what are you snickering about?"

"Oh, that? I—I thought I wanted to sneeze. It's sort of dusty this evening."

"I hadn't noticed it," said Dick suspiciously. But Stanley's countenance was quite devoid of [41] amusement, and he accepted the explanation. In front of Goss, Stanley backed off onto the grass and looked up to one of the third floor windows.

"There's a light in his room," he announced. "Somebody's in, anyhow. Let's go up."

So, Stanley leading the way, they climbed the two flights of worn stairs, for Goss didn't boast slate and iron stairways, and traversed a length of corridor to where the portal of Number 27 stood partly open. Stanley thumped a couple of times on the door and entered. Someone within said, "Come in, Stan," and Dick, following his friend, saw a rather short, stockily-made youth stretched on the window-seat at the end of the room. "Excuse me if I don't rise," continued the boy. "I happened to look out a minute ago and saw you rubbering up here." He shook hands with Stanley and then, seeing Dick for the first time, muttered something, and swung his feet to the floor.

"Shake hands with Bates, Sid," said Stanley. "Dick, this is Mr. Crocker, well-known in athletic circles as a shot-putter of much promise."

"Shut up," grumbled Crocker. "Glad to meet you," he added to Dick. "Sit down, you chaps, if you can find anything to sit on. Blash has got his things all over the shop. Bring up that chair for your friend, Stan. You can sit here, and I'll put my feet on you. Pardon me if I return to a [42] recumbent position, will you? I'm very weary."

"Where's Blash?" asked Stanley. "Gone over to Jud's, I suppose."

"Not exactly. He's down the hall somewhere. He suggested tossing up to see whether he or I should unpack the bags, and he lost. So, of course, he remembered that he had to see a fellow and beat it. He will be back in a few minutes, I guess. This is a fair sample of the way in which he meets his obligations, gentlemen. I'm ashamed of him."

Sid Crocker sighed, stretched, and deposited his feet in Stanley's lap. He was a nice looking boy of apparently eighteen years, with light hair and a round, much tanned face. He seemed unnecessarily serious of countenance, Dick thought, but afterwards he found that Sid's expression of gravity was no indication of mood. Sid caught Dick's gaze and was reminded of his duties as host.

"I guess I didn't quite get your name," he said, politely.

"Bates," said Stanley. "We're together over in Sohmer. This is his first year."

"Bates?" echoed Sid. "Bates! Where have I—Ah! I remember." He sank back against the [43] cushions again, closing his eyes as though in deep thought. Dick determined to be modest, but it was flattering to find that someone here had heard of him. He waited for Crocker to proceed, and so did Stanley, but instead Sid wriggled off the window-seat. "Just excuse me a minute, will you?" He crossed to a chiffonier, opened a drawer and fumbled within. "Just remembered something. Fellow downstairs wanted me to lend him—er——" Whatever it was the fellow downstairs required they didn't learn, for Sid removed something from drawer to pocket and made for the corridor. "While I'm about it," he added from the doorway, "I'll find Blash and fetch him back." Dick got the impression that he was seeking to convey to Stanley more than his words expressed, for he stared very hard at that youth as he spoke and continued to stare for an instant longer before he disappeared.

"Rather a jolly old room," said Stanley, when they were alone. "These old places fix up nicely, I think."

Dick agreed. Personally he didn't care for the idea of sleeping and living in the same room, but

the low studding, and the deep window embrasure and the scarred, dark-painted woodwork were somehow very homelike. The walls held dozens of pictures of all sorts: photographs, posters, [44] engravings, etchings, a veritable hodge-podge. Amongst them were strange trophies, too: part of a wooden board bearing the strange legend “TE WAY S PASSING” in two lines, evidently half of a sign that had been sawed in two; a fencing mask; a canoe paddle with a weird landscape painted on the broad end; a cluster of spoons and forks tied together with a brown-and-white ribbon; several tennis rackets; a lacrosse stick; a battered baseball adorned with letters and figures and tacked to the moulding by its torn covering; several faded or tattered pennants, one bearing a big blue K which Dick presumed stood for the rival school of Kenwood. Between the two narrow beds was a good-sized study table littered with books and clothing and odds and ends awaiting Blashington’s return. Two chiffoniers and three chairs about completed the furnishings. The beds held bags, partly unpacked, and two steamer trunks blocked the passages between beds and table.

“Blash has had this room four years,” mused Stanley. “Says he would be homesick if he went anywhere else. The joke about Sid’s shot putting, by the way, is that he tried it last fall and Blash got a cannonball that weighed about thirty pounds, and worked it off on him. Sid almost killed himself trying to putt it more than twelve feet. Then he noticed that Blash and the others were [45] using another shot, and got onto the joke. Here they come.”

With Sydney Crocker was a tall, thin fellow who, to Dick’s utter amazement, wore a long and drooping black moustache. Perhaps the gorgeous luxuriance of that moustache was a surprise to Stanley as well, for Dick noted that the latter stared at it fascinatedly for a long moment ere he greeted its wearer. Even then he seemed to find difficulty in speaking. Perhaps the dust was annoying him again. Dick awaited an introduction while the thought that there was something wrong with that moustache, grew from a mere suspicion into a certainty. In the first place, no fellow of Blashington’s age could grow such a thing. In the second place he wouldn’t be allowed to wear it in a preparatory school. In the third place it was much too good to be true; too long, too black, too—Why, of course, it was a false one stuck on! Dick smiled knowingly as Blashington stepped over a trunk and held out a bony hand.

“Pleased to meet you, Mr. Bates,” said Blashington, heartily. “Any friend of Stan’s is mine to the extent of ten dollars. Sit down, everyone. Dear me, you haven’t got these things put away yet, [46] Sid. So sorry to have you chaps find the room in such a mess. I don’t know what Sid’s been doing, I’m sure.” Blashington chatted on, but Dick noted that there was a distinct air of restraint about the others. Indeed, Stanley appeared to be actually suffering from restraint, for his face was very flushed, and the low sounds that came from him spoke of deep pain.

“You are a new-comer, I understand, Bates,” Blashington continued, smiling amiably behind that ridiculous moustache. “I hope you will like us and spend a pleasant and profitable year in these classic shades.”

He said more, but Dick wasn’t listening now. “Classic shades!” Where had he heard that expression recently, and who had used it? Then memory came to his aid and he knew! His face stiffened and his cheeks paled. Blashington, reading the symptoms aright, paused in his rhetorical meanderings and laughed.

“Bates is on, Stan,” he said. “I see the warm light of recollection creeping over his face. Further attempts at disguise are futile, not to say idle. The clock strikes twelve. Unmask!” Blashington pulled the moustache from his face and tossed it to the table. “Excuse the little jest, Bates. It was [47] Sid’s thought. Like most of his ideas, it didn’t work.”

Stanley and Sid were laughing enjoyably, but Dick couldn’t find any humour in the trick. He remained silent, while Sid gasped: “Gee, Blash, you did look an awful ass with that thing on!”

“Did I? Well, I seem to have offended Bates. He doesn’t look as though he thought I was a bit funny.”

“I don’t,” said Dick, stiffly. “Either now or this afternoon.”

“Oh, come, Dick!” protested Stan. “Take a joke, won’t you?”

“Dry up, Stan,” said Blashington. “Bates has a right to feel peeved if he likes to. Look here, Bates, I’m sorry I offended you. When you know me better you’ll understand that I didn’t mean to. Will that do for an apology?”

“I think the whole thing is awfully silly,” replied Dick coldly, “but it’s of no consequence: not enough to talk about.”

There was a moment of uncomfortable silence. Then Stanley said hurriedly: “That’s all right then! You mustn’t mind Blash, Dick: nobody does.”

Blash, whose expression of deep contrition Dick had thought suspiciously emphatic, chuckled. “I thank you, Stan, for them few kind words. Well, now that the *entente cordial* has been [48] restored, how are you and everything? Have a good summer?”

“Oh, yes, bully. Did you?”

“I had a busy one, anyway. I’ll tell you about it some time. I suppose you’ve heard that Pat isn’t coming back this year?”

“No! Why? What’s the matter?”

“Gaines told me that he had a letter from Pat about two weeks ago, saying that his father had lost a lot of money and that he was going to work; Pat, I mean, not his father: although it is likely

that Mr. Patterson will work, too. It sounds reasonable, eh? I'm awfully sorry. Pat was a dandy chap. Besides, he's going to leave a big hole to be filled."

"That's right," agreed Sid Crocker. "Patterson was a corking quarter-back. And he would have played on the nine next spring, I'll bet. He swung a mean bat on the Second last year, and would have made a mighty good fielder for us, I guess. Who will get his place, Blash?"

"Stone. Gus isn't bad, but Pat came pretty close to being a marvel. We're talking about our last year's quarter-back, Bates. Do you care for football?"

Dick felt Stanley's anxious look on him as he answered: "Yes, I like football, thanks." [49]

"Do you play?"

"I have played—some."

"That's good. We need talent this year, and you look as if you might be clever." Dick knew, however, that Blash was only being polite.

"Do you play baseball?" asked Sid.

"N—No, not much. Of course I have played it, but I'm not good enough." His manner was still stiff, and he made no effort to remain in the conversation. The others chatted on for some time longer, Stanley frequently seeking to get Dick to talk, but not succeeding, and then the visitors took their departure.

"Drop in again, Bates," said Blash. "If there's anything I can do to help, let me know."

Dick thanked him non-committingly. Outside Stanley shook his head. He was smiling, but Dick knew that he wasn't pleased. "I guess that didn't get us much, Dick," he said.

Dick frowned. "Well, I can't help it!" he said defensively. "He makes me tired. Anyway, if I can't get along in football without his help, I'm quite willing to stay out of it."

"Oh, that won't make much difference, I suppose. I only thought that if Blash took to you——"

"Well, he didn't: any more than I took to him." [50]

"I suppose I ought to have told you he was the fellow you rode up from the station with, but I didn't realise that you were really so peeved with him. It's sort of too bad you couldn't have taken it as a joke, Dick."

"I'm sorry," answered the other haughtily. "I won't trouble you to introduce me to any more of your friends, Gard."

"Well, don't be waxy," said Stan, good-naturedly. "There's no harm done. You may like Blash better when you get to know him, and——"

"I don't think so. And it doesn't matter, does it?"

"N—No, except that it's always nicer to like fellows than not to. You get more out of—out of life, Dick. Well, never mind Blash. Want to go over to Jud's for a few minutes? It isn't too late."

"I don't know. Yes, I guess I will, but you needn't bother unless you want to."

"Oh, I'll come along. We don't have to stay. Hope there'll be some eats, though."

When they had turned back and were retracing their steps along The Front, Dick broke a silence of several minutes' duration.

"Anyway," he said a trifle resentfully, "I noticed one thing." [51]

"What's that?" inquired Stanley.

"Blashington took mighty good care not to say anything about that twelve cents he owes me!"

CHAPTER V [52]

"RUSTY"

Two busy days followed for Dick. Stanley was a great help, however, and getting settled into his stride was accomplished fairly easily. There was his adviser to see and his courses to arrange: he was required to take seven courses, one of them elective. For the latter he chose General History, not so much because he felt a hankering for such knowledge as the course afforded as because it entailed but two recitations a week. You see, he had to arrange so as not to have studies interfere too much with football! However, there seemed no danger of his not having enough school work, for, with History, his grand total was twenty-nine hours.

He passed his physical examination with flying colours and on Wednesday set to work with the football candidates. Of these there was a startling number, he thought. The field that afternoon was so thickly sprinkled with fellows of all sizes, shapes and degrees of experience that there was scarcely room to move about. Dick found himself simply one of many, doomed to go through with [53] the usual routine of the beginner. At first he felt somewhat impatient and even peeved, but presently he decided to view the thing as a joke. They would very soon see that he belonged in an advanced squad, he thought, and meanwhile it wouldn't do him any harm to practice the

kindergarten stuff with the rookies.

The coach didn't appear until Thursday, and when he came, Dick didn't altogether approve of him. In the first place, Dick considered him too old: he looked to be every day of thirty-four or five. In the second place, Coach Driscoll lacked the good-natured, free-and-easy manner that Dick's experience had associated with football instructors. He wasn't bad looking, and he had very evidently kept himself in good physical trim, but, being so old, he would, Dick decided, be horribly behind the times and out-of-date. "Tod" Driscoll was a Parkinson graduate and a Yale man. At Yale, he had established an enviable reputation as a football player. He had been coaching at Parkinson for five years, Dick learned, and with success, for in that time the Brown-and-White had thrice triumphed over the Blue of Kenwood. And he was popular in spite of the fact that he was a very strict disciplinarian.

Dick found Captain Bob Peters more to his liking. Peters was a homely, tow-haired, snub-nosed [54] chap built like a Greek athlete, with a smiling countenance and a clear, creamy-brown skin against which his grey-blue eyes looked startlingly bright. He was cheerful and light-hearted and yet could be very intense and very earnest on occasions. He played at right end on the team. Dick didn't have any dealings with Captain Peters at this period, however, for a youth named Warden appeared to have control of his fortunes. Warden was a dark-complexioned, earnest fellow who never said an unnecessary word to the squad of beginners over whom he had been placed, and who worked very hard and conscientiously every minute. Dick thought he took himself and his duty a bit too seriously, but couldn't help liking and respecting him.

Dick was rather surprised at the extremely earnest and business-like way in which football practice was conducted. There was so much system and everyone was so serious! Even the manager and his hard-working assistant appeared to have no thought in life beyond that of turning out a successful football team. Billy Goode, the trainer, alone seemed to be unaffected by the contagion of effort. Billy even found time for a laugh and a joke. [55]

Naturally, Dick was especially interested in the quarter-back candidates. He got one of the fellows to point out Gus Stone to him, and was relieved to find that Stone didn't look very wonderful. He was rather short and perhaps a bit heavier than the position demanded, although doubtless a week of work would remove some of the weight. There was also Cardin, a slighter and younger boy who had played the position on the Second Team last year. And there were a dozen others, Dick amongst them, who had declared their preference for the quarter-back job.

He saw Wallace Blashington now and then on the field or in the gymnasium, and Blash always spoke, but there was no further meeting until the following Saturday. By that time Dick had settled down into the routine of school life, and had decided that he was going to like Parkinson immensely and Stanley Gard even more. Dick had grown rather used to having other fellows wait on him, run his errands and make life easy for him in general. He had never consciously asked such service, but had received it as a tribute to popularity. But he was not getting it now. If he had expected Stanley to wait on him—and he didn't know whether he had or not, but probably [56] had!—he was doomed to disappointment. Stanley was the best-hearted chap in the world, but if one of Dick's shoes had got away from him and taken up a temporary abode under Stanley's bed, it was Dick who fished it out. Only once had Dick asked a service. Then, seated at his study desk, he had lightly suggested that Stanley should hand him a book that was lying on the radiator top near the window. Stanley was seated in a chair somewhat nearer the radiator than Dick, but there was no sound of movement and after a second Dick looked around inquiringly. Stanley was still seated and there was a quizzical grin on his countenance. After a somewhat blank stare, Dick arose and got the book. As he sat down again he said sarcastically: "Much obliged, Stan."

Stanley chuckled. "Dick, you've been sort of spoiled, haven't you?" he said.

"Spoiled? What do you mean? Just because I asked you——"

"You're one of those fellows who expect others to do things for 'em, and get away with it. Wish I knew the secret. But it isn't good for you, Dick. You must learn to run your own errands, and whitewash your own fences. Any time you break a leg, I'll fetch and carry for you, but while [57] you're able to get about—nothing doing! In fact, seeing that I'm an older resident of this place, I'm not certain you shouldn't be fagging for me!"

"Oh, go to the dickens," muttered Dick. "You make me tired." Then, after a moment, he added: "Maybe that was cheeky, Stan. I'm sorry. Guess I've had it too easy."

"That's all right, son. It's just as well to know where we stand, though. Any other little thing I can do for you?"

"Yes, you can close your silly mouth," was the answer.

By Saturday Dick felt almost like an old boy. His courses promised to be only mildly difficult, and the instructors seemed a very decent lot, notably "Old Addicks" who knew so much of ancient languages that he looked like an elderly, benignant Greek philosopher, and Mr. McCreedy, who taught mathematics. Through Stanley he met a great many of the fellows, and he picked up a few acquaintances himself. Of these latter, one was "Rusty" Crozier. He was a Fourth Class fellow who preferred to live in the town, and occupied two comfortable rooms in a house on Maple Street, just below the school. He was a jolly, light-hearted chap with a perpetual smile and hair of that peculiar shade of red that we associate with rusted iron: hence his nick-name. Dick [58] met him in classroom. "Rusty" borrowed Dick's fountain pen for a minute. After class they came together in the corridor and walked a little way along The Front. That began it. When Dick asked Stanley if he knew Crozier, Stanley nodded.

“Everyone knows Rusty,” he said. “But if you want to tread the straight and narrow, Dick, keep away from him.”

“What do you mean? Isn’t he—all right?”

“Oh, yes, Rusty’s all right. That is, there’s nothing vicious about him. In fact, he’s a very decent, very clean fellow. But he’s gifted with a talent for discovering trouble. And a talent for squirming out of it! If he wasn’t he’d have left Parkinson long ago. I’d say that Rusty’s trouble was an over-developed sense of humor.”

“I rather liked him,” mused Dick.

“You would. So do I. Everyone likes Rusty. But wise guys say him nay when he suggests one of his innocent amusements. It was Rusty who closed traffic on Main Street in the middle of a busy Saturday one day last year, only faculty doesn’t know it.”

“Did what?” asked Dick.

“He borrowed two carpenter’s horses and a sign and placed ’em across the middle of Main [59]
Street, near School, about one o’clock one day last spring. He found the sign somewhere, I don’t know where. It said ‘Street Closed by Order of Selectmen.’ Then he went over and stood in Wiley’s drug store and watched the fun. It was almost an hour before they discovered that it was a hoax. The paper was full of it, and the selectmen made an awful rumpus, but everyone else thought it was a pretty good joke.”

“And he wasn’t found out!”

“No. At least a score of people must have seen him set the barrier up, but no two of them agreed as to what he looked like. Some said he was a labourer in blue overalls, and others said he was a tall man with whiskers, and so on. That’s just one of Rusty’s innocent ways of amusing himself.”

“But doesn’t he ever get caught?” asked Dick incredulously.

“Oh, yes, heaps of times, but he always manages somehow to show that he was actuated by good intentions or that circumstances worked against him. Like the time he dropped the parlour match heads all over the floor in Room G and every time anyone put his foot down, one of the things went *pop*! He showed Jud the hole in his pocket where the things had fallen out. If it hadn’t been for the hole, he claimed, it wouldn’t have happened. He got off with a month’s [60]
probation, I think.”

Dick laughed. “He must be a cut-up! Well, I’ll keep away from him when he feels frolicsome.”

“Trouble is,” said Stanley, “you never can tell when Rusty is going to spring something.” He smiled and then chuckled. “Three or four of us walked over to Princeville two years ago to the circus. It was one of those little one-ring affairs, you know, with a mangey camel, and a moth-eaten lion and a troop of trained dogs. It was rather fun. Rusty was one of us, and he was as quiet as a mouse until near the end. Then he began flicking peanuts at the ring master. We tried to stop him, but he wouldn’t quit. Every time the ring master turned his back, Rusty would land a peanut on him, and the crowd got to laughing and gave it away. So they hustled us all out, and we didn’t see the performing dogs. Has he asked you over to his room at Spooner’s?”

“Yes,” said Dick, suspiciously. “Is there any trick in that?”

“Oh, no,” answered Stanley, smilingly. “He has very jolly quarters. If you like we’ll go over together some evening.”

“All right. Only I don’t like that catfish grin of yours. I suppose he has a trick staircase that [61]
folds up and lets you down in a heap or something?”

“No. Rusty’s fun is pretty harmless. We’ll wander over there tonight if you like.”

“Well, but I’m going to keep my eyes open just the same,” Dick laughed “You’re too anxious to go along, Stan!”

That afternoon Dick found a letter in the rack downstairs. It bore the Warne postmark, and was addressed to him in a very dashing hand: “Richard C. Bates, Esq., Sohmer Hall, Parkinson School, Town.” Wondering, Dick opened the envelope. Within was an oblong of pasteboard punched with three holes of varying sizes. In one of the holes was an ancient looking cent so badly corroded that it was hard to read the lettering. Dick’s thoughts naturally fell on Rusty Crozier, although what the joke meant, he couldn’t make out. But he smiled and dropped the coin in a waistcoat pocket, and presently forgot about it. Returning from football practice at five, however, he found another missive awaiting him. The envelope was different and the writing different, but there was just such another coin-card within and in the card was a second penny. This one was bright enough, but it had been badly bent. Dick, puzzled, added the second coin to [62]
the first, resolved to find out the meaning of the prank that evening.

He and Stanley went across the campus and down Maple Street about eight. Spooner’s was a large, square house standing almost flush with the sidewalk. Like many of the residences thereabouts, its upper floors were tenanted by students unable or disinclined to secure rooms on the campus. Stanley pulled open a squeaky screen door and entered. At the foot of the staircase, he paused and lifted his voice.

“Oh, Rusty!” he shouted. “Rusty-y-y!”

Somewhere above a door opened and a voice answered.

“A-a-ay! Come up!”

Stanley led the way again up two flights, and then to a door at the front of the house. Oddly enough, it was closed tightly, which fact, since it had been opened a moment before, struck Dick as peculiar. Stanley knocked and a voice called “Come in!” Somehow Stanley managed to get behind Dick, and it was Dick who turned the knob and pressed the door inward. The next instant he was precipitated into a glare of light. The knob had jerked itself out of his hand, and something—he supposed at the moment the something to have been Stanley—had banged against his heels and pushed him violently into the room. He stopped to find himself asprawl over an armchair with a placard bearing the word WELCOME a few inches from his nose. [63]

“Good evening,” said Rusty amiably from across the room.

“Good evening,” said Rusty amiably

“Hello,” gasped Dick. Then he looked back at the door for Stanley. Stanley was not there. But at the instant the door opened again and Stanley appeared. He was grinning broadly, but Dick was too much interested in the door to see it. The door was not opening like any door Dick had ever seen. In the first place it was turning on pivots at top and bottom, half of it coming in, and half of it going out, so that the aperture for entrance was scarcely wider than Stanley. In the second place, Stanley was holding hard to that knob and being fairly dragged through, for above the sill and below the lintel was a coiled spring that, so soon as the knob was turned, swung the door swiftly on its axis from left to right. Dick stared in surprise.

“Just a little idea of my own, Bates,” said Rusty, coming forward and removing the placard from the back of the chair to a place on the wall. “Have a chair.”

Dick looked from the proffered chair to Rusty and then to Stanley and shook his head. “No, thanks,” he muttered. “I’ll stand!” [64]

However, Stanley assured him on oath that the chair was quite safe and wouldn’t double up under him and he consented to try it, although not without anxiety. But he was up again a moment later, demanding to be shown the working of the amazing door.

“Quite simple,” laughed Rusty. “First I unlock it, thus. Then I stand clear of it. Then the unsuspecting visitor outside turns the knob.” He turned it from the inside, stepping quickly out of the way, and the door leaped open, swung once around and stopped as the latch snapped again into its socket. “That’s all there is to it. I place the cushioned chair here to receive the caller and place the ‘Welcome’ sign where he will be sure to see it. Most all the fellows know about it now, though, and I have to rely on newcomers like you, Bates, for a bit of fun.” He locked the portal again.

“Well, but—but suppose you want to go out?” asked Dick.

“I go out the other door.” Rusty indicated the adjoining bedroom. “In fact,” he added with a twinkle, “I seldom use this entrance myself. I keep it locked until I am expecting a distinguished visitor.” [65]

“Still, I don’t see how you knew I was with Stan,” Dick objected.

“You’ll have to ask Stan about that,” laughed Rusty.

“I told him,” explained Stanley, grinning.

“Oh! Then that’s why you were so anxious to come with me.” Dick fixed his room-mate with an accusing eye. “All right. I’ll get even with you, old son, if it takes my last—if it takes my last two pennies!” He looked quickly at Rusty, but there was nothing to show that the latter had grasped the allusion. “Maybe,” continued Dick, “you’d like to see them.” He fished the two cents from his pocket and held them forth. Stanley viewed them interestedly and so did Rusty.

“What’s the idea?” asked the former. “Do you mean that you’re down to those? Stony broke, Dick?”

Rusty’s innocent, uncomprehending expression remained and Dick began to think his suspicions wrong. “No, those are just—just pocket-pieces,” he answered flatly.

“Wouldn’t be very useful to you in a pinch,” observed his host. “Well, find seats, fellows. Hope you didn’t mind the reception, Bates. But I guess you didn’t. You look like a fellow who can take a joke.” [66]

“No, I didn’t mind,” said Dick. “Guess I was too surprised to mind!” He looked about the room. “This is pretty comfortable, Crozier.”

“Not bad. I’ve had these rooms ever since my first year. Got two nice windows in front and one on the side there, and two more in the bedroom. Mrs. Spooner is a corking old soul, and doesn’t mind a bit of noise now and then.”

Stanley chuckled, and when Dick looked across inquiringly he explained. “Mrs. Spooner’s as deaf as a haddock, Dick. If she wasn’t she couldn’t live in the same house with Rusty!”

“Run away! I’m not noisy. Sometimes my guests are, but I do all I can to restrain them. Haynes gives me more trouble than Mrs. S. He has the room under this on the floor below, Bates, and insists on studying at the times I feel playful. There are four other fellows in the house and you couldn’t pry any of us loose. You chaps can have your dormitory rooms. I don’t want them, thanks.”

“Do you take your meals here?” Dick inquired.

“No, Mrs. S. doesn’t give meals. She used to, but that was before my time. I eat around. Usually at ‘The Eggery.’ Sometimes at Thacher’s. Stan says you’re out for the football team. Going to make it all right?” [67]

“I don’t know, I’m sure. I’m going to try to. Do you—are you——”

“No, I’m not athletic, Bates. My favourite sport is mumblepeg. Besides, my studies prevent. Oh, shut up, Stan! Let me make a good impression on Bates, can’t you? What time is it, anyway? Look here, let’s go to the movies. What do you say?”

“Not for me,” answered Stanley. “I’ve got to beat it back and do some work tonight. Besides, the last time——”

“Oh, that!” laughed Rusty. “Wasn’t it silly? Such a fuss about so little, eh?”

“Oh, yes, very little!” Stanley turned to Dick. “He and Blash stretched a rope across the aisle and tied it to the arms of the seats ahead of them. Being fairly dark, some confusion ensued!”

“During which, if I remember correctly, you and Joe and Blash sneaked out. Just shows what a guilty conscience will do, Bates. I remained, secure in my innocence, and saw the show through.”

“Yes, you rotter!” said Stan indignantly. “You put the blame on us, and every time I go there now the doorman looks at me unkindly.”

“Well, you were out of the way and I wasn’t. Besides, I wanted to see the rest of the picture.” [68]

“Rusty, if you got your deserts,” said Stanley, feelingly, “you’d be shot at sunrise. Well, I must beat it. Coming along, Dick?”

Dick went, in spite of Rusty’s pleas. They left by way of the bedroom and Dick watched the hall door very, very carefully. It proved to be a perfectly normal door, however. Rusty told Dick to call again and held conversation with them over the banister until they had reached the street door, while from a second floor room came howls of “Shut up, Rusty! Shu-u-ut u-u-up!”

“It’s only Haynes,” called Rusty reassuringly. “Don’t mind the poor fish. Come again, fellows! Good night!”

In the letter rack in Sohmer was another envelope addressed to Dick and within was a third penny.

---

[69]

CHAPTER VI

DICK MAKES AN ENEMY

That was on Friday. The next afternoon Parkinson played her first game, with Mapleton School. Mapleton had started the Parkinson schedule for several years, invariably providing just the

amount of fight desired, and today was no exception to the established rule. Four ten-minute periods were played and Parkinson managed to run up seventeen points. It was a slow and uninteresting game from the spectators' standpoint, and the afternoon was scorchingly hot for the last of September. "Babe" Upton, who weighed well over a hundred and eighty and played centre, affirmed afterwards that he could feel himself melting away like a candle. Indeed, although none of the team was allowed to remain in the contest for more than two periods, there were many who found it hard medicine. Dick, who as a member of the squad was supposed to look on and learn, watched the game from the Parkinson bench and sweltered uncomplainingly for the better part of an hour and a half. Naturally enough, his interest concentrated itself on [70] Stone and, later, Cardin, the quarter-backs. He secretly thought that Cardin, with sufficient instruction, could be developed into a better quarter than Gus Stone, for Cardin was a quick, gingery youngster who drove his team hard, while Stone, although more experienced and heavier, had a tendency to go to sleep on his feet, and the plays always dragged just when they should have been run off at top speed. A third candidate, a thin ramrod of a youth, was tried out for a few minutes just at the end of the game. A neighbour told Dick that his name was Pryne, adding facetiously that it ought to be Prune. Pryne had scant opportunity to show whether he deserved the latter appellation, however.

When Mapleton had gone away and the stands had practically emptied, the members of the squad who had taken no part in the game were called out for an hour's work. Coach Driscoll did not remain, and the job fell to Harry Warden, who because of a weak ankle had been out of his place at left half on the team that afternoon. By some chance the running of one of the three makeshift teams fell to Dick, and, with a few of the candidates who had failed to get placed on the squads following, he started off. The simplest sort of plays were being taught, straight line bucks and runs, outside ends and a rudimentary set of signals was used. At first the men moved [71] hardly faster than a walk. Then, having presumably learned their duties, they were allowed to trot. It seemed to Dick that he was burdened with the stupidest aggregation on the field, and one of the backs, a shock-haired, long-nosed youth named Halden, outdid them all. No matter how many times Halden was walked through a play, the instant speed was called for he forgot all he had learned. Finally, after he had "gummed up" a simple two-man attack on left guard for the third time, Dick's exasperation found voice.

"You! Eight half! What good do you think you are? You're supposed to go in there and clear out that hole, and instead of that you let the runner ahead of you and then walk all over his heels! Can't you understand that play? Don't you get the signal, or what's your trouble?"

"I thought full-back went ahead," grumbled Halden.

"You thought! Great guns, haven't you been through that play often enough? Come on, now! Try to get it right this time."

Halden did get it right, but the effort so unnerved him that he stopped as soon as he was clear of the line and the full-back ran into him.

"All right as far you got," commented Dick, bitterly, "but there's supposed to be an opposing [72] line in front of you, Halden. Keep on going! Here, we'll switch that play to the other side and you watch how it's done." This time the right half cleared the hole on his own side and the full-back, ball hugged to his stomach, plunged after him. "Get it?" asked Dick of Halden.

"Sure," growled the left half.

"Well, try it then. All right! 7—15—18—7——"

Halden started off much too soon, beating the signal by a yard, and a trickle of laughter arose from the squad. "Fine!" called Dick. "That's great work, Halden! But it's usual to wait until the ball is snapped! Here, you drop out and let someone else in here for a while."

"You're not running this," objected Halden, angrily.

"I'm running this squad, and I don't intend to waste everyone's time trying to drive a simple idea into that concrete dome of yours!" Dick turned to the followers. "Any of you fellows play half?" he asked.

A volunteer stepped forward and Halden, muttering and angry, dropped back. It was at that instant that Dick noted the presence of Warden. If he had known the Varsity man was there, he [73] might have been slower in assuming authority, but, having begun, he kept on with it. "All right. Left half, please. Now then, fellows, let's get going again. Mind the signals!"

Of course when he called on right half to take the ball on a run outside, tackle one or two made the mistake of supposing it was the unsuccessful play that was called for and acted accordingly, but that was to be expected. "I told you to mind signals," scolded Dick. "Don't try to guess what's coming. Listen to me!" When the goal line was reached and they swung around for a trip back up the field, Dick saw that Warden had taken himself off again and was somewhat relieved. He had more than half expected a calling-down for sending Halden out. Toward the end of the signal drill the squad worked fairly well, although Dick persisted in the belief that he had fallen heir to the most stupid bunch on the field. When dismissal came they trooped over to the benches to get sweaters, and as Dick pulled his on he heard Halden's voice at his shoulder.

"Next time you bawl me out like that I'll hand you a punch on the nose," growled the half-back candidate. "You wouldn't have done it if that big fellow hadn't been there!"

Dick's head emerged from his sweater and he viewed Halden coldly. "Son," he said in as low a [74] voice as the other's, "if you try any tricks with me I'll hurt you badly. And any time I'm playing

quarter where you are and you don't show any more intelligence than you did today, you're going to get roasted. You make the most of that, Halden!"

"You try it!" hissed the other like a villain in a melodrama. "You think you're somebody, don't you? Well, you'll get yours if you try to make a goat of me!"

"Oh, piffle!" said Dick disgustedly, elbowing away. "Keep your temper if you want to play football."

"Yes, and I'll be playing football when you're kicked off," answered the other.

Dick shrugged and went his way, Halden following gloweringly to the gymnasium. In the locker room, Harry Warden crossed over and seated himself beside Dick on the bench in front of his locker. "Say, Bates," he began, "you've done that sort of thing before, haven't you?"

"What sort of thing?" asked Dick, a twinkle in his eye. "Fired a fellow off the squad without authority?"

Warden's sober countenance showed the faintest ghost of a smile: or perhaps it was only the eyes that smiled. "I meant run off signals. I thought you showed a good deal of familiarity with the job." [75]

"Why, yes, I've done it before, quite often. I've played three years, two of them on my high school team. We all had to take hold and coach at times, Warden. Our real coach couldn't give us a great deal of time. He worked in a hardware store, you see, and his boss didn't care a great deal about football." Dick smiled. "We couldn't pay him anything and he couldn't afford to lose his job."

"What school was that?" asked Warden.

"Leonardville, Pennsylvania, High." Dick watched to see if the information aroused recollection. It didn't. Evidently Fame didn't travel into New England.

"You played quarter-back?" Dick nodded. "Hm." Warden rubbed a cheek reflectively. "What's your weight?"

"One-fifty-one today."

"You look lighter. That's your build, though. I liked the way you handled that bunch of dubs today, Bates. Ever done much punting?"

"Not very much. We had a full-back who was pretty nifty at that. I've done some drop-kicking, though."

"Can you do two out of three from the thirty yards?" [76]

"Yes, if the angle isn't too wide."

Warden got up. "I wouldn't be surprised, Bates, if Driscoll took you onto the first squad some day soon. Keep on the way you're going, will you? Let's see if we can't prove him wrong. You know, Driscoll insists that you can't make a prep-school player from a high-school fellow. He says they always know too much. Think it's that way with you?"

Dick looked haughty for an instant. Then he smiled. "Why, I don't believe so, Warden. That's a funny idea of his, though."

"He says he's never had much success with high-school fellows," said Warden thoughtfully. "I know what he means, too. Maybe you wouldn't notice it, Bates, but it's a fact that most chaps who show up here from high schools have mighty good opinions of themselves. Half the time they've been captains of their teams, you know, or crack half-backs or quarters, and they don't take kindly to new ways and hate being told anything. I know two or three cases myself. By the way, you weren't captain, were you?"

"No." Dick didn't explain that he might have been had he remained in Leonardville! "I would say, though, that it depended on the fellow, Warden, and not on the fact that he'd been playing with some high-school team." [77]

"Yes, maybe. Well, see you again, Bates. And, by the way, you did just right to drop that chap this afternoon. So long."

When he had gone Dick sat and nursed one bare foot for several minutes and wondered what Warden's interest portended. He felt rather cheered-up when he finally went on with dressing himself. Warden's remark about Coach Corliss and the first squad sounded good to him.

---

[78]

CHAPTER VII

PAGING MR. BLASHINGTON

There were two more pennies awaiting him on the letter rack, each enclosed in a business envelope. One envelope bore the inscription, "After Five Days Return to The Warne Gas and Electric Company, Warne, Mass.," and the other purported to have come from the "Stevens Machine Company." But the handwriting was suspiciously the same on each envelope. Upstairs, Dick handed the two to Stanley and told about receiving the previous three pennies. For a

moment Stanley seemed as puzzled as Dick. Then, however, a smile spread itself slowly over his face and he chuckled.

"Anybody owe you any money?" he asked.

"Not that I know——" began Dick. Then comprehension dawned. "By Jove! You mean Blashington?"

"Of course. It's just the crazy sort of thing he'd do. He owed you twelve and a half cents, didn't he? Well, he's paying his debt. But where he manages to get hold of all these bum pennies is [79] beyond me. There isn't one of the five, Dick, that you could pass on anyone but a blind man!"

"Well, it's putting him to a lot of trouble, I'll bet," said Dick grimly. "If he can stand it I can. Funny, though, I didn't think of him. I thought yesterday it was Rusty Crozier. That's why I showed them to you last night. Crazy ape!"

"Hand me a scrap of paper and a pencil, Dick. Anything will do. Thanks." Stanley wrote a few lines, folded the paper many times and handed it back. "Just for fun, Dick, when Blash has made his last payment, you read what I've written there," he directed.

"Gee, you're as bad as he is for silly jokes," grumbled Dick. But he opened the drawer in his desk and dropped the paper inside. "And that reminds me that I ran across another crazy idiot this afternoon. His name's Halden. He wanted to punch me because I called him down for balling up a play in signal drill. Know him?"

"Sanford Halden?" Stanley nodded. "Know who he is, yes. He's a sort of a nut. Goes in for everything and never lands. Used to think he was a pole-vaulter. Then he tried the sprints and—well, I guess he's had a go at about everything. The only thing I ever heard of his doing half-way [80] well is basket-ball. I believe he's fairly good at that. Usually gets fired, though, for scrapping. They call him Sandy. He's a Fourth Class fellow."

"Is he? I thought he was probably Third. He must be older than he looks then."

"I guess he's only seventeen," said Stanley. "He's smart at studies. He's one of the kind who always knows what he's going to be asked and always has the answer. It's a gift, Dick." And Stanley sighed.

"He's going to have another gift," laughed Dick, "if he gets fresh with me! Talk about your stupids! He was the limit today. Had hold up the whole squad while he was being taught the simplest play there is. Then he had the cheek to threaten to punch my nose! I hope they let me run a squad tomorrow and put him on it!"

"Calm yourself, Dickie. Halden's a joke. Don't let him bother you. Let's go to supper. Don't forget this is movie night."

Going to the movies was a regular Saturday night event at Parkinson and usually a good half of the school was to be found at one or the other of the two small theatres in the village. Tonight, perhaps because of the heat, the stream that trickled across the campus to the head of School [81] Street as soon as supper was finished was smaller than usual, and Dick and Stanley, Blash and his room-mate, Sid Crocker, commented on the fact as they started off.

"The trouble is," hazarded Sid, "they don't have the right sort of pictures. Gee, they haven't shown Bill Hart since 'way last winter!"

"How do you know! They may have had a Hart picture while we've been away. What I kick about is this educational stuff. I suppose it doesn't cost them much, but I'm dead tired of Niagara Falls from an airplane and gathering rubber in Brazil—or wherever they do gather it—and all that trash." Blash shook his head disgustedly. "Hope they'll have a real, corking-good serial this year. Nothing like a good serial to keep a fellow young and zippy."

"They give us too much society drool," said Stanley. "Pictures about Lord Blitherington losing the old castle and his string of hunters and going to America and stumbling on a gold mine and going home again and swatting the villain and rescuing the heroine just as she's going to marry the old guy with the mutton-chop whiskers. I wish they'd let her marry him sometimes. Guess it would serve her right!"

"Well, they've got a pretty good bill at the Temple tonight," said Dick. "That Western picture [82] looks great."

"Yes, but who's this guy that's in it?" demanded Sid suspiciously. "Who ever heard of him before?"

"Everyone but you, you old grouch," Blash assured him sweetly. "Come on or we'll have to stand up until the first picture's over."

Adams Street was quite a busy scene on a Saturday night, for the stores kept open and the residents of a half-dozen neighbouring hamlets came in to do the week's buying. While they were making their way through the leisurely throng Sid had a fleeting vision of Rusty Crozier, or thought he had. Stanley said it was quite likely, as Rusty was a great movie "fan." Then they were part of the jam in the entrance of the Scenic Temple, and Blash, because of superior height, had been commissioned to fight his way to the ticket window. Followed a scurry down a darkened aisle and the eventual discovery of three seats together and one in the row behind. Blash volunteered for the single one and since it was directly behind the seat occupied by Dick the latter subsequently shared with Stanley the benefit of Blash's observations and criticisms. A news weekly was on the screen when they arrived, and Blash had little to say of the pictured events, [83]

but when Episode 17 of “The Face in the Moonlight” began he became most voluble. Stanley kept telling him to shut up, but Dick, who didn’t find the serial very enthralling, rather enjoyed Blash’s absurdities. A comedy followed and then came a Western melodrama with a hero who took remarkable chances on horseback and a heroine who had a perfect passion for getting into trouble. There were numerous picturesque cow-boys and Mexicans and a villain who, so Blash declared delightedly, was the “dead spit” of Mr. Hale, the instructor in physics. Just when the picture was at its most absorbing stage the piano ceased abruptly and after an instant of startling silence a voice was heard.

“Is Mr. Wallace Blashington in the house? Mr. Wallace Blashington is wanted at the telephone!”

The piano began again and the usher, a dimly seen figure down front, retreated up the aisle like a shadow. The three boys in front turned to Blash excitedly.

“What is it, Blash?” asked Sid.

“Better go see,” counselled Stanley.

“Are you sure he said me?” whispered Blash. He sounded rather nervous.

“Of course he did! Beat it, you idiot! Come back if you can. Ask the man next you to hold your [84] seat, Blash.”

“We-ell—but I don’t see——” muttered Blash. Then he got up, dropped his cap, groped for it and found it and pushed his way past a long line of feet, stepping on most of them. At the back of the theatre an usher conducted him to the ticket booth and he picked up the telephone receiver.

“Hello!” he said. “Hello! This is Blashington!”

“Hello! Is that you, Mr. Blashington?” asked a faint voice from what seemed hundreds of miles away.

“Yes. Who is talking?”

“Mr. Wallace Blashington?”

“Yes! Who——”

“Of Parkinson School?”

“Yes! What—who——”

“Hold the line, please. Baltimore is calling.”

Then followed silence. Blash wondered. He tried to think of someone he knew in Baltimore, but couldn’t. He felt decidedly nervous without any good reason that he knew of. Through the glass window he saw the doorman watching him interestedly. Beside him the girl who sold tickets pretended deep absorption in a magazine and chewed her gum rhythmically, but Blash knew that [85] she was finding the suspense almost as trying as he was. After what seemed to him many minutes a voice came to him. It might have been a new voice, but it sounded to Blash much like that of the first speaker.

“That you, Wallace!”

“Yes! Who are you?”

“This is Uncle John.”

“*Who?*”

“Uncle John, in Baltimore.”

“Unc—Say, you’ve got the wrong party, I guess! Who do you want?”

“Isn’t this Wallace?”

“This is Wallace Blashington!” Blash was getting peevish. “I haven’t any Uncle John in Baltimore or anywhere else!” The ticket girl sniggered and Blash felt his face getting red. “I say I haven’t——”

“Yes, Wallace? I can’t hear you very well. I’ve just had word from Dick, Wallace, and——”

“Dick who? I say Dick *who*!” roared Blash.

“Yes, Wallace, I’m sure you do. Well, this is what he says. I’ll read it to you. ‘Tell Blash——’ He calls you Blash. ‘Tell Blash he needn’t bother——’”

“Needn’t *what*?”

“Needn’t bother! ‘Tell Blash he needn’t bother to send the other——’ Are you there, Wallace? [86] Did you get that?”

“Yes! But who is talking? What is—Look here, I don’t understand——”

“Yes, Wallace, I’ll speak more distinctly.—‘Not to bother to send the other seven and a half cents!’”

“What cents? Say, look here! Who is Dick? Dick who? What——”

“Dick Bates,” answered the ghostly voice.

Blash stared for an instant at the instrument. Then he said: “You—you——” in an oddly choked voice, banged the receiver back on the hook and bolted through the door. He was aware that the

ticket girl was giggling and that the doorman eyed him amusedly as he hurried into the theatre again and he wondered if they were parties to the hoax. In the darkness at the back of the house he paused and fanned himself with his cap, and as he did so he chuckled.

"Not bad," he whispered to himself. "Not a-tall bad!"

Then he made his way down the aisle, located his seat after much difficulty and crawled back to it over many legs and feet. Three concerned faces turned sympathetically.

"No bad news, I hope?" said Stanley in an anxious whisper. [87]

"Anything important?" asked Sid.

Dick looked but said nothing, and Blash, his lips close to Dick's ear, hissed threateningly: "One word from you, Bates! *Just one word!*"

Instead of speaking, however, Dick turned his face to the screen again, his shoulders shaking. Further along, where Sid sat, there was a faint choking sound. Then Stanley said: "*Oh, boy!*" and fell up against Dick. Again that queer choking sound, then a gurgle, followed by a muffled explosion of laughter from Dick, and Stanley was on his feet, pushing Sid ahead of him, and Dick was following weakly on his heels, and a second after all three were plunging wildly up the darkened aisle.

"Ex-excuse me," muttered Blash. He clutched his cap and wormed his way past a dozen exasperated, protesting members of the audience and pursued his friends. He found them in the lobby outside. Stanley was leaning against the side of the entrance, Sid was draped over a large brass rail, and Dick, midway, was regarding them from streaming eyes, one hand stretched vainly forth for support. The contagion of their laughter had involved doorman and ticket girl, while a [88] small group of loiterers beyond were grinning sympathetically. On this scene appeared Blash. Stanley saw him first and raised one arm and pointed in warning. Dick looked, gave forth a final gasp of laughter and fled on wobbling legs. Sid and Stanley followed and Blash brought up the rear.

Down Adams Street in the direction of the railroad station went hares and hound, the hound gaining at every stride. Dick took to the street early in the race, the sidewalk being much too congested for easy progress, and had hair-breadth escapes from cars and vehicles. To him the station came into sight like a haven of refuge, and there he was run to earth in a dim corner of the waiting-room. When Stanley and Sid reached the scene, outdistanced by Blash, Dick was lying on a bench and Blash was sitting on him in triumph.

"Apologise!" panted Blash. "Say you're sorry!"

"I—I——" gurgled Dick.

"Say it, you lobster!"

"'Pologise!" grunted the under dog. "Sorry I—Oh, gee!" And, Blash arising from his prostrate form, Dick went off again into a paroxysm of laughter, while Stanley and Sid sank weakly onto the bench and wiped their eyes.

"Who did you get to do it?" asked Blash a few minutes later when they were making their way [89] back to school. "Who was on the 'phone?"

"Rusty Crozier," chuckled Dick.

"Rusty! And I didn't recognise his voice! I guess, though, he put a pebble under his tongue or something." Blash laughed. "Say, fellows, I'd have sworn he was a thousand miles away!"

"He—he stood away from the 'phone," Dick explained.

"Oh!" Blash was silent a moment. Then: "I suppose you two silly pups were in on it," he accused.

"I was," acknowledged Stanley. "Dick and I hatched it up at supper. Sid didn't know until you'd gone out to the telephone. Rusty went to the theatre first and found out what time the big picture was coming on. We passed him on Adams Street and I was afraid you'd see him and suspect something. But I guess you didn't."

"No, I didn't see him. Where did he telephone from, Stan?"

"The hotel, right across the street. He said he could watch you from there while he talked!"

"Wait till I get hold of him!" said Blash. Then he laughed again. "Well, it was pretty cute, fellows. The joke was on me that time!"

---

[90]

CHAPTER VIII

HALDEN REPEATS

Of course the joke was too good to keep, and two days later Blash's friends—and he had a good many—developed a disconcerting fashion of greeting him with: "Is Blashington in the house?" Blash, however, could take a joke as well as play one. Dick had secret doubts as to his right to accept credit for the conspiracy, for without Stanley it could never have been born. Still, like a

great many other great ideas, it had, in a manner of speaking, fashioned itself, and perhaps Dick had had as much to do with it as Stanley.

On the following Monday Dick found himself again in charge of one of the squads in practice. He had a suspicion that Harry Warden had said a good word for him to the coach, for more than once he found the latter watching him. With this encouragement Dick buckled down and worked very hard with the somewhat discouraging material supplied him. Halden was not with him today, but there was an excellent understudy for him in the shape of a chunky youth named Davis. Davis was just as slow as Halden had been, but he didn't gloom or grouch. He was [91] cheerful and apologetic and really tried hard, and Dick took a good deal of trouble with him and was extremely patient. When the squads were called in and the scrimmage began Davis insinuated himself between Dick and a neighbour on the bench.

"Say, Bates, I'm mighty sorry I was so stupid. And it was white of you to let me down easy the way you did."

"Oh, that's all right. You tried, and that's more than some of them did. Look here, Davis, why don't you brush up on the signals a bit before tomorrow? You didn't seem to remember them very well."

"The trouble is that I can't think quick enough, Bates. You say 'Six! Twelve! Fourteen!' and I know that I'm going to have the ball——"

"No, you're not!" laughed Dick. "Not on those signals!"

"Eh? Oh, that's right! Well, '*Five*, twelve, fourteen, then. What I mean is, that while I'm getting the first number you call the third and then the ball is snapped and I haven't found out where I'm going with it!"

Dick laughed. "Can't think quick enough, eh? You'll have practice on that then. Look here, [92] Davis, who told you you were made for a back?"

"No one, but you see I sort of wanted to play there. You don't think I can?"

"Oh, I don't want to say that," answered Dick kindly, "but I do think you'd do better work in the line. Seems to me you'd fit in pretty well at guard."

"I guess I'm too short," said Davis sadly. Then, brightening: "But I wouldn't have to remember so many figures, would I?" he asked.

"Well, anyway, you'd have another second or so to think about them," chuckled Dick. "Why don't you tell the coach you'd like to try playing guard? You are a bit short, but you've got weight and you look husky. How old are you? Sixteen?"

"Seventeen. I don't look it, do I? Say, I suppose you wouldn't want to speak to Mr. Driscoll, would you?"

"Me? It wouldn't do any good, my speaking to him, Davis. I'm just one of the dubs like the rest of you."

Davis appeared to doubt that. "I thought—Well, you won't be long. Anyone can see that you know the game. Maybe I'd better ask Bob Peters, though. I'm sort of scared of Mr. Driscoll."

"All right, Davis, go to it. Neither of them will bite you, I guess. Were you here last year?" [93]

Davis nodded. "And the year before. I'm in the Third."

"Oh, are you? Well, how does Mr. Driscoll stand with the fellows?"

"Stand with them? Oh, ace-high, Bates," answered the other earnestly. "He's a corker! Don't you like him?"

"I don't know him, but it seems to me he's sort of old for the job. And he doesn't seem to——" Dick stopped. "Oh, I don't know, but he acts a bit stand-offish, and football seems so much of a *business* here! I guess I can't explain just what I mean."

Evidently he hadn't, for Davis looked blank. "He isn't though," he affirmed. "Stand-offish I mean. I like him immensely. Most everyone does. And he can turn out good teams, Bates."

"Well, that's the main thing. I wonder if we have punting practice after the scrimmage. Who is the skinny chap that was in charge of the punters Friday?"

"Gaines. He's playing on the further squad there. See him? At right half: the fellow with the new head-gear. He's pretty good, too. He played right half last year. I'm no use at punting. Guess [94] my leg's too short."

"That can't be my trouble," laughed Dick.

"Oh, you! I thought you were mighty good at it," said Davis approvingly. "I wish I could do half as well as you did."

"Well, I can get distance sometimes," acknowledged Dick, "but I'm just as likely to kick to one corner of the field as the other! Direction is the hard thing."

"I suppose so, only it's all hard for me." After a moment of silence he said: "Do you know, Bates, half my trouble today was that I was scared. I was afraid you'd jump me the way you did Sandy Halden the other day."

"You weren't on the squad that day," answered Dick, puzzled.

"I was trailing behind. When you let Sandy go I wanted to take his place, but I was pretty sure

I'd do even worse! You ought to have heard Harry Warden chuckle when you slammed Sandy."

"Did he? Well, I had a lot of cheek to do that, because I wasn't supposed to change the line-up. But Halden was too much for me. Has he played before this year?"

"Oh, sure! Sandy tried last year, but they dropped him to the Second and he got peeved and [95] quit. He's always trying something. He had the golf bug last Fall and thought he was going to do wonders. But that petered out, too. Nobody would play with him after awhile because he was always blaming things on them. If he topped a ball he said the other fellow had coughed or moved or something. He was playing with Rusty Crozier one day: Rusty's a mighty good player: and he was fiddling over his ball on a tee when Rusty began swinging his club behind Sandy. Sandy told him he should keep still when his adversary was playing. Rusty had heard a lot of that and he got mad. 'That so?' he asked. 'Let me show you something, Sandy.' He pushed Sandy aside, and took a fine long swing at Sandy's ball and sent it into the woods over by the old quarry. 'There,' he said. 'Now you go hunt for that, Sandy, and when you find it try to swallow it. Maybe you'll choke on it!'"

"Did he find it?" asked Dick amusedly.

"Don't think so. Anyway, he hasn't choked yet!"

On Wednesday Sandy Halden fell to Dick's squad in signal drill. There had been a very strenuous twenty minutes with the tackling dummy and most of the fellows were still smarting under the gentle sarcasms of Billy Goode, and some nursed sore spots as well. Halden had failed [96] as signally as any of that particular squad to please the trainer and had come in for his full share of disparagement, and his temper was not of the best when signal work began.

Dick resolved to have no trouble with Halden; nor any nonsense either. But Halden started off more hopefully today and managed to get through the first ten minutes of drill without a mistake. He showed Dick, however, that he was still resentful by scowling on every occasion. Davis had, it appeared, found enough courage to ask for his transfer to the line, for he was on Dick's squad at left guard. Of course, with none to oppose him Davis managed to go through the motions satisfactorily enough, but whether he could ever be made into a good guard remained to be seen. There were five signal squads at work that afternoon, and several of them were followed by blanketed youths for whom no positions remained. Coach Driscoll and, at times, Billy Goode and Manager Whipple moved from one squad to another, the coach, however, devoting most of his time to the squad containing the more promising of the substitute material—or what seemed such at that early period. Captain Peters was at right end on the first squad, which held all of last season's veterans: Furniss, Harris, Cupp, Upton, Newhall, Wendell, Stone, Gaines, Warden and [97] Kirkendall. The weather had turned cold since Saturday and there was a gusty north-east wind quartering the field, and the more seasoned squads were charging up and down the gridiron with much vim.

Dick had his men pretty well warmed up at the end of ten minutes and plays were going off fairly smoothly. Then, down near the east goal, came the first serious mix-up in the back field. Showers, playing full-back, had received the ball from centre direct and was to make the wide-turn run outside his own left end, the two half-backs going ahead as interference. It was a play that had already been gone through half a dozen times that afternoon. But now for some unknown reason Halden, instead of sweeping around to the left in the wake of the other half, plunged straight ahead at the right guard-tackle hole and emerged triumphantly beyond. His triumph ceased, though, when he saw Showers and the right half-back trotting along a good fifteen yards distant. He pushed through toward Dick, who had been engaged with a mythical opposing back, scowling darkly.

"You called for a straight buck!" he challenged.

"Wrong, Halden," replied Dick quietly. "I called for a run outside left end and you were [98] supposed to be in advance of the ball."

"You got your signal wrong, then!"

"I don't think so. Everyone else understood it. We'll try it again presently, Halden. See if you can get it right next time."

"I got it right that time. I heard the signal, and it was——"

"Hire a hall, Sandy," advised a lineman. "You were all wrong."

"I was not! Bates doesn't give the signals so anyone can get them, anyway. He talks down in his boots!"

"Never mind that, Halden. Signals! 9—11—You're out of position, Halden. Come on, come on!"

"What's eating you? I'm in position!"

"You are now, but you weren't. Signals! 9—11——"

"I haven't moved an inch!"

"Well, do it now then. Move a couple of hundred inches and get out of here." Dick looked around for someone to take Halden's place, but there were no followers today. Halden had turned very red and now he stepped up to Dick sputtering.

"You can't put me off, you smart Aleck! I was put here by Driscoll and I'll stay until he tells me [99] to go. You think you're the whole thing, don't you? How do you get that way? You make me sick!"

Dick made no answer, but he watched Halden closely, for the boy was quite evidently in a

fighting mood. It was Davis who came to the rescue by slipping out of his place in the line and inserting himself suddenly between Halden and Dick.

"Sure, he's got a right to fire you, Sandy, and you're fired! So beat it!" Davis pushed Sandy playfully away. "Bates is boss, son."

"He is not! He's no more on this squad than I am! Quit shoving me, Short!"

"Driscoll is looking over here," warned Showers uneasily. "Let's get at it, fellows."

"Right you are," responded Davis, jumping into his place again. "Let her go, Bates!"

"I must have another half-back," answered Dick, looking about.

"Oh, forget it," growled Halden. "I'm not going off."

"I think you are," replied Dick quietly. He left the squad and walked across to where Billy Goode was standing with Manager Whipple. "I'm short a half-back," he announced. "Got someone, Mr. Trainer?"

"What's the matter? Someone hurt?" asked Billy. [100]

"No, but I've let Halden go. He tried to make trouble."

Billy looked at Dick quizzically. "*You* let him go! What do you know about that?" He turned inquiringly to Stearns Whipple.

Whipple smiled. "Benson's not working," he said. "Give him Benson."

"Would you?" Billy shot a look of mingled disapproval and respect at Dick. "Well, all right. Send Halden to me. Say, what's your name? Gates? Oh, Bates! Well, if I was you Bates, I wouldn't get too uppity." Billy went off for Benson and Dick started back toward his waiting squad, followed by the amused regard of Whipple. Benson trotted out from behind a neighbouring group and joined Dick.

"Billy sent me over," he said. "I'm a half-back."

"Go in at left, will you? That's all, Halden. Goode says to report to him."

Halden walked up to Dick and spoke very softly. "I'll get you, Bates, if it takes a year!" he said.

Dick nodded. "Come on, fellows! Signals!"

Some ten minutes later Coach Driscoll found Dick on the bench while the first and second squads were taking the field for the scrimmage. "Whipple tells me you had trouble with Halden," he said. "What was wrong, Bates!" [101]

"He tried to hold up work arguing whether he or I was wrong about a signal I gave."

"Who *was* wrong!"

"He was, sir, but that didn't matter. He wouldn't work. Just wanted to chew the rag. So I let him go."

The coach smiled faintly. "You probably did right, Bates, but perhaps in future you'd better report the matter to me first. You see some fellows might question your authority." The coach's smile grew. "Well, I dare say Halden won't trouble you again." He nodded and went off. Dick looked after him thoughtfully.

"When he smiles he doesn't look so old," he said to himself.

---

[102]

CHAPTER IX

LETTERS AND RHYMES

Dick's home letters became shorter about this time. Life was very busy for him. He wrote the news, but he no longer indulged his pen in descriptions. Sumner White had written twice from Leonardville, rather long letters about the High School Team, with messages from Dick's former schoolmates and questions about Parkinson football methods. Sumner's faith in Dick remained unimpaired, although the latter had still to announce his acceptance on the Parkinson First Team. "We are all expecting big things from you, Dick old scout," wrote Sumner in his latest epistle. "Cal Lensen is going to get the Parkinson weekly to exchange with the *Argus* so he can keep tabs on you. So just remember that we're watching you, kid! Every time you make a touchdown for Parkinson the old *Argus* will have a full and graphic account of it in the next number. But you'd better write now and then, besides. Good luck to you, Dick, and that goes for all the 'gang.'"

It wasn't very easy to answer Sumner's letters because answering involved explaining why he hadn't made the team. But Dick did answer them. The following Sunday he wrote: "Got your letter Tuesday, but saved it for today because Sunday's about the only day a fellow has time here for writing letters. Glad to get the news about everyone, but very sorry to hear of the Chester game. But you fellows must remember that Chester has the edge on you, anyway. Look at their coach and all the money they spend and all that! Besides, 19-6 isn't as bad as we licked them two years ago. I guess you'll have to find someone for Mercer's place. Ed tries hard, but he isn't [103]

scrappy enough for full-back. You need a fellow who isn't afraid of a stone wall and doesn't get hurt the way Ed did all last year. What about Cleary? He's slow, I know, but you might speed him up this year, and he has lots of fight.... Things here are humming along finely. We played Musket Hill yesterday and just walked away with them. I told you I didn't fancy Driscoll, the coach, but I like him better, and I guess he does know how to get the stuff out of a team. Talking about full-backs, I wish you could see our man here in action. His name's Kirkendall and he comes from Kentucky. The fellows call him 'K of K.', or just 'K' sometimes. Well, he got started yesterday in [104] the third period on our forty and Stone (quarter) fed him the ball eight times and he landed it on N. H.'s seven yards, and he'd have taken it over, too, if Stone hadn't acted the silly goat and switched to Warden. It took Warden and Gaines both to get it over then, but they did it. Only it seemed too bad not to let K. get the credit for the touchdown after smashing all the way for fifty yards. Stone doesn't use his head, it seems to me. But he does play a good individual game. For all-round work, though, our captain, Bob Peters, is the star of the team. He plays right end, and he's a wonder at it. Talk about getting down under punts! Gee, Sum, he's under the ball from the minute it's kicked, and he seems to always know just where it's going, too. But he's just as good on defence, and the way he handled the opposing tackle yesterday was a marvel. He's a dandy captain, too, for all the fellows swear by him and would do anything he asked them to, I guess.

"I'm still pegging along on the outside, and maybe I won't make the team this year. There are nearly five hundred students here and a lot of them are corking football players and a fellow has got to be mighty good to even get looked at by the coach. So you mustn't be surprised if you don't [105] see my name in the *Leader* this year. Of course it's early yet, and I might have luck, but I'm not counting on it much. I'm having a good time, though. Some of the football chaps are corkers, *big* fellows, you know. I mean big every way, not only in size. They're big enough in size, though, believe me, Sum. Gee, I was certainly surprised when I saw how the team stacked up. Why, Newhall, the right guard, must weigh two hundred pounds, and Cupp isn't any light-weight either. Another thing I was surprised at was the way they go at football here. Everything's all arranged and cut out six months ahead and it's the most business-like proposition I ever saw. There's an Athletic Committee first, composed of three faculty and two students, the football and baseball managers usually. Then there's the Head Coach, and under him the trainer and his assistant. The committee meets every week and then there's a meeting in the coach's room every night but Sunday and everything is threshed out and plans made for the next day. There doesn't seem to be a moment wasted here. Just at first I thought it was too professional or something, but I guess it's just being efficient. It works all right, anyway. Well, I must stop and go over to see a fellow in the village with Stan. I'll tell you about that fellow some time. He's a wonder! [106] Remember me to everyone and think over what I wrote about Leary. I forgot to tell you the score yesterday. It was 27-3. Some game, eh?"

Dick might have written a little more truthfully that he wasn't counting at all on making the First Team, for at the end of the first fortnight at Parkinson it was pretty evident to him that he had still some distance to go before he would reach the proficiency of fellows like Peters and Kirkendall and Warden and several more. The fact that he had loomed up as an uncommonly good quarter-back at Leonardville High School, and that the town papers had hailed him as a star of the first magnitude, didn't mean much to him here. He saw that Parkinson and Leonardville standards were widely apart. Why, there were fellows on the Second Team here who were better than anything Leonardville had ever seen! But Dick took his disappointment philosophically. He meant to try very hard for a place on the big eleven, no matter how humble it might be, and so get in line for next year. He wondered sometimes if he wouldn't have shown himself wiser had he gone out for the Second Team instead. There was still time for that, for very often candidates released from the First Team squad went to the Second and made good, but somehow he didn't [107] like the idea of trying for the moon and being satisfied with a jack-o'-lantern! No, he decided, if he failed at the First he would quit for that year and try all the harder next. Rumors of a first cut were about on the Monday following the Musket Hill game, and Dick prepared for retirement to private life. The cut didn't come, however, until Thursday, and when it did come it passed Dick by. Why, he couldn't make out. Fellows like Macomber and Swift and Teasdale disappeared and Dick remained. And Macomber and the others were, in Dick's estimation, much better players than he. But he accepted his good fortune and went on trying very hard to make good, telling himself all the time that the next cut would take him, certainly.

But if Dick's success at football was in a measure disappointing, his faculty for making friends had not deserted him. He had acquired many by the end of the first fortnight at school. Of course, they were not all close friends, but they were more than mere acquaintances. Among the close friends he counted Stanley first. Then came Blash and Sid and Rusty. His liking for Blash—and Blash's for him—seemed to have started after the episode of the telephone call. Because Dick had [108] fooled Blash and Blash had taken it smilingly seemed no good reason for an increase of friendship, but there it was! Blash still threatened to get even some day, and Dick was certain that he would, but that only made the mutual liking stronger. As between Sid Crocker and Rusty Crozier, Dick would have had trouble saying which he liked the better. Rusty was far more amusing, but Sid was a dependable sort of chap. In trouble, Dick would have thought first of Sid. Oddly enough, Dick's popularity was greater amongst fellows older than he. Each of those whom he counted real friends was at least a year his senior, and Harry Warden, with whom acquaintanceship was fast warming into friendship, was nearly two years older. But the disparity in age was not greatly apparent, for Dick had the growth and manners of eighteen rather than seventeen, and one who didn't know the truth might well have thought him as old as either Stanley or Rusty.

Of enemies, so far as he knew, Dick had made but one. Sanford Halden allowed no opportunity

to remind Dick of his enmity to get past him. He had been among those dropped from the First Team squad in that first cut and it appeared that he somehow managed to hold Dick to blame for that. When they passed in hall or on campus Sandy always had a malevolent scowl for him, and [109] once or twice Dick thought he even heard mutters! All this Dick found mildly amusing. Sandy reminded him of a villain in a cheap melodrama. A few days after the cut Dick heard that Sandy had attached himself to the Second Nine for fall practice.

Football took up a great deal of Dick's time and much of his thought, but he managed to maintain an excellent standing in each of his courses and thus won the liking of most of the instructors with whom he came in contact. With Mr. Matthews, who was Dick's advisor, he was soon on close terms of intimacy. The instructor was one of the younger faculty members, a man with a sympathetic understanding of boys, and tastes that included most of the things that boys liked. He had a passion for athletics and was one of the Nine's most unflagging rooters. But for all this he was not generally liked. The younger boys, who formed most of his classes, were suspicious of his fashion of regarding them individually instead of as a whole. They declared, some of them at least, that he "crowded" them. By which, in school parlance, was meant that he tried to be too friendly. They resented his attempts to interest himself in their doings outside classes. Among the older boys, however, he was a prime favourite, and his study in Williams was [110] the scene of Friday evening "parties" that were always well attended. Anyone was welcome. There was much talk, the subjects ranging from the value of the "spitball" in pitching to the influence of Bible study on literary style. At nine o'clock ginger ale and cookies—the latter especially made by a woman in the town and transferred each Friday from her house to the school in a laundry box by Mr. Matthews—were served. Perhaps some of the guests were present more on account of the ginger ale and molasses cookies than for any other reason, for the cookies had long since gained a wide fame, but none questioned their motives.

Stanley and Dick attended one of the parties the Friday following the Musket Hill game. There were more than a dozen fellows already in the room when they arrived, most of whom Stanley knew and a few of whom were known to Dick. All the usual seating accommodation being exhausted, the instructor had dragged his bed to the door of the adjoining room, and on the edge of that the newcomers found places, they and a spectacled youth named Timmins completely filling the doorway. Conversation was still general. Mr. Matthews, dropping a word now and then into the noisy confusion, was at his study table cutting sheets of paper into quarters with a pair of [111] shears. He wasn't a bit impressive, being under rather than over medium height and slight of build. He had light hair that was already thin over the forehead, bluish eyes and light lashes, all of which gave him a somewhat colourless appearance. But there was an inquiring tilt to the short nose, a humorous droop at the corners of the mouth and a very determined protrusion of the chin that lent interest to the countenance.

The study was a comfortable sort of place. The woodwork was painted mahogany brown and there was a lightish buff paper on the walls and many books in the low cases and a few really good engravings above. The furniture was old, rather dilapidated and most friendly. Even the chairs whose backs were straightest and whose seats looked most uncompromising had acquired unsuspected and hospitable curves. There was a deep red rug, rather a good rug it was if you knew anything about Mousuls, and a "saddle-bag" was stretched along the window-seat. Just now the latter was hidden by four of the guests.

Mr. Matthews dropped the shears and rapped for attention. "Before we settle the affairs of nations, fellows, as is our weekly custom," he announced in his pleasant and somewhat precise [112] voice, "I propose that we spend a half-hour in mere recreation. This particular form of recreation is not original with me. I ran across it in the summer. Half a dozen of us were trying to live through the third day of a northeast storm down on the Maine coast. We'd exhausted every known means of staving off imbecility when one of the party, he happened to be a clergyman, by the way, introduced—should I say 'sprung,' Harris?—sprung this on us. 'There are three things,' he said, 'that every man firmly believes he can do. One is run a hotel, another is conduct a newspaper and the third is write poetry.' He proposed that we should write poetry. We tried, and the results, if not calculated to win us undying fame, were at least amusing. Suppose, then, we try the same stunt this evening. Here are some pencils and two fountain pens. You are respectfully requested to leave the pens behind when you go out. The pencils I leave to your consciences. And here are some sheets of paper. Ford, would you mind distributing to those behind you? And you, McEwen? Thank you. Now the idea is to choose the surname of one of the party and write a two-line verse, the first line ending with the—er—victim's name. Want to try it?"

"Yes, sir!" "We'll try anything once!" "My middle name is Tennyson, Mr. Matthews!" [113]

"All right. And for the one who writes what is voted to be the best effusion, there is a prize concealed in this drawer here."

Loud applause from the assemblage, and an inquiry from the window-seat: "Please may we see it first, sir?", followed by more applause and laughter.

"Sorry, Neal, but the prize is not to be seen until won. I want you to really try! To illustrate the style of composition to be followed, I give you this, gentlemen, craving your indulgence. It is one of my attempts on the occasion mentioned. I ran across it the other day and it gave me the idea of trying the game this evening. In explanation I may say that the gentleman mentioned was a super-excellent golf player and very, very thin as to body.

'Fore! Fore! Here comes the devastating Felton,

To all opponents “The Inhuman Skel’ton”!’

The rhyme is obviously of the licensed sort! But you get the idea, don’t you? Now, let’s select a name. Which shall we start with?”

“Ford, sir. That’s easy,” someone suggested.

“Very well. Three minutes is allowed. When the time is up I’ll call ‘Time’ and you will at once [114] stop. Ready? Everyone supplied with pencil and paper?”

“All set!” “Let ’er go, sir!”

“Now!” said Mr. Matthews, his eyes on his watch. The laughter was stilled and fifteen pens or pencils were poised over as many sheets of paper. Then mutters arose and feet shuffled. “Say, what rhymes with ‘Ford’?” asked Timmins of Stanley in an audible whisper. Chuckles arose and De Vitt answered, “‘Flivver,’ Tim!” Dick was still struggling when the time was up and his second line was lacking a rhyme.

“Now we will read the results in turn,” said Mr. Matthews. “Suppose you begin, Harris.”

“Not prepared, sir,” answered “Tip” Harris.

Three others answered to the same effect and it was Cashin who bashfully produced the first composition, as follows:

“Apollo had nothing on Goody Ford.
He’s cross-eyed and lantern-jawed.”

“Ingenious,” commented Mr. Matthews, when the laughter had stopped, “but rather a libel on Ford. You’re next, Elders.”

“I didn’t get mine done, sir. I think your watch was fast!”

“How about you, Gard?” [115]

“Guess you might as well open that drawer, sir!” And Stanley read:

“He seeks no prize, does Goody Ford,
For virtue is its own reward.”

That won much applause, for Ford, whose appellation of “Goody,” derived from his given name of Goodman, was no indication of his behaviour, had scorned to take part in the competition. Two other verses were read and then a second name was chosen. This time it was Cashin, and nearly everyone turned in something. The best of them, if applause was any indication, was Neal’s:

“I sing the praise of our Beau Cashin,
The latest cry in mode and fashion.”

“That rhyme requires a license, too, Neal,” laughed Mr. Matthews. “I might say, fellows, that it isn’t absolutely necessary to ‘knock’!”

“No, sir,” agreed De Vitt, “but it’s easier!”

Which rejoinder brought De Vitt into the limelight, and his name was tried next. Gerald De Vitt was editor-in-chief of the school weekly, *The Leader*, a likable fellow who took himself a bit seriously, who wrote long, sensible and very dull editorials, and who mistakenly conducted a [116] column of allegedly humorous matter that was the despair of his friends. Consequently when Stanley read his production the howl of laughter that arose held as much applause as amusement.

“Here in our circle frowns the grave De Vitt,
Revered as Mentor and deplored as Wit!”

Later someone suggested trying “Matthews” and there were many dismal failures and just one quasi-success. The latter was Dick’s.

“Though anger may assail our Matthews
His cheek ne’er shows the sanguine wrath hues.”

In the end it was Stanley’s couplet on De Vitt that was voted the prize and Mr. Matthews gravely opened the desk drawer and as gravely presented the fortunate contestant with a large red apple! It was quite the largest apple any of them had ever seen, and, while it was passed around, the instructor explained that it was one of a plate of prize-winners at the County Fair. At Stanley’s request a knife was produced and the apple was divided into sixteen pieces and distributed. Mr. Matthews brought out the “spread” and for an hour longer the gathering munched delectable cookies and drank ginger ale and talked. On the whole, the occasion was a [117] very enjoyable one, and Dick determined that hereafter his Friday evenings should be spent in Number 2 Williams. And, although he missed a “party” now and then, he kept that promise to himself fairly well.

---

[118]

CHAPTER X

WHITEWASHED!

Parkinson played Cumner High School the next afternoon. Cumner was a nearby town of some eight or nine thousand inhabitants set in the middle of a prosperous farming community. The Cumner teams were made up largely of very hefty sons of the soil, averaging slightly older than Parkinson's representatives and invariably out-weighing them. As a rule Parkinson won because of better knowledge of the game and greater speed. She called Cumner's players The Farmers, but she did it with much respect and liking, knowing which Cumner took no exception to the title. In fact, the Cumner Football Team was one of a few that invariably received as hearty a welcome when it trotted onto Parkinson Field as did the brown-and-white eleven. Its members were big, manly, hard-playing chaps who took defeat gallantly and victory modestly.

Dick, of course, was not vitally interested in that game and as he was not required to report in togs today he and Stanley and Sid watched the contest from seats in a stand. Cumner showed up [119] unusually formidable during the ten or fifteen minutes of practice that preceded the contest, and Sid, who, although a baseball man, knew football very thoroughly, predicted trouble ahead for the Brown-and-White.

"That's the heaviest team they've sent over since I've been here," commented Sid, "and they don't look nearly as slow as they generally do. And that black-headed giant down there hasn't missed a goal yet, although he's tried some fierce angles. No, sir, Parkinson isn't going to have any old walk-away this afternoon."

"Oh, we won't pile up more than twenty points, maybe," said Stanley. "Sometimes we don't."

"Yes, and sometimes we just squeak through, as we did two years ago. Seven-six it was that time. I remember I had heart disease when Sinclair got ready to try that goal. And then he wouldn't have made it if the ball had gone six inches further to the right."

"You don't play football!" asked Dick. "I mean, you never have?"

"No." Sid shook his head. "I've always preferred baseball. I suppose I like it better because it gives more chance for individual work. Of course, if you're a backfield player in football you have [120] more show to work 'on your own,' but a lineman's a good deal like a piece of machinery; the more he's like it the better he is. Now in baseball——"

"He's off!" groaned Stanley. "You shouldn't have got him started, Dick. He's good for an hour now!"

But Sid's exposition of the advantages of baseball over the rival game was interrupted by the referee's whistle and the thud of "Babe" Upton's toe against the ball. Parkinson had put in what was to date her strongest line-up: Furniss, Harris, Cupp, Upton, Newhall, Wendell, Peters, Stone, Gaines, Warden and Kirkendall. Opposed to them were eleven heavier and yet apparently rangy youths. Even the Cumner quarter-back must have tipped the scales at a hundred and fifty, and the ends were unusually weighty for their positions. But Cumner soon showed that weight and speed may go together. The kick-off fell on her twenty-yard line, was seized by a long-legged back and, with the team closing in ahead of him, the back ran straight ahead for fifteen yards before he was downed. Bob Peters had followed the short kick closely, but even Bob couldn't penetrate the close defence until three white lines had been crossed by the runner.

Three plays took the ball out of the danger zone and Cumner opened up with a dazzling [121] forward-pass that put the ball well beyond the centre of the field. After that a penalty set her back and she was forced to punt. But three minutes later the ball was hers again, for Kirkendall, tackled on an end run, had dropped it and a Cumner youth had fallen on it. Again came a forward, this time far and swift, and Furniss, watching the wrong opponent, saw the pigskin settle into the hands of the Cumner right half. It was Stone who chased the runner out of bounds on Parkinson's twenty-six yards.

"What do you know about that?" marvelled Sid.

"You tell me," said Stanley.

"Sure I will! I'll tell you that I smell a score, sonny!"

"Oh, we'll hold 'em off, all right. They won't try any more forwards. Watch them crack against our line."

But Cumner didn't crack. At least, she managed to make her distance in four and arrived at the Brown-and-White's fifteen-yard line to the surprised dismay of the home rooters. The Parkinson left had been twice punctured for respectable gains and twice Cumner had slashed a path outside [122] right tackle. Cumner had evolved a very satisfactory method for bottling Captain Peters, using a tackle, brought across from the other side of her line, and a back for the purpose. But, although the hundred or more Cumner supporters yelled in triumph and a touchdown seemed imminent, Parkinson for the time staved off a score. Two straight plunges at the left of her centre gained only two yards, and the Cumner right half walked back to kicking position. The angle, however, was difficult and few looked for a bona fide attempt at a field-goal. Consequently the short forward-pass that followed, from the Cumner right half directly across the centre of the line, didn't catch the home team napping. Gaines intercepted it and went plunging back into the mêlée and made seven yards before he was stopped. Parkinson punted on first down and the ball was Cumner's on her forty-six.

Stanley taunted Sid with the failure of his prediction. “Where’s that score, you old gloom?” he demanded. “Dick, I don’t want to say anything that might be construed into a criticism of our mutual friend, Mr. Crocker, but I must remark that he’s a bum prophet.”

“Hold your horses,” answered Sid soberly. “That score’s coming and it’s coming mighty soon. [123] Those farmers have found someone to teach them football. They know the game. Watch them for the next five minutes, Stan, and then tell me if I’m a bum prophet.”

“I’ll tell you so now,” replied Stanley cheerfully. “I don’t have to wait five minutes. Say what are those hayseeds up to? What sort of a silly stunt is that?”

Cumner had stretched her line across the field in a weird formation indeed. A horse and wagon might have easily been driven between any two of her linemen. Quite alone stooped the centre, the quarter eight yards behind him and the other backs apparently no longer interested in anything he might do. To meet this scattering of forces Parkinson likewise spread out, but she did it less whole-heartedly, keeping her centre trio pretty close together. Her backs adopted the “basket formation” well behind the line, for it seemed that Cumner’s queer arrangement of her players must portend some novel type of forward-passing. Yet, when centre lined the ball back to the quarter, nothing extremely novel developed. The outspread line dashed forward straight toward the opponent’s goal and the quarter, delaying a moment, sped off at a slight angle, the ball cupped in his arm. To his support came two backs. But Parkinson, after a brief second of [124] hesitation, concentrated on the oncoming trio, and, although Cumner netted six yards on the play, the Brown-and-White’s adherents howled ironically. That even six yards had been gained was merely because Parkinson had refused to believe her eyes and had waited too long before going in. Another time, jeered Stanley, they’d be lucky to get an inch!

Cumner tried her full-back against Parkinson’s right and lost two of the six she had won. This was from ordinary formation, as was her next attempt to skirt Bob Peter’s end. On the latter play she made a scant yard. Then, while Parkinson rooters laughed and hooted in good-natured derision, Cumner again broke her line apart. What followed this time, however, was far different. When the ball was shot back to the quarter the Parkinson centre trio made straight for that youth, bowling the centre out of their path. The quarter seemed to the onlookers unusually slow and even at a loss, for after a moment of hesitation he made a tentative stride to the right, stopped, faced the attack undecidedly and then dashed away at a surprising speed toward the right side of the field. A back had already shot off in that direction and was some fifteen yards beyond the quarter when the latter, deftly eluding the Parkinson left tackle, whirled, stopped and [125] shot the ball away at a lateral pass. Parkinson had unconsciously drawn in toward the quarter-back, even her left half having wandered from his position, and when the Cumner half, catching the pass neatly, again threw the ball forward there was none near the receiver. The latter was the Cumner right end who had, almost unseen, trotted down the field just inside the boundary. That second pass was fairly high and it seemed that Kirkendall would reach the receiver in time to spoil it, but he didn’t quite succeed. The best he could do was give chase along the edge of the field and, at the last, defeat the effort of that speedy Cumner right end to centre the ball behind the Parkinson goal. Stone, too, was in the race, but, like the full-back, never reached the runner until the line had been crossed.

Cumner’s supporters went wild with joy, and long after the pigskin had been punted out from the corner of the gridiron to a waiting left guard, their howls and cheers arose from across the field. Sid forebore to say “I told you so,” but Stanley sadly apologised. “I retract what I said, Sid,” he stated dolefully. “You’re not a bum prophet. You’re a prophetic bum!”

Cumner kicked goal easily after the punt-out and when the ball had again sailed through the air [126] the first quarter ended. That twelve-minute period, however, spelled ultimate disaster for the home team, for although Cumner did not score again, Parkinson failed to score at all! Twice she came near to it, once in the second quarter and once in the third. In the second she slammed her way to Cumner’s seven yards, lost ten yards on a penalty, and failed of a field-goal by inches only. In the third period she reached her opponent’s four yards only to have Kirkendall’s last effort fail by a scant six inches. That was bitter medicine to the Brown-and-White, and after that failure all the fight seemed to have gone out of her. In the final period, with many substitutes in, she showed some life, to be sure, but there wasn’t punch enough left to make her dangerous, and Cumner, still playing with her first line-up practically intact, kicked out of danger whenever it threatened.

Going back to the campus after Cumner, cheering and singing, had marched triumphantly under the goals, Sid predicted a shake-up in the team. “You can’t tell me,” he said, “that we had any right to get licked today. That flukey play of Cumner’s that got them their score may have been unpreventable, although I don’t think so, but where we fell down hard was in that third period when K couldn’t get across. It isn’t allowable for a Parkinson team to get to the four yards [127] and not get over. It isn’t done among the best Parkinson teams!”

“I thought,” observed Dick, “that Kirkendall should have been sent around tackle on that last play. We’d hammered their centre three times and they were looking for us to do it again and they’d massed their whole secondary defence behind it. Seems to me——”

“I think so too,” agreed Sid. “Give ’em what they aren’t expecting, is my motto. Stone ought to have kept them guessing. His idea, I suppose, was that if he hammered the centre long enough it would weaken. Even their backs couldn’t have stopped a score if the line had busted, Dick. You see, we needed only a yard at the last and we’d have got it if their centre had weakened a bit more. It’s easy to criticise from the grand-stand, but it’s likely that Stone knew more than we did about those fellows he was facing. He probably had good reason to think he could smash K

through there. Must have or he wouldn't have persisted the way he did. Well, we'll have to do better next week or we'll get a good trouncing."

"Phillipsburg?" asked Stan. "Yes, that's so. We play them on their grounds, too, and that makes [128] a difference. Hang it, I wish we'd tried a goal from the field that last time. Even three points would be something! It looks like the dickens to have those farmers whitewash us! We haven't been whitewashed for ages!"

"Maybe we needed it, then," chuckled Sid. "But you know Bob Peters well enough to be certain he wouldn't be satisfied with three points when he might get seven. Not Bob! He'd want to win or tie. Just getting a consolation prize wouldn't appeal to him, Stan."

"It would to me, then," muttered Stan. "You going to Phillipsburg?"

"No, I can't. We've got a sort of a game on Saturday with Warne High School. It doesn't amount to much; six innings and we to use second-string pitchers; but it's likely to be about the last chance of the season to try some real work. You expect to go?"

"I don't know. What about it, Dick?"

"I'd like to. Is it much of a trip?"

"No, a couple of hours. I'll go if you do, I guess. Got any money?"

"Yes. I'll stake you. Will many of the fellows go?"

"A lot," answered Sid. "I think Blash intends going. Well, see you later, fellows. We'll be over [129] about seven."

"That's right," exclaimed Stanley joyfully. "This is movie night! Oh, you Douglas Hart! Oh, you Bill Fairbanks! So long, Sid!"

CHAPTER XI [130]

WARDEN ADVISES

The shake-up predicted by Sid didn't come, although several experimental changes were tried in the line-up the next week. Dick learned from Cardin that Coach Driscoll had taken a large share of the responsibility for that defeat, declaring that he should have supplied the team with a better defence for the one-man pass. Dick and Cardin had taken to each other and, during scrimmage when Stone was running the First Team against the Second, usually sat together on the bench. In a measure they were rivals, but Cardin was second-choice quarter and Dick—well, Dick was so far down on the list that his number didn't matter. Stone, Cardin and Pryne were the quarters who would be depended on this season, and Dick sometimes wondered why he and two other aspirants were retained. But they were, at least until the Friday of that week. Then Dick alone remained and could flatter himself if he chose to with the title of fourth-string quarter-back! With the passing of the two superfluous quarters came the elimination of a half-dozen [131] assorted candidates and the First Team was down to less than forty players.

It had been decided that Dick and Stanley, Blash and Rusty were to accompany the team to Phillipsburg on Saturday, and, when that day arrived, go they did. But they didn't go together, for on Friday afternoon, after the players were back in the locker room in the gymnasium, Manager Whipple read the names of the thirty-one fellows who were to report at eleven the next forenoon, and lo, the list began in this surprising manner:

"Abbott, Abernathy, Banker, Bates——"

So Stanley, Blash and Rusty Crozier travelled to Phillipsburg in the twelve-ten accommodation, while Dick, one of a small army of players, coaches, trainers, rubbers and managers, departed in style at eleven-forty on the Springfield Express which, for that occasion only, was scheduled to stop at Phillipsburg at twelve-fifty-four. They walked to the station, each with his togs in a bag, and presented a fairly formidable army as they marched by twos and threes down School Street. Small boys stood spellbound in awed admiration and elderly citizens smiled or frowned according to their sympathies: for Warne is still a somewhat old-fashioned town and there were still those [132] who looked with disfavour on the rude sport of football.

At the station Billy Goode and his assistants were waiting beside a baggage truck piled high with paraphernalia, and the assistant manager, who, as he would become manager next year, must learn his trade by serving an apprenticeship to which fell the hard work, was standing nearby importantly frowning over an envelope full of round-trip tickets. He had counted the contents of the envelope three times and had got a different result with each count. Stearns Whipple relieved him of further responsibility by pocketing the tickets uncounted while the assistant dug up the balance of the eighty dollars entrusted to him. The express came in twelve minutes late—being late was a long-standing habit of the express—and they piled aboard. Seats were few and Dick was among the dozen or more who were forced to stand or sit on their up-ended suit-cases in the aisle. At the first stop after Warne, however, Dick and Warden were lucky enough to fall heirs to the seat of an elderly couple nearby who for twenty minutes had displayed intense bewilderment over the somewhat boisterous horde of boys who had invaded the car. Dick thought he read intense relief on the prim countenance of the old lady as she left. [133]

“I wouldn’t be surprised if Mr. Driscoll used you today, Bates,” said Warden when they were speeding on again. “I have an idea that it’s been decided to put in a practically fresh line-up in the second half. No one cares an awful lot whether we win from Phillipsburg, and it’s about time some of the second-string fellows got a good tryout.”

“But I’m not a second-string fellow,” demurred Dick.

“N-no, but I think he means to give all his backs a whack at it this afternoon. If you do get in, old man, just keep your head steady. Don’t let anything or anyone rattle you. If you look out for that you’ll make good, I guess. Another thing, Bates. Don’t be afraid of hustling the team. A team likes to work fast. It’s the waits between plays that raise the dickens sometimes. Keep us going. And talk it up a lot. That helps, even if it does sound crazy on the side-lines. Scold, too, but don’t nag. Stone nags too much. And Cardin doesn’t whoop it up enough. I tell you, Bates, a fellow likes to feel that his quarter is right on the job, that he isn’t missing a trick and that he’s standing by every minute. I don’t know if I make myself quite clear. But, for instance, when I’m playing I like [134] to feel that all I’ve got to do is mind the quarter, that he knows what he’s doing. I want to have implicit confidence in my quarter. Then I can play ball. If I don’t have confidence I can’t. I get to thinking: What’s he mean by that? That isn’t the play for the down. Suppose he’s mixed on his signals: Is the ball going to be there when I’m ready? And I lose confidence in my own ability to make the play good.

“Last year we had Patterson. He was a wonder, my idea of just what a quarter should be. If it was fourth down on the other fellow’s one-yard and Billy called for a punt we’d have thought it all right. Not one of us would have questioned. He didn’t make mistakes and we knew it. I say he didn’t make mistakes, but of course he did once in a while. He was only human, you know. He pulled an awful ‘boner’ in the Chancellor game. He had called the ‘big shift’ and then he sent K around the wrong end and we lost about six yards; and a touchdown, too, as it proved, for we couldn’t make the distance afterwards. Of course we were pretty sore and we’d have said some hard things just then to anyone but Billy. You might expect a quarter after doing a stunt like that to be all broke-up, but when I got on my feet again Billy was laughing for all he was worth. [135] ‘That’s the worst one I ever pulled,’ said he. ‘I guess the old bean’s slipping, fellows!’ So, in about one second we were all laughing, too, and calling it a joke. But Billy’s old bean didn’t slip very often, I’m telling you.”

“Did you win that game, Warden?” asked Dick.

“Oh, sure! We got over the next try all right. I forget the score. Something like three scores to one, I think. But if Billy had got sore we’d have all been sore, and being sore doesn’t help much. Unless you’re sore against the other team. A quarter wants to be a regular double-dyed optimist, Bates, and he wants to let everyone know it, for the rest of the team will take their cue from him. Just let them think that he’s discouraged and they’ll feel the same way, and as soon as they do they’ll quit trying their hardest. They won’t mean to, mind you, but they will. There’s a lot of psychology in a football game, old man.”

“Yes, I think that’s so,” agreed Dick. “Where I’ve played, back home, though, it’s always been the captain that’s run things, Warden.”

“Bad business. A captain shouldn’t butt in on the running of the team unless it’s absolutely imperative. He has a position to play and he ought to give his whole mind to playing it. You watch [136] Bob. You’ll almost never see him question a signal or even suggest a play. You can’t have two bosses, Bates, and a quarter-back is in position to see what’s going on and to dope out the answer. Sometimes Bob will guess what the other fellow is up to and let us know, and he’s usually right, too, but that’s about all he does except play his position. Off the field he’s the Big Boss, but on it he’s taking his orders from the quarter just like the rest of us. I’m doing a lot of talking, but I’ve got rather strong convictions as to the proper playing of the quarter-back position, Bates, and I thought I’d hand them on. Even if you don’t like ’em there’s no harm done.”

“I’m glad you have, Warden,” said Dick earnestly. “I’d never thought much about the—what you call the psychology of the thing. But I see that you’re right. And I’ll keep it in mind—if I ever get a chance!”

“Oh, your chance will come before the season’s over. Mr. Driscoll isn’t keeping you on the squad just to look at. Bates, I’ve seen a whole team pretty nearly turned upside down between the first game and the last, seen fellows who supposedly never had a chance come out of the big game covered with medals. You never can tell! Well, next stop’s ours, I think. I’m as hungry as a [137] bear. I hope they give us a good feed at the hotel. Two years ago we nearly starved.”

Phillipsburg didn’t impress Dick very favourably at the first glance for the sunlight of a gorgeous October day was almost obscured by a pall of smoke from the many factories along the railway. But later, when they had left the station behind and were trudging up the hill toward the centre of the city, the smoke disappeared and Phillipsburg turned out to be rather attractive. The hotel was one of those old-fashioned hostelries set close to the street, with a broad verandah running along the front on which gentlemen of leisure sat tilted back in their chairs and watched life go by. To the loungers the arrival of thirty-odd guests in one bunch was a refreshingly momentous event, doubtless affording them more real excitement than they had experienced since the last collision or runaway. Quite a number of them abandoned their ease and comfort and followed the end of the procession into the lobby to satisfy their curiosity.

Dinner—or luncheon as it really was—was served in a small and very musty smelling room on the second floor, a room evidently dedicated to the yearly banquets of the Odd Fellows and the [138] annual conclave of the local Order of White Elephants. There was a faded red carpet on the floor

and three long walnut tables were arranged around as many sides of a square. The chairs matched the tables and dated back to about the period of the Hayes and Tilden campaign. But the food wasn't bad and the two coloured waiters, in spite of the infirmities of age, managed to get it to the table fairly hot.

After the meal was finished Coach Driscoll explained the plans for the afternoon game. Phillipsburg Academy had a light-weight and supposedly speedy team that relied on passing and running more than on line-smashing. Her punters were exceptionally good and her ends fast. To meet the Phillipsburg style of offence Parkinson would play her ends back and her tackles out, with Stone and Warden dividing the field. Phillipsburg made use of both the "bunch" and the "one-man" pass and used a lateral pass as well. If Phillipsburg switched her attack to the centre of the line, the Parkinson tackles were to come in again, but there were always to be two men up the field. On attack the Brown-and-White was to try out several new running plays and to use the forward-pass whenever practical inside the neutral zone.

"We've got a good chance, fellows," said Mr. Driscoll, "to try out our passing and end-running [139] plays against a team who has a scientific defence against them. If we make our passes go we'll have reason to be a bit satisfied with ourselves, for Phillipsburg has worked out a pretty good defence against the passing game. What she can do to stop end-runs remains to be seen. But you've got to start quick today and run hard and watch the holes, you backs. You've got to show about twice the speed you showed against Cumner last week. If you don't, these chaps will make you look mighty poor.

"I'm going to see that every fellow has a look-in at some time during the game. We may lose the game, but we're going to get experience. Mind, I'm not saying we shall lose it or that we ought to, because I don't think for a moment that Phillipsburg is a bit better than we are, even if we use third-string players. If you'll use your heads today, and play as fast as you know how, you'll come out on top. I want to see that Number 12 play go smoothly today. It's a winner if you pull it right, but you've got to get together on it. All right. Any questions, fellows?"

A few minutes later they crowded into two yellow trolley cars and went bouncing and swaying [140] out toward the Academy, a mile from town. Dick had held a few hurried words with Stanley and Blash in the lobby. Rusty, it seemed, had disappeared while they had been having lunch in a white-enamelled place down the block and hadn't turned up since. "He's probably up to some idiotic tomfoolery," grumbled Stanley, "and we'll have to go to the police station later and bail him out, I suppose. Well, good luck, Dick! Hope you get into it. If you do, remember the Maine and all that sort of thing!"

The squad changed into football togs in a room assigned to their use in the Academy gymnasium and at a few minutes past two went across the elm-shaded school yard to the athletic field beyond. A tall youth with an embarrassed manner and a prominent Adam's apple, the assistant manager of the Phillipsburg team, personally conducted them. The game was scheduled for half-past two and already the stands were well sprinkled with spectators. A cheering section of some hundred or so Parkinsonians was already in place and the Brown-and-White trotted onto the field to a quite noisy reception. Three squads took the gridiron for signal drill and the punters got busy. Dick accompanied the latter and punted and caught for a good fifteen minutes, getting rather warm during the proceedings. Phillipsburg arrived at two-twenty and hustled out for a [141] warming-up. By that time the stands were about filled and the cheering was on in earnest. Then the teams retired to their benches, the captains met in midfield, shook hands and watched the flicking of a coin, and Bob Peters waved toward the south goal.

"Means we won the toss," commented Jerry Wendell, right tackle. "Well, here goes!" Dick laid strong hands on Wendell's sweater and the latter squirmed out like a moth from a chrysalis.

CHAPTER XII [142]

THE PHILLIPSBURG GAME

There were not as many in attendance at the game as was usual at Parkinson, although Phillipsburg was a fair-sized city and Warne only an overgrown town. Perhaps the fact that Phillipsburg Academy was a very long mile from the city had something to do with the meagreness of the audience. At all events, aside from the rival cheering sections the stands showed long empty stretches, and Cardin, who shared an end of the bench with Dick, resented it.

"Guess they must think this is a practice game," he grumbled.

"Well, Mr. Driscoll seems to think so, too," said Dick. "He says we're all to have a show before it's over."

"He'll forget that, though," replied the other pessimistically, "when we need a score to tie or something. Coaches are always making cracks like that and then forgetting 'em. Bet you I won't get in, Bates, and bet you you won't."

Dick shook his head. "I might bet about you, but I wouldn't wager an old straw hat on my [143] chances. Still, he *said* we would. There we go!"

Long, who was at right half, had pulled down the home team's kick-off and started across the

field with the ball, but the advance was short-lived, for a speedy Phillipsburg end soon had him, and it was Parkinson's ball on her twenty-two yards.

Kirkendall shot through the enemy left for three and then lost half the distance on a similar attempt. Stone punted to the Phillipsburg forty, a high kick that found both Peters and Furniss waiting when it came down. The catcher was downed in his tracks. Phillipsburg started in merrily with a twenty-yard pass diagonally across her line, but Peters smashed it aside and the ball went back. A second forward, this time to the opposite side, grounded, for Warden had run the receiver far out of position. Phillipsburg stabbed the Parkinson centre once in a half-hearted way and got a bare four feet and then punted. The ball, rising near the thirty yards, corkscrewed beautifully down to the opposite thirty-five where Warden got it but was stopped immediately. On the exchange Parkinson had gained ten yards. Kirkendall smashed the centre and got two, Warden added three and Stone again punted.

This time he managed a better ball, for it had both height and distance and was nicely placed in [144]
the left-hand corner of the field. With Peters and Furniss both on his heels, the Phillipsburg quarter made no attempt to catch, and it was Furniss who finally seized the bounding oval and downed it on the enemy's twenty-seven. Phillipsburg split her line and shot the quarter through on a tricky dash that fooled the opponent nicely. When the quarter was stopped he had reeled off twelve yards and the ball was close to the boundary. The Phillipsburg rooters cheered lustily. An attempt to advance on the short side was foiled and the ball was paced in. On second down Phillipsburg was caught off-side and set back. A run half across the field netted but four yards and Phillipsburg punted from near her thirty-five, the ball going out at the visitor's forty.

Kirkendall got clean away on the first run from kick formation and, with excellent interference, put eighteen yards behind him. Long was stopped and Warden made three. Kirkendall, again called on, tried left tackle and managed to make three more. Stone again punted.

On the side-line Coach Driscoll was frowning intently. Dick, noting, thought he understood. He [145]
had heard the final instructions in the gymnasium and recalled the coach's words distinctly: "Keep out of their line, Stone, until you're certain you can't get your distance any other way." Now Stone seemed to have forgotten those instructions, for not once had a forward-pass been tried, while at least a half-dozen plays had been aimed inside the Phillipsburg tackles. Dick didn't see what Bob Peters had gained by giving the kick-off to the enemy and then promptly punting the ball back into her hands, nor what Stone's idea was in kicking regularly on third down, irrespective of the distance lacking. However, it was possible that Stone had something up his sleeve, and when Phillipsburg had failed at a well-tried "bunch" forward and been stopped at the opponent's left end and had punted to mid-field, Dick looked for another forward-pass. But it didn't materialise. Instead, Stone tried a delayed pass and got away with the ball very neatly along the left side. But an obstreperous Phillipsburg lineman wormed through and nailed him short of any gain. Kirkendall again retired to kicking position and, with the ball snuggled, shot off at a tangent for the enemy's right. But the play worked less well this time. The interference was split and a Phillipsburg half nailed Kirkendall three yards past the line. Then the delayed forward-
pass came and Warden tossed across to Peters. Peters tipped the throw but lost it. Again Stone [146]
punted, this time making a miserable failure of it and landing the ball but twenty yards away. It descended in the midst of a pushing crowd of opponents, leaped toward the side-line and was finally landed a few feet away.

For another three or four minutes the play hovered about midfield, neither side showing any indication of a consistent attack, and then the whistle blew. Coach Corliss summoned Cardin to him. Dick watched them in conversation a bit enviously. Then Cardin sped on, followed by Bartlett, a right guard, and Gross, a left tackle.

When play began again Stone was somewhat dourly looking on from the bench and Cardin was in command. Phillipsburg had made no changes. Phillipsburg shot a breath-taking forward from her thirty-seven yards to Parkinson's thirty-five, but, although it deserved to succeed, Bob Peters had his man guarded too closely and the pass grounded. A second attempt on a third down went better and Phillipsburg got seven yards, three more than needed. Then, on her forty-five, she started an advance that only slowed when she was under the Brown-and-White's goal. Two forward-passes, each short but certain, took her well past midfield. After that two tricky split-
plays let her clever quarter through for scandalous gains, and, almost before Parkinson realised [147]
what was happening, the ball was on the Brown-and-White's twenty-one. There was much shouting from the stands, much anxiety on the benches as Phillipsburg stabbed the line once for practically no gain and then dropped a tackle back to kicking position.

"Any fool could make a goal from there," growled "Tip" Harris, who, deposed from left tackle position, had seated himself beside Dick. "It's dead in front of goal and not thirty yards!"

"But do they mean to try?" asked Dick. "Seems to me one of those short forwards of theirs——"

"Yes, but I guess they want the three points, Bates. There's a lot in getting first blood. Say, he doesn't act as if he meant to kick, though! By jiminy——" Tip raised his voice imploringly: "Watch a run, Parkinson! Watch that man, Bob!"

Mr. Driscoll, nearby, turned disapprovingly. "Cut that, Harris," he ordered. Tip subsided, muttering. From the teams came many warnings: "Hold that line, Phillipsburg! Hold that line!" "Break it up! Block this kick, Parkinson!" "Watch that half!" "Signals! Signals!" "Come on! Here [148]
we go!"

Back shot the ball to the tall tackle's waiting hands. The lines plunged and heaved. The tackle swung a long leg under him. But the ball hadn't left his hands, and now, pushing it into the crook

of his left elbow, he sprang off to the left, the other backs closing in about him. As quickly as he had started, he stopped, swung directly about and, with two Parkinson men trying to reach him past his interference, raised the pigskin on high and threw far and swiftly. Thirty yards away a Phillipsburg end was streaking toward the corner of the field. Now he was past the line, well into the end zone, and not an opponent was near him. Straight for his upstretched hands flew the ball, like a brown streak, and not until too late did Parkinson see her danger. Then half a dozen of her defenders sprang toward the lone enemy. But the deed was done. Into his hands settled the ball, he turned on his heel and plunged toward the goal and when he had been rescued from under three brown-and-white legged opponents the pigskin was half-way between side-line and nearer goal-post.

Phillipsburg waved and cheered, and stood on the seats and howled, while from across the gridiron came a fainter but defiant "Parkinson! *Parkinson!* PARKINSON!" Mr. Driscoll turned his [149] countenance to the bench and shook his head, smiling ruefully. "Half our team asleep, fellows," he said. "Scoville, go in for Furniss! Warm up, Gaines!"

Phillipsburg missed a fairly easy goal after the touchdown and play began again in midfield. There was no more scoring in the quarter although Gaines, restored to his place at half, twice almost got clear. Under Cardin's direction, Parkinson thrice tried forward-passes and but once succeeded. Then Gaines, catching, reeled off a dozen yards before he was forced out of bounds. The half ended with the score still 6-0.

There was some hard, plain talk in the gymnasium for the Parkinson audience. Mr. Driscoll was far from pleased and he didn't hesitate to make the fact known. "You fellows have been taught football for two years, some of you longer, and yet you went out there and just stood around all during the first period. That sort of thing won't win games! Do something! Try something! If you can't do anything else, worry your opponent. All you did was to hand him the ball back. Stone, a lot of that was up to you. You had your instructions to try out your overhead game, and your [150] running game, and what did you do? You went at the line every time you got the ball! Now I'm going to start in with the beginning of this last half and use the bench. If you don't want to get licked, use your heads and play football! You can score if you try hard enough. You ought to score at least twice. And if you let those fellows get close enough to your goal to pull another of those forwards over the line you deserve to lose! You were all asleep, every man Jack of you! Long, where were you when that happened? And you, Gross? And you, Stone? Someone's got to watch the end of the line, fellows! You can't all go off visiting like that! You've each got a duty to perform on every play and you each know it, but just because the other fellow pulls something you haven't met up with since last year you forget everything and go straggling after him to see what he'll do! You stay in position after this, no matter what the other fellow does. Another thing —and I'm aiming this at you, Wendell, more than anyone—watch your hands. The rules require that no part of your body shall be ahead of the line of scrimmage. If the umpire was strict he'd have called you off-side twenty times. Keep your arms down and your hands back until the ball's in play. After that I don't care how fast you bring them up. Now, then, we're going to play fast [151] ball this half. Pryne, you're quarter. Keep the team on the jump every minute. Start your signal the minute the whistle blows and make your men hustle to positions so that the play can snap off quickly. You've been loafing for two periods. Now I want to see some *work*! I want a score inside the next twelve minutes. Here's the line-up."

That the coach meant to "use the bench" was very evident. Of the original starters only three remained, Kirkendall, Upton and Peters. Save for the former, the backfield was all new: Pryne at quarter, Skinner and Curtis at half: and in the line were five second- and third-string players. That Parkinson could win with that aggregation was far too much to expect, and there were plenty who said so on the way back to the field when half-time was over. Stone was still disgruntled and very pessimistic, and he and Cardin grumbled together all during the third period. Usually they had little to say to each other, but today their wrongs drew them together.

That third period, in spite of the "crape hangers," showed the visiting team to far better advantage. Although, as it turned out, Parkinson neither scored or came dangerously near scoring, she played a hard, earnest game and stopped every attempt of the opponent to get to her [152] last line. In the first three minutes of the quarter Phillipsburg attempted a hopeless place-kick from the thirty-eight yards, but it landed far short, and after that her desperate forward-passes were always spoiled. It is only fair to say that luck favoured the visitors more than once, however. With an even break of fortune there might have been a different story to relate.

Pryne ran the team according to directions as best he could. He lacked experience, though, and if the play went faster than before it was due more to the eagerness of the substitutes than to Pryne's efforts. Those substitutes did themselves proud, even if they weren't strong enough to score, and, although many fellows on the bench wished that Coach Driscoll had cared more about winning and less about developing substitute material, it was generally agreed that much credit was due the "rookies." Before the quarter was ended Captain Peters was added to the retired list and Findley took his place.

The third period ended with Phillipsburg making several changes, something she had refrained from doing before, and the ball in Parkinson's possession on her twenty-nine yards where Skinner [153] had been downed after a punt. More changes were made. Trask went in for Kirkendall and Dean for Upton, at centre, and four other substitutes trotted nervously on. One of them was Dick.

CHAPTER XIII

THE LAST QUARTER

Phillipsburg began that final period with all the confidence born of having held her enemy scoreless through thirty-six minutes of play. She had replaced many of her first-string men, but her captain was still in and so was the quarter-back who had started. On the Parkinson stand the audience was on its feet, imploring a touchdown.

Dick had been through some trying moments during his brief football career at Leonardville, but he had never felt quite so conspicuous, never so uncertain of himself, as when he trotted out and joined the group of brown-jerseyed players by the thirty-yard line. His heart was beating like a sledge-hammer and his palms were moist and there was a funny prickling sensation in his legs. Diffidence had seldom troubled him before, and he felt doubly awkward now for that reason. But there wasn't much time for thought of his feelings, for he had hardly joined his team-mates when the whistle blew the end of the minute intermission.

[155] Dick looked over his companions in the back-field and wished that he knew more of them. Trask, in Kirkendall's position, was much the same sort of fellow in appearance as K. But he was lighter, and a good two years younger, Dick thought. Curtis was a good man and so was Skinner, but of the two Curtis's style of play was better known to Dick. Gleason had been made acting captain, and it was the substitute guard who bent behind centre to whisper into the quarter's ear.

"We've got to get Skinner loose, Bates," said Gleason. "He's the boy if he can get away."

"All right. Let's start something, Parkinson! Signals!"

When the ball came back from between Dean's wide-spread legs, Dick whirled and tossed it to Skinner, and Skinner, rather heavily built but quick at starting and hard to stop, went hurtling into the opposing left guard and, with half the Parkinson team behind him, smashed his way through for six yards. Then came every indication of a forward, with the left end edging out and showing nervous impatience and Dick dropping back eight yards behind centre and the half-backs watching the opposing ends. Back shot the ball to Dick, he made a pretence of throwing it to the left and turned his back to the line. [156] Around swept Findley, the right end, and to him went the pigskin at a short, quick pass. The halfs fell into stride beside him and Dick sprang away to guard the rear. Four strides, six, and a sharp cry of "In! In!" The end dug a heel in the trampled sod and swung to the right. Straight toward the confusion of swaying bodies that had formed the two lines a moment before, he raced. Yet there was some method in the confusion, for Parkinson's right end and one half had been drawn across the field on the false alarm and her tackle had been forced in. Back of the enemy line the secondary defence was rushing to the support of the forwards, but the interference cleaned the hole nicely and Findley shot through, dodged a tackle and was off at a tangent, finding holes where there seemed none, racing diagonally toward the right side-line. The interference was gone now and he was on his own, but only the Parkinson quarter remained between him and the distant goal. Free of the mêlée, he swung down the field at the forty-yard line, a scant dozen feet from the boundary.

Behind him came the pursuit, but Findley was fleet of foot and only the Phillipsburg quarter, coming fast yet cautiously down on him, caused him concern. [157] The middle of the field was past now and he had gained another yard or two of elbow-room and the pursuers had not gained. Then came the supreme instant. The Phillipsburg quarter sprang with outstretched arms and Findley gave, turning and twisting, across two yards of the precious territory at his right. The quarter's clutching fingers grasped, held for an instant, and Findley went staggering to one knee. Then he was up again, the quarter was rolling over on his back, legs ludicrously in air, and a great shriek of triumph came across from the Parkinson stand. Findley was safe and bearing in toward the still distant goal, while, behind him, friend and foe pounded in pursuit.

Dick had followed Findley through the line, had defeated one eager tackler and had gone sprawling onto the turf. But he had been on his feet again an instant later and, skirting the struggling mass, had kept straight ahead down the field. He knew that he could not hope to reach Findley in time to aid him against the quarter-back. His only chance of helping lay in being well down the field in case the runner got past the enemy quarter. None sought to stop him, for the play had followed the ball, and, while in the ruck of the pursuit friend and enemy went down and were strewn behind, Dick had had the centre of the gridiron to himself, with Findley speeding [158] along well ahead and to the right and the quarter-back cutting across to him. Then had come the runner's clever escape and now he and Dick were converging on the goal, the latter gaining a little as the white lines went slowly underfoot. Never was the foremost pursuer very far behind, but always, barring an accident, Findley seemed to have sufficient margin to win by. Yet, as the thirty-yard line was left behind, one Phillipsburg player became momentarily more dangerous. He had managed to avoid the Parkinson interferers and had worked himself well into the lead. He was tall and slight and a runner of no mean ability, and Dick, turning his head for a quick glance, read the menace. Findley was tiring slightly and running more slowly, head back, as Dick, edging further to the right, brought himself nearer to the path of the pursuit.

Followed an anxious moment. Findley crossed the fifteen yards with Dick a scant six feet behind and the Phillipsburg man gaining on the runner at every stride. But to reach Findley the enemy would have to slip around Dick or topple him aside, and Dick knew it. The rest of the pursuers, strung back half the length of the field, were no longer to be reckoned with. There was a thumping of swift feet at Dick's side and he looked around into the set, intent face of the [159]

Phillipsburg player. The latter meant to swing past Dick and then, with a final burst of speed, bring Findley to earth before the goal-line was reached. But Dick had other views. Slowing imperceptibly, he let the enemy run even, as he did so catching a questioning look from a pair of wide, straining eyes. Then he swung quickly to the right, shoulders hunched, and went sprawling over and over on the ground. And with him went the enemy. And staggering, almost falling, Findley, the pigskin clutched tightly now to his stomach, crossed the last white line and sank gratefully to the turf.

Somewhere, a great distance away as it seemed to him, there was a subdued roar that sounded like "*Findley! Findley! Findley!*"

Minutes later a nervous, anxious youth by name of Trask directed the pointing of a ball in the none too steady fingers of Dick, the latter lying on hip and elbow close to the twenty-yard line. So much depended on that goal that Trask had at first mutinously refused to attempt it and had only consented when convinced that no one else on the team dared even try. Trask was very deliberate and many times Dick's hands moved this way or that in obedience. Behind Trask the [160] referee knelt on one knee with upraised hand. Then, when Dick thought that in just one more second he would have to yell, there came a firm, quiet "Down!" from Trask, the referee's hand dropped swiftly earthward, a brown object swung past Dick's eyes and the ball was gone. Still poised on hip and elbow, Dick's eyes followed the revolving oval. Very slowly it mounted upward, seemed to wobble uncertainly against the blue sky, veered erratically to the right as though making straight for a post and then began to fall. Dick's heart sank like a leaden weight. Trask had kicked too short! Then the ball suddenly went upward again as though struck from beneath and a din of cheers and shouts broke the long minutes of silence.

"Struck the bar and went over!" someone shouted and Dick's heart leaped upward again as swiftly as the ball had bounded from the cross-bar. The Phillipsburg players ended their leaping charge and with downcast faces walked past as Dick jumped to his feet. Someone thumped him tremendously on the back and almost sent him sprawling to earth again, and Trask's voice howled hoarsely: "Got to hold 'em now, Bates! Got to hold 'em, old man! It's our game if we can hold 'em!"

"We're going to!" answered Dick with a world of confidence in his voice. "We're going to hold [161] 'em, Trask! It's our day! Come on!"

And hold them they did, although there were moments during the remaining nine or ten minutes when things looked dark indeed for the visitors. Phillipsburg hustled in new players and went back at the enemy tooth and nail. A bewildering variety of single and double and even triple passes were essayed. Some succeeded, most failed, but all were puzzling and unnerving to a team of third- and even fourth-string players, and that Parkinson managed to stave off defeat in that final quarter was scarcely less than a miracle. End runs got away and yet were stopped short of disaster, and always Dick clung to the ball to the last desperate moment before yielding it by a punt. Parkinson didn't make the mistake of playing only for safety, for a purely defensive game kept up for a length of time takes the heart out of the defenders. When Parkinson got the ball she attacked as hard as ever, and some of the substitutes won real laurels that afternoon. But at last the end came, after Phillipsburg had thrice won her way inside her opponent's thirty yards and had once got to her fourteen, and eleven joyous, tired, breathless youths fell against each other [162] and babbled incoherent congratulations.

An hour later players and rooters mingled happily on the home-bound train and in a corner of one car Dick and Stanley and Blash and Rusty crowded themselves in and over and around one seat designed for two persons and made merry. Dick's merriment was less strenuous than that of the others, for that brief session had left him rather limp and tired. It had also, it appeared, left him somewhat of a hero to his friends, for Blash declared that only Dick's interference had won the game.

"Findley's run was a corker," said Blash, "and he ought to have the Victoria Cross for it, but it wouldn't have scored if you hadn't been Johnny-on-the-Spot, Dick. Why, Lovering would have had Findley as sure as shooting! Of course, we might have smashed it over from the ten yards, and then again we might not have. I think we might not have. What saved the bacon for us was you bowling Lovering over, and don't you forget it! The Victoria Cross for Findley and the Distinguished Service Cross for you. I'll order them at once."

"The gentleman is quite correct," said Rusty, "although it isn't a usual condition with him. And, [163] look here, fellows, while we're pinning bouquets on, why not say a couple of kind words for the whole bloomin' team that held those Phillipsburg guys innocuous—I believe that's the word, Stan?—innocuous all through the last dreadful quarter? I ask you why not, and again I ask you ——"

"Moved and carried," droned Blash, "that the hearty thanks of the meeting be extended to the team. So ordered. There being no other business before the meeting, a motion to adjourn will ——"

"Move you, Mr. Chairman, that Stan be appointed a committee of one to find the train-boy and buy much sweet chocolate. All in favour——"

"What with?" demanded Stanley sarcastically. "Seven cents? You borrowed every red I'd borrowed from Dick, Rusty. What did you do with it?"

Rusty grinned, gulped and broke into chuckles. "I spent it, dear one," he giggled. "And 'twas well-spent, believe thouest me! Listen and I'll tell you—Hold on, though! Who buys the chocolate?

Honest, I'm far too faint to narrate this moving tale. Have a heart, Blash!"

"I'm busted, son. Honest!"

Dick produced a few silver coins and some pennies. "I'll be the goat," he said, "but someone [164]
else must do the buying. I wouldn't stir from here for a thousand dollars; even if I could, which I can't with Stan sitting on my shoulder."

"Give me the pelf," volunteered Stanley, with a sigh. "Which way do I go?"

"Forward," advised Rusty. "I saw him going through ten minutes ago. Better hurry, too, for he didn't appear to be overstocked."

Stanley went wearily away along the crowded aisle and Blash reminded Rusty of the tale. "Go on," he said, "and let's hear your criminal adventures."

"Wait till Stan comes back. Don't I tell you I'm faint from want of food? Besides, Stan's going to enjoy this yarn. Jumping Jehosophat, I wish we were home and I was eating my supper! Isn't anyone else starved?"

"We all are," said Blash, "only we don't—don't wear our stomachs on our sleeves!"

Dick laughed and Rusty shook his head wonderingly. "The kid is clever," he murmured. "Ah, here he comes! Empty-handed, by jiminy! No, he bears succor! A-a-y, Gard! Sweet youth, I bid you welcome! Where's mine? *Wha-a-at?* Only three cakes for all that money I supplied you with? [165]
What do you know—Oh, well, I'll try to worry along on this. Folks, that tastes good! Now then, lend me your ears and everything and I'll narrate to you the story of The Careful Spender and the Helpful Friend."

---

[166]

CHAPTER XIV

RUSTY BRINGS A FRIEND

"When I left you in the restarong," began Rusty, "I hied me forth in pursuit of a youth whose countenance I had spied through the window, in short, none other than Sandy Halden. Sandy said he was looking for someone, I forget who, and I said I'd help him look. I believe in helping others whenever it isn't too hard work."

"Why that pill, though?" asked Stanley. "Thought you had no use for Sandy."

"You're quite wrong then," answered Rusty earnestly. "To the eager and inquiring mind nothing is useless. Anyhow, you shut up and let me tell this. Sandy and I wandered through the metropolis side by each, admiring the soaring edifices and the homes of ease and luxury. And as we strolled, we talked. Maybe I talked more than Sandy did, but that's neither here nor there. Among other things I said was this: 'They're charging fifty cents to see the game this afternoon, [167]
Sandy, and that's too much. Not that I'm going to pay it, though. I'm going to see it for nothing.' Of course that interested Sandy tremenjously, for Sandy doesn't mind spending money any more than a Scotsman! He wanted to know how I was going to do it; did I have a pass or what. 'Don't have to have a pass,' I told him. 'Maybe you've noticed that one of the dormitories is right close to the field? Well, if you happen to have a friend there whose room is on the back, you don't have to spend your good money. You just sit in the window up there quite comfortably and look right down on the field. Of course, you're not as close as you are in a stand, but you can see everything that goes on and you're saving a big old half-dollar. And a half-dollar is a lot of money about the middle of the month!' Sandy agreed cordially to that sentiment and said he wished that he knew someone in one of those dormitories. I said, yes, it would be nice if he did, and looked at my watch, remarking that I mustn't be late for my engagement. Then we happened on a candy store and I stopped and looked in the window and said something about the caramels looking nice. I could see Sandy struggling mentally and I kept on looking at the caramels. He tried to edge off, but I wouldn't edge. So finally he said in a weak little voice that he guessed he'd get a few and we went in and he bought a quarter of a pound for fifteen cents. Then we strolled on and ate the [168]
caramels, and after a bit I said sort of thoughtfully: 'Look here, Sandy, if you'd like to see the game with me I guess it would be all right. My friend is a mighty nice sort and I don't think he'd mind if I brought you along.'"

"What friend?" asked Dick, puzzled.

"My friend in Wallack Hall," replied Rusty, with a grin. "Wallack's the dormitory that looks like a tomb and has ivy all over it."

"Oh," said Dick uncertainly. Blash made a derisive noise in his throat and Stanley chuckled.

"Well, Sandy was that pleased! Gee, fellows, it does give one a fine feeling to give pleasure to others, doesn't it? Sandy was quite affecting. He said I was mighty kind and he wouldn't forget it and he'd like awfully to meet my friend. So we came to a drug store about then and I said I was thirsty and Sandy insisted on buying sodas. By that time it was getting on toward two and I asked a fellow in the store how to get out to the school and he told me and we started out. I had to pay the car fares, for Sandy was looking out the window hard when the conductor came around. When we got out there I said we'd better walk around awhile and see the place, and we so did, [169]
and when it was about time for the game to start I conducted Sandy to Wallack. 'He may not be

in yet,' I said, 'because he has a two o'clock recitation, but he said I was to make myself at home until he got back.' So we climbed two flights of stairs and I went along looking at the numbers on the doors, telling Sandy I didn't quite remember which room it was. Sandy kept asking me what the fellow's name was and reading the cards, but I put him off until I found the room. Then I knocked, and, sure enough, Harold wasn't in, but he'd left the door open and so we went on in. It was a bully room, with a lot of corking furniture and pictures and so on, and we looked around and waited for Harold to come back. You couldn't see as much of the field as I'd expected, because the top of the grand stand cut off the nearer side of it, but it wasn't bad, and I made Sandy take his coat off and sit down on the window-seat. He was very grateful, was Sandy. Doing things for him is a real pleasure, fellows!" And Rusty looked around the small circle of his audience with much feeling. Stanley was chuckling and Blash and Dick grinning broadly, and Rusty seemed surprised at their amusement.

"Well, that's about all there is to tell, except that presently Sandy called out that they were [170] starting the game and I came over and looked out over his shoulder and saw that he was telling the truth. 'Funny Harold doesn't show up,' I said, as concerned as anything. So I opened the door and looked up and down the corridor and there wasn't anyone in sight and the building was awfully silent. 'Guess I'll go down to the entrance, Sandy,' I said, 'and see if I can see him. You sit tight.' So Sandy said all right, he would, and that Phillipsburg had just kicked-off, and I went out and closed the door gently but firmly behind me, absent-mindedly turning the key in the lock, and went downstairs. Harold wasn't in sight and so I went on around to the field."

"You locked Sandy in there?" exclaimed Stanley incredulously and joyfully. Rusty grinned and nodded.

"I guess so. I didn't try the door, but the key turned all right."

The others were fairly howling. "Wouldn't I like to have been there when the owner of the room got back!" gasped Blash. "*What* do you suppose Sandy told him?"

"He told him the truth," laughed Rusty, "but I don't believe Summer believed him."

"Summer? Not that big left-guard of theirs?" cried Stanley.

"Yes, Harold Summer." [171]

"Then—then you *do* know him?"

"Only by reputation," replied Rusty modestly. "I've never had the honour of meeting him."

"How'd you know where he roomed?"

"Easy. Looked up the fellows on the team until I found a couple who roomed in Wallack. Half of them do room there, because it's a sort of senior dormitory, I guess."

"Looked 'em up where?" demanded Dick.

"In the school catalogue. There was a copy in the library. I forgot to say that we visited the library amongst other places of interest. I found one football chap lived in 17 Wallack and another in 28, and I knew that one of them must be on the back, and it turned out to be 17, and that was Harold's dive."

"Summer's? But, look here, seems to me Summer's name is George," said Stanley. "Where do you get this 'Harold' stuff?"

"Had to call him something, and Harold sounded sort of convincing, sort of like what a Phillipsburg fellow *would* be called. Get me?"

"Oh! Well, say, suppose Summer didn't go back to his room until after supper or something? Have you seen Sandy since?"

"Oh, yes, he's aboard. I saw him in the station. He didn't see me, though. I think he wants to. [172] That's one reason I wasn't keen for going after the chocolate. Something tells me that Sandy has misconstrued my innocent efforts to save his money for him!"

"Gee, but I'll bet he's mad enough to bite a nail!" chuckled Stanley. "Of all the crazy stunts, Rusty, that's the craziest! How did you know Summer wouldn't have a room-mate and that the room-mate wouldn't be in when you got there?"

"I didn't. I couldn't find that out without going through the whole catalogue, and there wasn't time for that. If there'd been anyone in when I knocked I'd have just asked for a fictitious name and backed out again. Anyway, I don't see what Sandy has to be peeved about. He saw the game without paying a cent!"

"Except for the caramels and soda," laughed Blash. "I wish I could have been behind a door or some place when Summer walked in and found Sandy sitting there!"

"Maybe Sandy got wise and got away before Summer came back," suggested Stanley anxiously. But Rusty shook his head. "He probably got wise, all right, but I'll bet he didn't get out! There was only one door and that was locked. There wasn't any transom and the window was two [173] stories up. And I don't believe there was a soul in the building; every fellow was at the game."

"How the dickens did you ever think of the scheme?" asked Stanley admiringly. Rusty shrugged modestly.

"Oh, it just sort of came to me. Like an inspiration, you know. Well, that settles one or two old scores between Sandy and me, I guess. I hope Summer didn't beat him up, but still, if he did—" Rusty shrugged again. "I should grow faint and be carried out!"

“Rusty, you’re a wonder!” said Blash earnestly. “You’ll be hung if you live long enough; there’s no doubt about that: but in the meanwhile you certainly do add to the joy of nations!”

“What do you mean, hung?” demanded Rusty indignantly. “My record is as clean and my life as stainless—Oh, my sainted grandmother! Here he comes! Hide me behind your stalwart frame, Blash!”

From the farther end of the swaying coach came Sandy Halden, gloom and wrath upon his brow, his gaze seeking his enemy. A few seats away his eyes fell on Rusty and they blazed in triumph. He shoved his way past an accumulation of suit-cases and faced his benefactor, his shock-hair standing up defiantly under the cap he wore and his long nose twitching like a [174] rabbit’s. Rusty viewed him calmly.

“Hello, Sandy,” he greeted. “Great game, wasn’t it?”

“A great game you put up on me!” sputtered Sandy. “I suppose you think you’re mighty smart, eh? You wait till I’m through with you, Crozier! I’ll make you wish you weren’t so blamed funny! I’ll show you what a real joke is! I’ll——”

“There, there,” said Rusty, soothingly. “What’s your kick, Sandy? You saw the game all right, didn’t you? And you saved a whole half-dollar, didn’t you? What more do you want? By the way, I suppose you introduced yourself to Harold? Sorry I couldn’t stick around!”

“He was all right, don’t you worry! I told him about you and he said a few things you ought to have heard! His name isn’t Harold——”

“What? You don’t mean that we got into the wrong room!” exclaimed Rusty incredulously. “Wasn’t it Harold Jones’ room, Sandy?”

“You know mighty well whose room it was!” answered the other indignantly. “That’s all right! I’ll get even with you! I’ll——”

“Oh, I *am* sorry!” declared Rusty miserably. “Such an awkward mistake to make. I don’t see [175] how I could have been so stupid! Whatever can I do to show my contrition, Sandy?”

By this time most of the fellows within hearing were listening eagerly and amusedly, and it dawned on Sandy that he was making a mistake to advertise the joke. “Never mind your contrition,” he growled in a lower voice, “I’ll fix you, Crozier. Don’t think you can get away with it.” His eyes swept the grinning or amused faces of Rusty’s companions. “You make me sick, anyway, the whole lot of you!” he added. “If I tell Jud what you did, Crozier, you won’t think it’s so funny!” With which veiled threat he swung angrily away and the car door crashed resoundingly behind him.

Blash and Stanley were somewhat sobered, but Rusty still beamed. “I wonder what Summer did say!” he chuckled. “I wish I knew!”

“Look here,” said Stanley, “you don’t suppose he will go to Jud, do you? You know, Rusty, Jud’s a bit down on you!”

“He won’t. He knows that if he did I’d beat him to a stiff froth! Anyhow, what of it? Jud will only appreciate my kindness of heart. It wasn’t really my fault if we stumbled into the wrong room.”

“That won’t go with Jud,” said Blash, shaking his head. “Still, I don’t believe Sandy will blab. [176] What say, Gus? Oh, he was sort of peeved over something that happened.” Blash turned to Gus Stone, who was leaning over the back of the seat. “You know how Sandy is. Thinks fellows are trying to put something over on him.”

“What was it?” persisted Stone, smiling broadly in anticipation.

“Why, nothing much, really. It was all—a mistake.” Blash looked as innocent as a new-born babe. “You see, Rusty offered to introduce Sandy to a friend of his at Phillipsburg whose room overlooked the football field so that Sandy wouldn’t have to pay to see the game, and by accident they got into the wrong room and Rusty went out to look for his friend and thoughtlessly locked the door behind him. Of course, when the fellow who lived there got back and found Sandy, he was surprised! And Sandy has got it into his head that Rusty put up a job on him. Which just shows, Gus, that even with the best intentions in the world you sometimes go wrong!”

“Warne! Warne!” called a trainman. “Change for Sturgis, Bradfield, Seppit’s Mill and points on the Westfield Branch! Wa-a-arne!”

---

[177]

CHAPTER XV

CAPTAIN PETERS ENTERTAINS

Dick received his meed of praise for his part in securing Parkinson’s victory over Phillipsburg, but naturally the greater credit went to Findley, as it should have. Dick found, however, on the following Monday that he had become of a little more importance on the gridiron. Billy Goode was most solicitous as to his condition and Coach Driscoll was a little bit “fussy” over him. He saw plenty of hard work, however, for Gus Stone and Cardin, together with several others, were excused from practice that afternoon. Dick and Pryne were kept busy and when the Second Team came over for a scrimmage it was Dick to whom fell the honour of generaling the First. The team

made hard sledding that day, and the Second put over a touchdown and a safety in the first half and made her opponent hustle in the second half to win. The substitutes acted stale and were slower than cold molasses, to use Gaines' metaphor, and even Dick, who had certainly not been overworked on Saturday, found it hard to put snap into his play. Perhaps the weather had [178] something to do with it, for the day was mild and misty and even the ball felt heavy.

After practice Dick went back to the gymnasium with lagging feet, paying little heed to the talk of the fellows about him. Somehow, nothing was vastly interesting today, and the thought of supper held no attraction. A cold shower braced him somewhat, however, and as it was still short of five o'clock—for practice had been slightly shorter than usual—he turned his steps back to the field where the Track Team candidates were still at work. The high hurdles were being set and Stanley and five other boys were waiting at the head of the straight-way. Dick spoke to several of the group and seated himself on a stone roller beside the cinders. Billy Goode was in charge and Billy called to Dick remonstratingly.

"Bates, you oughtn't to be sitting around here like that," he said. "Put a sweater over your shoulders. Take one of those on the bench there."

"I'm as warm as toast, Billy," answered Dick.

"You do as I tell you," said Billy in a very ferocious voice. And so Dick got up and crossed the track and picked up a sweater from among the half-dozen tossed on the bench. Stanley, overhearing the colloquy, left his place near the starting line and joined Dick on the roller. [179] "Hello, what are you doing here, Dick?" he asked.

"Just came over to see you fellows at your play."

"Play, eh? Son, this isn't play, this is har-r-rd work. I've done four sprints and I've got a kink in my calf—" he rubbed his left leg ruefully—"and now Billy says we've got to do time-trials. How did football go?"

"Rotten, I guess. The Second scored nine on us."

"What? For the love of Pete! What did you do?"

"Oh, we got eleven, finally. But everyone was dopey today and Driscoll was peevish and nobody loved us. Who's the elongated chap with the pipe-stem legs, Stan?"

"Arends. He's a corking hurdler, though the low's his best game. The little chap, Mason, is good, too. Doesn't look like a hurdler, does he? Well, here's where I suffer. Wait around and I'll go back with you."

"Maybe," answered Dick, doubtfully.

"Maybe! How do you get that way? You talk like an expiring clam! I'll be back here in a minute, you chump."

"All right. Go to it, Stan. Beat 'em, son!" [180]

"Beat 'em nothing! I tell you I've got a kink in my left leg that's no joke. But I'll do my bestest for you, Dickie."

Stanley pranced back to the start and Dick watched while the first three, Stanley, Arends and another, got on the mark and awaited the pistol. There was one false start and then they were off, three lithe, white-clad bodies, speeding down the straight-way over the cinders. Arends reached his first barrier a half stride ahead of his team-mates, skimmed above it with never an inch to spare, and took his stride again. Then the other two flashed up and down in unison, and after that from Dick's post of observation it was anyone's race. Arends upset his fourth hurdle, and the third boy, whose name Dick didn't know, had trouble with them all without knocking any down, and ultimately finished a good five yards behind the winners, for Stanley and Arends ran a dead-heat. While the other three hurdlers were preparing for their turn and Dick awaited Stanley, Sandy Halden arrived at the bench across the track and fumbled at the sweaters there. Dick noted the fact without interest. After a moment Sandy moved across to where Dick sat, and:

"That your sweater you've got?" he asked.

"What did you say?" asked Dick. [181]

"I said, is that your sweater you're wearing?"

"My sweater? Oh, this! No, I found it over there on the bench. Is it yours?" He untied the sleeves from around his neck and held it out.

"It certainly is," answered Sandy indignantly as he snatched it away. "And I'll thank you to leave my things alone, Bates!"

Now Dick happened to be in a poor sort of mood just then, and Sandy's unreasonable displeasure accorded illy with it.

"If I'd known it was yours I wouldn't have touched it with a ten-foot pole," he replied angrily, "much less worn it!"

"Well, you did touch it, and you'd no business to. Wear your own things after this and let mine alone."

"Oh, for-*get* it!" cried Dick, jumping up impatiently.

Perhaps Sandy misunderstood that move, for, dropping the sweater to the sod, he stepped forward and sent a blow straight at Dick's face. The latter, seeing it coming, ducked at the last

instant and then, as Sandy followed the delivery, brought him up short with a blow on the chin. After that there was a merry scrap while it lasted, which wasn't long, for Billy Goode, who had an instant before sent the hurdlers away, and several of the fellows about the starting line, dashed in between. [182]

"Here! Here!" cried the trainer. "What do you boys think you're doing? Behave now, the both of you! Suppose someone had seen you! Right here on the field! Are you crazy?"

"He started it," panted Sandy.

"Never mind who started it," replied Billy severely. "I'm stopping it. You beat it in, Halden. You've no business loafing around here anyway. Didn't Jimmy tell you to go to the showers? You'd be better off somewhere else, too, Bates, and not coming around here starting ructions!"

"I didn't start any," growled Dick. "He tried to slam me one and I gave it back to him." Then, wiping his knuckles on his trousers, to the detriment of that garment, he managed a grin. "I'm sorry, Billy," he said. "Maybe it was my fault, although I didn't hit first."

"Well," grumbled the trainer, mollified a trifle, "don't take chances like that again. It's my duty to report the both of you, but maybe I'll forget it if I don't see you around."

Sandy Halden had already gone off and now Stanley arrived, his eyes round with curiosity, and hauled Dick away in his wake. "What the dickens was the matter?" he demanded. "First thing I saw was you and Stanley dancing around like a couple of trained bears. I thought it was fun until I saw you land one. What did he do?" [183]

Dick thought a moment. "Nothing, I guess. Nothing much, anyway. He found me wearing his sweater over my shoulders and told me to leave his things alone, and I lost my temper and got up to go away, and I guess he thought I was going at him and tried to land on my nose."

"Hm, looks as if he'd landed on your cheek," said Stanley. "Hope you didn't let him get away with that."

"I don't think so, not from the way my hand aches," responded Dick grimly. "I suppose if Billy told faculty I'd get the dickens, eh?"

"You would, my misguided friend. You'd get about a month's probation. But Billy won't tell. He's never told anything yet, and he's had lots of chances. If you have to scrap here, Dick, go over to the brickyard. That's where all the best things are pulled off. It's funny about that, too," continued Stanley musingly. "Faculty usually knows what's going on, but in my time there have been at least two dozen fights in the brickyard and nothing's ever been said or done about them. Looks as if Jud sort of winked at it, doesn't it? Maybe he has a hunch that a square fight is the best medicine sometimes." [184]

"Well, if Sandy wants to go on with it I'll meet him there."

"Sandy? Oh, he won't, I guess. He likes to scrap sometimes, but he's most all bluster. Guess he's the sort that has to get good and mad before he can get his courage up. I'll doctor that face of yours before we go to supper so Cooper or Wolan won't ask embarrassing questions. Cooper's a hound for scenting scraps. Not that he'd do anything, though, except look wise and say, 'Hm, you don't tell me, Bates? Most int'sting!'"

Dick laughed at Stanley's mimicry of the instructor's pronunciation. "I like Cooper, though," he said. "And I don't like Wolan."

"Nobody does—except Wolan! By the way, I told Bob Peters I'd come around tonight and bring you along. He's giving a soiree."

"A—a what?" asked Dick as they entered the dormitory.

"A soiree," laughed Stanley. "That means eats, son. Bob's soirees are famous. He's got an uncle or something in the hotel business in Springfield—or maybe it's Hartford: somewhere, anyhow—who sends him a box of chow about every two or three months. Then Bob invites a crowd in and there's a feast." [185]

"Sure he asked me along?"

"Absotively! He was quite particular about you. 'Be sure and fetch Bates,' he said. So, if you know your business, you'll go light on supper."

"I shall anyway," replied Dick. "I'm not hungry—much. Say, if you show any chance of making the team in earnest, Stan, they take you on one of the training tables, don't they?"

"Yes, of course, but that needn't worry you. Some fellows don't get on until the season's half over."

"It's half over now," said Dick thoughtfully. "There are only four more games."

"Is that right? Well, I wouldn't be surprised if we lost your charming society very soon, Dick. Now let's have a look at the—er—abrasions. Say, he certainly handed you something, didn't he? Good it didn't land a couple of inches further to the left. If it had it would have closed one of your cute little peepers. Wait till I get some water and stuff. Did you see a bottle of witch-hazel—I've got it! I'll be back in a jiffy."

Dick critically observed his countenance during Stanley's trip to the lavatory. There was a fine big lump over the right cheek-bone that made him look curiously lop-sided. He heartily wished he had kept his temper. The swelling would be there until morning at least and it wouldn't require a giant intellect to guess the reason for it. Of course, he could say he had done it in football, only if [186]

he had got the contusion in that way Billy Goode or one of the assistants would have had it dressed with arnica long ago. Stanley came back with a mug of water and administered quite professionally, and a few minutes later Dick went across to supper redolent of witch hazel and very puffy as to his right cheek. Facetious remarks were many and Dick's unsmiling explanation that he had "got it on the field" didn't appear to deceive any of his table companions. The subsequent sight of Sandy Halden with a roseate blush around his right eye somewhat consoled Dick. By morning the rosy tinge would have changed to green and yellow, shading to purple.

There were eight fellows in Bob Peters' room in Leonard Hall when Dick and Stanley arrived, and the eight didn't include the host himself, for, as Sid Crocker explained, Bob had gone to the village to get some lemons. Dick met three or four fellows not previously known to him, one of [187] them the spindle-shanked Arends he had noticed on the track earlier. At intervals other fellows arrived and, before Bob Peters returned, the two rooms, for Bob shared a study and bedroom with "Babe" Upton, were filled almost to capacity. Leonard was the newest of the Parkinson dormitories and, in comparison with such as Williams and Goss, was most luxurious. There was a real, "sure-enough" fireplace in the big study and in it this evening a cannel-coal fire was burning in spite of the fact that the windows were open. A folding card-table was set against the wall and a blue-and-white checked cloth hid enticing mysteries. Jerry Wendell aroused laughter by edging up to the table and with elaborate carelessness lifting a corner of the cloth. What he saw, however, he refused to divulge. Presently, into a babel of talk and laughter, hurried Bob with a bag of lemons.

"Hello, everybody!" he shouted. "Glad to see you. Babe, stick these on the bed in there. I bought a knife, too. Catch! How many lemons does one need for a dozen cans of sardines, Sid? I got two dozen. That ought to do, what?"

"I'd say so," laughed Sid. "What's your idea? Serve a sardine on every lemon? A half-dozen would have been enough, you chump."

"Would? Well, I asked the Greek at the fruit store and he said two dozen. I thought maybe he [188] was deceiving me. Hello, Fat!"

Arends smiled genially at the ironic appellation and hunched his elongated person into a smaller compass on the window-seat to make room for new arrivals. Most of the fellows there were football players, and all, it seemed, were connected with some sport. Sid, beside whom Dick found a seat on a leather couch, pointed out several celebrities: Colgan, the hockey star; Cheever, Parkinson's crack two-miler, who also did satisfactory stunts with the hammer; Lewis, the tall and keen-eyed first baseman, and one or two more. Everyone's mood appeared to be peculiarly happy, even flippant, and if football or baseball or any other form of "shop" was mentioned someone immediately howled the speaker down. Two or three of the guests had brought musical instruments and soon there came the sound of tuning and then someone began to hum under the babel of talk and someone else joined, and presently conversation had ceased and everyone was singing. Between songs the talk went on. Bob demanded "How We Love Our Faculty" and the elongated Arends obediently stood up and was joined by a short, plump and red-cheeked youth with a guitar. Arends was preternaturally solemn and the plump chap who pressed [189] against him and looked up into his face as he strummed the strings had the expression of a melancholy owl. Everyone ceased talking and waited, smiling broadly. The plump youth struck a chord and Arends began in a whining voice:

"There's old Jud Lane, our Principal,
  You know him? We know him!
He is a dear old, grand old pal.
  You know him? We know him!
I hope no harm will e'er befall
This dear old, grand old Principal,
And if into the drink he'd fall
We'd pull him out, one and all.
  Now would we? Well, would we?"

The responses were made in chorus by the rest of the crowd, and the final "Well, would we?" had a peculiar suggestion of sarcasm! Then came the refrain, measured and sonorous:

"Oh, how we love our Faculty, our Faculty, our Faculty!
Oh, how we love our Faculty!"

"How we love our Faculty!"

(Ensued a silence in which Dick saw every mouth forming words that were not uttered, and then a final outburst, long-drawn-out, like a solemn benediction:) [190]

"Our Fac-ul-ty!"

More verses followed in which various lesser lights were celebrated, and through it all Arends preserved his solemn countenance and the accompanist gazed soulfully up into it. Everyone seemed to enjoy the song immensely. Dick, by watching Sid's lips, discovered that the unuttered sentiment was "We hope the blame things choke!"

Then "Babe" Upton twanged a banjo and improvised the verses of a song whose refrain ran:

"Up and down and all around, that's the way we find 'em!
Two for five and three for ten, and here's a string to bind 'em!"

Dick thought Babe's faculty for making rhymes quite marvelous until he noticed that he used only three or four in the course of a dozen verses. Before he had finished, half of those present had been sung about. The verses weren't remarkable for sense of rhythm, but they always won laughter and applause. Cheever came in for the following:

[191]

"Here's big Jim Cheever, looking fine.
He always does when he's out to dine.
You couldn't keep Jim away to-night,
For he's right there with his appetite!"

And even Dick didn't escape, for Babe turned his grinning face toward the couch and twanged the strings and sang:

"A fellow named Bates is here to-night
And his face it is an awful sight!
Maybe he fell against the wall,
But I'll bet he didn't get it a-playing football!"

"Up and down and all around, that's the way we find 'em!
Two for five and three for ten, and here's a string to bind 'em!"

Jerry Wendell gave imitations, one of Mr. Addicks, the Greek and Latin instructor, being especially clever. Wendell leaned over the back of a chair and drew his face into long lines. "Young gentlemen," he began in a slow, precise and kindly voice, "the trees are budding this beautiful morning and the little birds are chirping to one another and there's a feeling of spring in the air. You may have noticed it, young gentlemen? As Juvenal so poetically phrases it, 'Sic transit gloria mundi, Veluti in speculum Sunday.' Are there any amongst you this bright morning [192] who know who Juvenal was? Is there one? No, I feared as much. Warden, would it inconvenience you to open your eyes and give me your attention? Ah, I thank you. Yes, young gentlemen, spring

is upon us. Especially is it upon you. I have but to gaze on your rapt, intelligent countenances, your bright and eager faces, to realize how thoroughly you are imbued with the Spirit of the Spring. If Townsend will drag his legs out of the aisle—I thank you. Spring is a wonderful season, young gentlemen, a beautiful season, the vernal equinox, as a poet has so well phrased it. The Greeks, as you doubtless recall, celebrated the coming of spring with appropriate observances. And yet it may be that the fact has escaped many of you. A pity, a great pity! Suppose, therefore, that you refresh your memories on the subject and be prepared tomorrow to tell me in what way the Greeks welcomed the advent of spring. And we will have tomorrow what the spring has prevented us from having today, and also the next two pages. Young gentlemen, the class is dismissed. Will some one of you kindly awaken Peters as you pass out?"

[193] Then the host flicked away the cloth from the table and there was an outburst of applause for what lay revealed. Sandwiches of many sorts, potted delectations, cakes and pastries, biscuits and cheese and much ginger ale. After that came a half-hour of earnest endeavour on the part of each and every one to ruin digestion, with Bob maintaining a sharp and yet lenient watch on the football fellows, to whom pastry was taboo. Bob's "soiree" ended in a final burst of song that brought an apologetic warning from a proctor. Afterwards Dick and Stanley walked across to Sohmer humming the tune of Babe's absurd jingle, Stanley breaking into words as they climbed the dormitory stairs:

"I've got a lot of math to do,
But I don't think I will; would you?
I'm so full of cake and pie
I'd rather just lie down and die!"

---

[194]

CHAPTER XVI

MR. BATES PROTESTS

That party in Captain Peters' room has no bearing on the story save that it seemed to Dick to mark the beginning of a closer intimacy with the football crowd. He heard himself alluded to as Dick Bates, instead of Bates, and from that to Dick was a matter of only a few days. And there were other signs, too; as when, during practice on Wednesday, Kirkendall, relieved by Trask in the scrimmage, sank into the bench at Dick's side, gave his knee a mighty and somewhat painful thump, grinned and relapsed into silence. Had "K" spoken Dick wouldn't have thought so much of it. The fact that the big full-back considered words unnecessary meant so much more.

There were some mighty sessions of work that week, for Coach Driscoll was smoothing out the First Team attack, adding a new play now and then, shifting his players experimentally and drilling, drilling, drilling until Dick sometimes awoke at night with the cry of "*Signals!*" in his [195] ears. He had his full share of quarter-back work with B Squad and worked as hard and intelligently as he knew how. Such work was different at Parkinson than at Leonardville High. At the latter place playing quarter meant developing individual ability first and letting team-work look after itself in a measure. Here at Parkinson one was ground and filed and fitted into the eleven much as a machine part is fitted into the assembled whole, and one was a unit of the team first and an individual last. At first Dick had been disappointed over a reality so different from his secret expectations. Although he had openly professed humility and had told the fellows at Leonardville that he might not count for much in a football way at a school as large as Parkinson, yet he had never greatly doubted that his advent would be a matter of importance to the school, nor that he would find the path to glory broad and easy. He had outlived the surprise and disappointment, however, and was ready to defend the Parkinson system with his last breath, a system that played no favourites and judged only by results.

Parkinson played the local high school the following Saturday. Warne was a hard-fighting but [196] light team and the game was one-sided from the start. Dick, rather to his surprise, was trotted on in the middle of the second quarter, when Stone was slightly hurt in a flying tackle, and stayed in until the last period began. He ran the team well and handled several difficult punts in a clever manner, but he had no opportunity to distinguish himself, nor did he seek one. Overanxiety on one occasion led him into a wretched fumble under Warne's goal and once he got his signals so badly jumbled that Bob Peters had to come to his rescue. But the fumble led to no disaster and the mixed signals signified little.

Parkinson rolled up a total of thirty-three points in forty-eight minutes of playing time and managed to keep High School at bay until, in the final few moments, with a substitute line in, High School, having worked down to Parkinson's thirty-four on a forward-pass, dropped a really remarkable goal from about the forty yards. To be sure, there was a strong wind blowing almost straight with the ball, but even so the kick was as neat a one as had been seen on Parkinson Field that season and none begrudged the frantic delight that the visitors obtained from those three points. In fact, Parkinson applauded quite as heartily as did the High School rooters.

[197] On Monday occurred a momentous event in Dick's estimation. He was taken to the training table.

Being taken to the training table perhaps did not signify so much in itself, for the table was in reality two tables, each holding from twelve to fourteen, and one might spend a football season at

one of them without winning his letter in either of the two games that counted, Chancellor and Kenwood. But when one was snatched, so to say, from obscurity to the training table in the middle of the season one had a right to be a little elated and to cherish expectations. So, at least, Dick thought, and so Stanley declared.

"You're certain of playing part of the time in the Kenwood game, Dick," said Stanley. "Stone is the only fellow you've got to be scared of, and he isn't going to last the game through. Cardin is no better than you are now and I miss my guess if you don't come faster the rest of the season than he does. And Pryne's only so-so. As I figure it out, you and Cardin are just about tied for second choice quarter, and all you've got to do is work like the dickens to beat him."

"Sounds easy the way you tell it," laughed Dick. "For that matter, all I've got to do is to work like the dickens to cop a scholarship!"

"Not at all. 'Copping' a scholarship, as you so vulgarly phrase it, requires a certain amount of [198] grey matter in the garret. Winning a position on a football team is merely a matter of physical effort. No brains are necessary, my son. Therefore, I back you against the field to get the quarter-back job!"

"Thank you for nothing! At least, it requires more brains to play football well then it does to jump over a lot of silly hurdles!"

"There speaks ignorance," retorted Stanley in a superior and pitying tone. "There are just three fairly decent hurdlers in this school, Dickie, and there are at least half a hundred fairly decent football players. Q.E.D."

"Q.E. rot!" said Dick. "Anyone with skinny legs and a pair of spiked shoes can jump fences, you old swell-head! Besides, you don't jump 'em half the time: you just knock 'em over and get tangled up in 'em. You track boys are a lot of nuts, anyway."

"Before you say something that I'll have to resent, Dick, I will change the subject for your sake."

"Ha!" grunted Dick derisively. "That's what everyone does when the argument goes against them. Say, what's Sandy Halden doing with you fellows, Stan?"

"He was trying to be a half-miler last I knew, but I saw him over with the jumpers Friday. You [199] and he made up yet?"

"I haven't even seen him, except to pass him in Parkinson. I guess, by the way, Billy didn't report that little mix-up last week."

"I knew he wouldn't. Billy's all right: even if he did tell me this afternoon that I took-off like a steam-roller!"

"He's very discerning," murmured Dick.

Stanley shied a whisk-broom at him, and in the subsequent fracas conversation languished.

Dick started at training table that evening and found himself assigned to a seat at the substitute's board between Pryne and Bartlett, a second-string guard. At the other table Coach Driscoll presided, with Captain Bob facing him at the farther end. At Dick's table Stearns Whipple, the manager, occupied the head. No one paid any special attention to the newcomer as he took his seat, although several smiled in a friendly way and Pryne seemed glad to see him. Fellows had a way of appearing suddenly at that table and disappearing suddenly as well, and so a new face occasioned little interest. Stanley had cheerfully, almost gleefully, predicted that Dick would starve to death at training table, and consequently Dick was somewhat relieved to find the [200] danger apparently very remote. There was less to choose from, and certain things that Dick was fond of, such as pie and frosted cake, were noticeably absent, but there was plenty of food nevertheless. To make up for the pastry, there was ice-cream three times a week instead of once, with a single rather dry lady-finger tucked under the saucer. Steak and chops and underdone beef and lamb formed the basis of the meals, and with those viands went a rather limited variety of vegetables. Eggs were served at breakfast in lightly cooked condition and milk was the regular three-times-a-day beverage to the exclusion of coffee and tea.

It was on Thursday that Dick returned from a hard practice to find a letter from his father awaiting him. Mr. Bates wrote regularly each week, usually on Sunday, so that his letter arrived at school Monday afternoon or Tuesday morning. The present epistle was an extra one and Dick opened it with some curiosity. When he had read it through he was alternately smiling and frowning. It wasn't long, but it was emphatic.

"Dear Dick:

"Every time I take up the *Sentinel* these days I find a piece about you in it. [201] How you did something or other in a football game and how proud the town is of you. What I want to know is, do you do anything at that school but play football. I'm getting right-down tired of reading about you. I sent you there to study and learn things and get a good education and not to play football and get your name in the papers all the time like a prize-fighter. You buckle down and attend to your work for a spell, that's my advice to you. If I keep on seeing where you've made a home run or whatever it is I'm going to yank you out of there plaguey quick. Folks keep asking me have I seen where you did so and so and ain't I proud of you, and I tell them No, I ain't a blame bit proud, because I didn't send you to school to play games, but to make a man

of yourself. I hope you are well, as I am at the present writing.

"Your aff. father,

"Henry L. Bates."

Dick read that letter to Stanley and Stanley chuckled a good deal over it. "Of course he is proud of you, just the same, Dick," he said. "But I dare say there's something to be said for his point of view. You'll have to convince him that you're doing a bit of studying now and then on the side, eh?"

"I suppose so. But he ought to know that if I wasn't keeping my end up in class I'd be hiking [202] home mighty quick! Maybe I ought to work harder, Stan, and let football alone, but, gee, a fellow's got to do something besides study!"

"Can't you persuade the editor of that home paper of yours to let up on you for awhile? How do you do it, anyway? Nobody in my home ever sees my doings in print. Got a drag with the editor, or what?"

"It's the High School *Argus*," responded Dick a trifle sheepishly. "The fellows that run it got *The Leader* here to exchange with them and they print everything about me they see in *The Leader*. Of course that isn't much: just the accounts of the games: but the *Argus* fellows work it up and then the *Sentinel* copies it. I—I wish they wouldn't."

"Do you?" Stanley grinned wickedly. "Yes, you do! You're tickled to death! So would I be, Dickie. Tell you what: you sit down and write a nice letter to your dad and tell him the facts and make him understand that playing football doesn't incapacitate you for occasional attention to studies. Or you might write a little piece about how you stood highest in your class last month, [203] and how teacher gave you a big red apple for it, and send it to the town paper. That would please your dad, wouldn't it? And how about mentioning that you've made the Banjo and Mandolin Club? Think that would help any?"

"You go to the dickens," grumbled Dick. "The trouble is, dad's easy-going as you like until he gets his back up. Then you can't argue with him at all. He will do just as he says he will unless I make him understand that I'm working as well as playing. If," he added ruefully, "he learned about the Banjo and Mandolin Club he'd probably send me a ticket home!"

"But you played football when you were in high school, didn't you? And did track work? And was on the Glee Club, or whatever the fearful thing was called?"

"Yes, but I suppose I was sort of under dad's eye and he knew that I was getting along all right in school. Being away off here, he sort of thinks I'm being purely ornamental!"

"I don't see how he could think you ornamental," said Stanley soothingly. "Hasn't he ever seen you?"

"It's all well enough for you to joke," replied Dick, grinning half-heartedly, "but you don't know my dad."

"Tell you what! Let me write and tell him what a whale you are in class room. After he'd read [204] what I'd written he'd send you a letter of apology, Dickie! I can see it now. 'My dear son, can you forgive me for my unjust and unworthy doubts? Your—er—your estimable companion, Mr. Gard, has written me the truth and I see now how terribly I misjudged you. It makes me extremely happy to know—to know that you have Mr. Gard as a friend. He is, as I discern, a young gentleman of great—er—mental attainment and——"

"Oh, shut up!" laughed Dick. "You'd joke at a funeral!"

"Not at my own, anyway! Well, cheer up, old top, and hope for the worst. Then you'll get the best. If your father refuses to finance you I'll take up a collection and your loving friends will see you through; at least, to the end of the football season!" And Stanley chuckled enjoyably.

Of course Dick answered that letter immediately and spent the better part of an hour and much ink trying to convince his father that in spite of the evidence he was doing his full duty. Perhaps he had secret qualms even as he wrote, though, for it is a fact that from that day forth he [205] managed another hour of study, by hook or by crook, and perceptibly improved his standing in various classes. And finding time for more study was less easy than it sounds, for the day following his appearance at training table found him accepted by coach and players as the second-choice quarter-back, and if he had thought he knew what hard work in practice meant he now saw his mistake. For he was added to the select coterie who remained on the field three or four afternoons a week after the others had been dismissed and who were drilled in punting and catching until their legs ached and they saw a dozen footballs where there was but one.

Guy Stone's attitude toward Dick was peculiar, or so Dick thought. He appeared to miss no opportunity to chat with him and was very friendly, but afterwards, thinking Stone's conversation over, Dick invariably found that the first-string quarter had seemingly sought to instill self-doubting and discouragement in his possible substitute. One short conversation will do as an illustration.

"I see you take the snap-back almost facing centre," said Stone when they were on their way to the gymnasium after a hard practice. "Think you can work faster that way?"

"No, but I feel surer of the pass," answered Dick. "Do you think I ought to stand more [206] sidewise?"

Stone looked doubtful. "I don't know. Of course, Dick, if you face your backs more you don't

have to turn so far when you continue the pass. It's well to have the ball travel from centre to runner on as straight a line as possible, you know. If you take it so, and then have to turn like this before you shoot it at the runner, you're losing time, aren't you?"

"Why, yes, but only a fraction of a second, I'd say. I do it that way because I can see the ball better from the time centre starts the pass until it's in my hands. When I turn I just slip my right foot around a few inches and swing on my left. But if it's better to stand sidewise to the line——"

"Oh, I'm not suggesting that you change now," protested Stone. "It's always dangerous to change your style of doing a thing as late in the season as this. If you'd started earlier—but then you may be right about it. You're the doctor, Dick. If you can do it better the way you are doing it, I say keep on. Of course, in a real game you'll probably find sometime that your back isn't where you expect him and there'll be a mix-up, because when you're excited you do funny things. Take [207] Gaines, now. He has a great way of trying to beat the ball and goes loping away from position before you're ready to toss to him. That means he has to slow up or lose the pass. If you stand so you can see your backs as the ball comes to you you know how to act. Of course, when the pass is to the back direct, mistakes like that can't happen often, but Driscoll doesn't fancy the direct pass much."

"Then you don't think my way is correct and you don't think I ought to change it," said Dick, puzzled. "Mr. Driscoll has never said anything about it being wrong."

"My dear fellow, I'm not saying it's wrong, either, am I? I think there's a natural way for everyone to do a thing, and that's your natural way. And I guess it wouldn't be wise to try to change now. All I do say is that you're likely to wish you had changed it some old day. But I wouldn't worry about it. I dare say you'll muddle through all right."

When Dick mentioned the talk to Stanley the latter laughed.

"Forget it, Dick," he said. "Stone's worried for fear you may beat him out for the place. Haven't you any gumption!"

"Beat him!" Dick exclaimed. "That's likely, I don't think!" [208]

"Well, convince him that it isn't likely, and you'll find that he will stop talking that way. Can't you understand that if he can get you worried enough you'll fall off in your playing? He isn't afraid of Cardin, evidently, but he is of you."

"Do you think so?" asked Dick thoughtfully. "Maybe that's it, then. Just the same, there isn't a chance that I'll beat him. I do think I'm doing better work than Cardin, but Stone has it all over me."

"Now, yes, but maybe he thinks you'll keep on coming. How does Cardin take it, by the way?"

"Cardin? Oh, he doesn't seem to mind. He's an awfully nice chap, Cardin."

"Yes, he is. But don't fool yourself into thinking he doesn't care, Dick. It's just he's too decent to let you see it. He's a good loser; and there aren't many of that sort. I hope, whatever happens, he'll get his letter."

"Oh, so do I!" agreed Dick earnestly. "I do like Cardin!"

---

[209]

CHAPTER XVII

IN CONFERENCE

"I wish," said Blash one evening, "that someone would invent a new sport."

"What for?" asked Sid. "Thinking of taking a little exercise? Ever try checkers, Blash? That's about your style of a game."

"Cease your idle chatter," answered his room-mate with dignity. "I'm not thinking of myself. I'm thinking of Sandy Halden. Sandy is out of a job again. They let him go from the Track Team today. Billy Goode thinks the school can worry along through the year without him as a jumper or half-miler or shot-putter. Of course, Billy's probably mistaken, but there it is."

"Just what was Sandy? A shot-putter or one of the other things you mentioned?" Sid laid down his pencil and tipped back squeakingly in his chair. It was study hour in Number 27 Goss, but Blash wasn't in a studious mood.

"George Keene says he was broad-jumping the last thing. He'd tried running, and maybe everything else for all I know, and had got Billy to let him try jumping. This afternoon, Keene [210] says, Sandy managed a perfectly marvellous jump of eighteen feet or something and then claimed that Hollaway, who had the tape, didn't measure it right. Claimed he'd done twenty-one even and pointed to his foot-prints—only they happened to be someone else's—and was very nasty until Hollaway offered to beat him to a pulp and Billy gave him his time. So now Sandy is nursing a new grouch and looking for new worlds to conquer." Blash yawned widely. "That's why I want a new sport. You see, Sid, Sandy has tried everything now."

"He might try canoeing and tip over," suggested Sid.

"Don't be heartless. Besides, he can probably swim!" Blash drummed his fingers on the edge of

the table until Sid, who had returned to work, exclaimed protestingly. “Look here, what am I going to do about Dick Bates?” asked Blash, thrusting his hands into his pockets to make them behave.

Sid pushed his book away and sighed in resignation. “All right, hang you,” he said. “Go ahead and talk yourself out, and when you’re quite through I’ll finish this math. What about Dick?”

“Why,” laughed Blash, “I owe him something. You haven’t forgotten that hoax he worked on me [211] in the movie house, have you?”

“Not by a long shot!” Sid grinned. “That was corking, Blash.”

“Hm. Well, yes, I acknowledge that it was. And being corking, it demands a corking come-back. But I can’t seem to see one. My powers of—of invention——”

“You never had any. Why not forget it and call quits? You put one over on Dick the day you came up in the carriage with him, didn’t you?”

“Oh, that was nothing. Purely impromptu, Sid. What I want now is something—something grand and magnificent, something worth while! Can you think of anything?”

“No, and if I could I wouldn’t. You let Dick alone until he’s through football. Your old tricks will only get his mind off his work.”

“Think so? I wouldn’t want to worry him, Sid. My idea is only to amuse him, to provide diversion.” Blash was silent a moment and Sid, eyeing him doubtfully, stretched a tentative hand toward his book. But Blash wasn’t talked out yet. He chuckled. “Stan told me something funny about Dick yesterday,” he announced. “It seems that he’s a bit of a hero back home and his high [212] school paper has been copying everything about him it could find in *The Leader* and playing it up hard. Now his father is writing to ask him if he doesn’t do anything here besides play football and is threatening to take him out of school!”

“Get out!” Sid looked incredulous. “That’s just one of Stan’s yarns.”

“Honest to coconuts, Sid! And Dick’s terribly worried and is afraid the old man will learn that he’s been taken into the Banjo and Mandolin Club. Say if his father hears that, he’ll disown him!”

Sid laughed. “Must be a cranky old codger! Most fathers would be rather proud, I guess. I recall that mine slipped me a twenty-dollar check when I wrote home that I’d been elected baseball captain!”

“Well, that’s different,” said Blash gently. “You see, he’d never expected much from you, Sid, and the surprise momentarily unnerved him. And I suppose that by the time he’d pulled himself together again and tried to stop payment on that check you had it cashed.”

“I sure did,” laughed Sid. “And spent, too, most of it!”

“I think I remember the occasion. Well, I’ve been sort of dallying with the notion that there [213] might be a chance to get a rise out of Dick in connection with his father’s—er—attitude. I don’t just see my way clear yet, but—there’s an idea floating around at the back of my brain——”

“It will probably die of loneliness,” said Sid comfortingly, “so don’t trouble about it. Just you take my advice and let Dick alone. I’ll tell you right now that I shan’t help you in any of your nefarious plots, Blash.”

“That’s all right. I think I’ll be able to work this alone.” Blash stared thoughtfully at the light and a slow smile overspread his lean countenance. “Yes, I think I shall,” he added with conviction.

Sid looked across suspiciously. “I’ve a good mind to warn him against you,” he said; “tell him to look out for plots.”

“Piffle! You mind my own business. I’m not going to hurt Dick. Besides, I—I haven’t got it quite. It—it eludes muh!”

“I hope it’ll continue to elude you. Now, for the love of Pete, shut up and let me study, will you?”

“Sure! I didn’t ask you to stop studying. Think your conversation is interesting to me? Go on and study. I’m going to Sohmer.”

“Stan’s?”

“I might drop in there. Come over when you’re through with that rot. What you want to bother [214] with it for is more than I know, anyway. You’re just making it harder for the rest of us!”

When, a half-hour later, Sid joined his room-mate in Number 14 Sohmer, he found to his relief three boys amicably and unemotionally discussing the prospects of the college football teams. Blash, however, looked horribly pleased and innocent, and Sid’s suspicions returned. He always suspected Blash when he looked innocent.

The St. Luke’s Academy game on the following Saturday proved one of the best contests of the season. The visitors usually gave an excellent account of themselves, but the closeness of the score on this occasion was a big surprise to Parkinson. The best the home team could do in the first half was to drop a single field-goal over the cross-bar, and even that modest performance was delayed until the second quarter was almost over.

It was Newhall, the big right guard, who made the tally possible by breaking through on St. Luke’s thirty-two yards and spoiling a punt. The pigskin bounded away from Newhall’s body as he

leaped into its path, and went trickling across the sod. A dozen players pursued it but it was Bob Peters who won, and when the pile-up was disentangled it was found snuggled under his chest. From the enemy's twenty-eight to her eighteen Gaines and Kirkendall alternated, the latter finally making the last of the distance with only inches to spare. Warden failed to gain and a quarter-back run netted but three yards. With Kirkendall back, on a fake kick, Gaines got through right guard for three more. With four to go on fourth down Kirkendall dropped the ball between the uprights for the only score of the half. [215]

St. Luke's presented a heavy team and a most aggressive one. From end to end, her line outweighed Parkinson's by many pounds, but weight didn't mean slowness in her case, and time and again the visitors made gains by getting the jump on their opponent. In the back-field she was lighter but quite as fast as the Brown-and-White. St. Luke's suffered, however, as was generally agreed, from a lack of good scoring plays. She relied on weight and speed to break through the enemy line and her reliance was not misplaced. But she had not counted evidently on the excellent defence put up by Parkinson's back-field. Her lighter backs, once through the line, were almost invariably stopped short of conclusive gains. She had almost nothing to offer in the way of variety and her runs outside tackles were weak. The overhead game she let severely alone during the first half of the contest and tried but four times later. At punting, however, she excelled Kirkendall by five yards and, in the last quarter, when K went out, bested Gaines by fully eight. [216]

The third period opened up with Parkinson kicking off and St. Luke's running the ball back from her goal-line to her thirty-eight, Furniss missing a tackle and Harris finally bringing the runner down. St. Luke's battered the Brown-and-White for her distance, smashing through Cupp on the left of centre for five yards and again for two and completing her job by an unexpected slide off Wendell. Once over the fifty-yard-line, however, she failed to gain in four and punted to Warden on his fifteen. Warden gained five. Kirkendall threw Peters on his thirty-three and Bob was downed. Off-side on the next play set Parkinson back and three downs gained but six yards. Kirkendall punted. St. Luke's fumbled but recovered and ran in twelve yards across the field. Parkinson's line failed to give and St. Luke's tried her first forward-pass. Although she managed to bunch three men for the catch, the pass grounded. She punted on the next down and Stone misjudged the ball and followed it across the line for a touchback. A few minutes later Warden got away around the enemy's left and zigzagged nearly twenty yards before he was run out at his forty. A fake-kick, with Kirkendall carrying the ball on a wide run around the enemy's right, added seven more and Gaines made the distance on the fifty. With Peters coming around from right end, Stone made two through centre, and the same play, with Peters carrying, gained four outside St. Luke's left end. A subsequent attempt by Gaines failed and Parkinson punted. The kick went short and cross the boundary at the enemy's thirty-two yards. [217]

St. Luke's made four around Furniss and failed at the centre. She then tried her second forward-pass and made it good, taking the ball just past midfield. Scoville took Furniss' place for Parkinson. St. Luke's tried out the new end and was stopped for a two-yard loss. A cross-buck on right tackle gave her four and her full-back romped through a wide hole in Parkinson's centre for eight. St. Luke's now concentrated on Newhall and Wendell and made short gains, Newhall finally giving up and going out in favour of Bartlett. The Parkinson right side was weakening and the enemy battered it hard and inched along to the Brown-and-White's twenty-nine. There a fumble cost her a seven-yard loss. Faking a place-kick, her right half took the ball through Wendell for six and it was second down on Parkinson's thirty. A plunge at centre was stopped and again St. Luke's prepared to kick. This time the ball went to quarter and that nimble youth romped ahead for the needed distance and was downed on the twenty-five. [218]

Two attempts at the right side gave the visitors five yards and necessitated the substitution of Cairns for Wendell. Cairns stopped a plunge at his position and, on fourth down, with a tackle back in kicking position, St. Luke's made her distance on a skin-tackle play that shot her left half off Harris to Parkinson's fourteen.

St. Luke's ran on a fresh right tackle and a substitute left half, and, for Parkinson, Long went in for Gaines. With a tackle back and every indication of a forward-pass, St. Luke's smashed at the Parkinson right side for three and repeated the play for two more. From the nine yards the enemy reached the three in two attacks at centre and then hurling her whole back-field at Bartlett, she sent her right tackle trickling around the Parkinson left end. Warden nailed the runner just short of the line, but couldn't prevent a score. It was a touchdown by less than a hand's breadth, but a touchdown nevertheless. St. Luke's failed on the punt-out and the score stood 6-3. [219]

The period ended with the next play and Parkinson made four changes. Gleason went in for Cupp, Dean for Upton, Trask for Kirkendall and Bates for Stone. St. Luke's made two substitutions, sending in a new centre and a new full-back.

Dick carried instructions from Mr. Driscoll to open up the play, and Trask, standing on his twenty-four yards, sent off a forward-pass to Peters well up the field. Peters touched the pigskin but couldn't hold it. The same play to the other side of the field, Trask to Long, netted eighteen yards. Dick sent a plunge at the St. Luke's right side but Trask made only a yard. Warden ripped off four outside left tackle. A forward-pass, Trask to Scoville, added twelve, Scoville being downed where he caught. Three line plunges left Parkinson three yards short of her distance and Trask punted short to the enemy's seventeen.

St. Luke's tried the Parkinson ends and gained five in two downs and punted to midfield, the ball going out. Dick was getting more speed into the team than it had shown before and St.

Luke's was finding the attacks at her line harder to stop. A weak spot developed at the St. Luke's right tackle and thrice Warden and Trask plunged through for gains. In eight downs Parkinson advanced to the enemy's twenty-eight yards. There, with Trask back in kicking position, Dick scurried around the St. Luke's left end and found a free field to her twelve, where he was tackled by the quarter just inside the boundary. The ball was outside on the next play and was paced in on the eleven yards. Warden slid off right tackle for three and put the pigskin down in front of the right-hand goal-post. With Cairns back as though to kick, Dick tossed the ball to Long and Long shot it across the line to Peters for a touchdown. Parkinson arose in the stand and howled approval. [220]

And that ended the scoring. Coach Driscoll ran on numerous second- and third-string players in the final four minutes and the game became hectic and uncertain, with several penalties and two costly fumbles, shared by the two teams, and Dick having heart-failure every time he called his signals. But, although St. Luke's worked her way back to Parkinson's thirty-five yards and looked formidable, the defenders took the ball away before she could try a field-goal and punted out of danger. And before the enemy could start another advance the whistle blew.

On the whole, both teams played good football, and there were plenty who maintained that, given a half-dozen tricky plays, St. Luke's would have scored a victory. Of course Parkinson had shown plenty of weak spots. For three periods she had been slow in the line and not much faster behind it. Newhall had made a poor showing against St. Luke's left guard and Furniss, at left end, had had an off-day. Stone had sometimes chosen the wrong plays. But everything considered Parkinson had proved herself a powerful team and shown considerable improvement over her performance of a week ago. [221]

Parkinson's best-beloved rival Kenwood, had had a season of ups and downs and, as Coach Driscoll said at the first conference following the St. Luke's game, there was no telling what sort of a team she would present against Parkinson on the twenty-third of November. She had been decisively beaten in mid-season by Bonright School, had turned around a week later and slammed Wainstow to the tune of 26-0, had been tied by Musket Hill and now, on Saturday last, had just nosed out a victory over Chancellor.

"She's got good material," said Mr. Driscoll, "but it isn't running true to form. And she's had some hard luck, too. Losing her best back, Shotwell, early in the season was against her. But the chief trouble, as I see it, is that she doesn't seem to have settled on a definite playing policy, unless she's done it within the week. She started out with light backs and a lot of fast, clever trick plays that worked all right until she ran up against Bonright. Bonright seems to have beaten her at her own game. After that she laid off heavy Browne and that other half, whatever his name was, and took on two heavy men and started in playing a line game, smashing tandems between tackles and using a very good forward-pass with two men receiving. But she hasn't developed a dependable goal-kicker yet, unless she's got someone in hiding. Nutting missed two tries, both easy, on Saturday. So, as I say, there's no such thing as sizing her up. Of course, we may get a sort of a line on her after we've met Chancellor this week, but I don't expect much that will help us." [222]

"It never seems to make much difference how Kenwood plays during the season," observed Stearns Whipple. "She's always top-of-form when she gets to us!"

"We'll have one advantage, anyhow," said Bob Peters. "We've come along pretty steady and what we know we've learned. Kenwood has sort of gone one step forward and two back, and she doesn't know just where she's at, I guess. What about her condition, Billy?" [223]

"Oh, she's got a first-class trainer in Connell and he will do his part all right. You mustn't look for any advantage there, Cap. Her men will be in condition all right. As good as ours, I guess."

"We'll outpunt her, Coach," said Stone.

"With Kirkendall in, yes. But that man of hers, Brighouse, has a clever foot. And he puts his punts where he wants them to go, I hear. We may outdistance him a few yards, but a lot depends on the wind. I have a sort of a hunch, fellows, that Kenwood is keeping something up her sleeve. I can't tell you why I think that, or what the something is, but that's my hunch."

"And your hunches are generally right," mused Peters. "Any second-string fellow that looks as if he was being held back? A clever back-field man, for instance?"

"I haven't found any. No, I think it's a goal-kicker, or maybe they've got a new scoring play that they haven't shown. Well, I'm only guessing. We'll know better a week from Saturday. Now let's do some planning on the week from now to Thursday. We've got to buckle down and find a way of getting some punch into those split-plays. Or else drop them. What's your idea, Cap?" [224]

Whereupon the meeting became very technical and abstruse.

CHAPTER XVIII [225]

PUBLICITY

Mr. Bates' reply to Dick's letter was contained in his regular weekly epistle and was decidedly non-committal. He appeared to accept Dick's statements as to the latter's studiousness and

progress but made little comment. Only, a mail later than the letter, came two copies of the Leonardville daily, each with a paragraph circled in red ink. Seeing them, Dick sighed and shook his head even before he read them. Thursday's paper held the following under the caption "High School Jottings":

> "Richard C. Bates, for two years one of High School's most popular students, is certainly making good at his new Alma Mater, Parkinson School, which he entered last September. Dick went out for the Parkinson Football Team and proceeded to show them how the position of quarter-back should be played. Now he is first substitute, we learn, and the season isn't over yet. Dick's loss was a severe blow to the High School Team, but his old friends are surely proud of his success and are rooting hard for him." [226]

Dick shuddered over that and took up the second paper. "Leonardville is Proud of Him," he read. "Richard Corliss Bates, the younger son of our prominent citizen and successful merchant, Mr. Henry L. Bates, of Euclid Boulevard, is a fine example of the coming citizens of Leonardville. Young Bates is well and favourably known to a wide circle of friends in this city who will be pleased to learn of his success in the various branches of his career at Parkinson School, Warne, Mass., of which famous institution of learning he became a student in September last. While attending the local High School Richard Bates was unusually popular, both for his personal traits and for the brilliancy displayed by him in athletics. As a football player he was easily supreme in this part of the State and his prowess was recognised widely. A number of schools and colleges sought his services but young Bates chose the school which his brother, Stuart Bates, now of Philadelphia, attended. There, in the short space of two months, Richard has already made his presence felt and is in a fair way to attain renown both for scholastic attainments and athletic supremacy. He entered into competition at the beginning of the school year for the position of [227] quarter-back on the School Football Team, an honor for which there were dozens of contenders, and now holds the place of first substitute, with every indication of becoming the regular incumbent of the position before the football season ends. He has also recently been elected to membership in one of the school's most exclusive organizations, the Banjo and Mandolin Club, to which, because of a rare musical talent, he will doubtless prove a valuable addition. In his classes Richard stands high. There is, we understand, talk amongst his friends in the High School of organising a party to go to Warne on the occasion of the Parkinson-Kenwood football game, which is held the Saturday before Thanksgiving, to see him play and to do honour to one who is so pleasingly upholding the traditions of Leonardville young manhood. His career will be watched with sympathetic interest by a host of well-wishers in our fair city."

Having completed the reading of that, Dick not only shuddered again but groaned loudly, so loudly that Stanley, at the table, looked up from his studies and viewed him with alarm.

"What's the matter?" asked Stanley.

"It's that rotten paper again," moaned Dick, casting the offending sheet to the floor and turning [228] a disheartened gaze to the window. Stanley smiled, pulled the paper toward him dexterously with one foot, rescued it and read. And as he read he chuckled, and Dick, seeing what was happening, made a dash to wrest the paper away.

"No, get out of here! Let me read it, you simp!" Stanley fended Dick off with feet and one hand. "Everybody else has," he laughed, "so why shouldn't I?"

Dick scowled, shrugged, thrust his hands into his pockets and subsided on the window-seat. "Go ahead then," he muttered. "But if you laugh I'll kill you!"

So Stanley put the paper between them and made no sound, although certain twitchings of his hands aroused the other's suspicions. When he was through Stanley lowered the paper from in front of a very serious countenance.

"Well?" said Dick morosely. "Say it, you chump!"

"Why, I—well, of course, Dickie, it's a bit—a bit fulsome, you know, but I can't see anything in it to be mad about."

"You can't, eh? Well, I can! What do you suppose dad thinks when he reads that sort of piffle? [229] No wonder he wasn't more—more cordial in his letter!"

"But the paper says a lot of very nice things about you, Dick," protested Stanley. "That about the exclusive Banjo and Mando——"

"Oh, shut up!" growled Dick. "They make me sick."

"And I'm sure," pursued the other gravely, "any fellow would be flattered at having his friends come all the way from Pennsylvania to see him play in the big game."

"Huh! That's only guff, thank goodness! Gee, if that happened——"

"But this paper says it's likely to happen," Stanley objected. "If it was me, I'd be pleased purple!"

"Yes, you would!" jeered Dick. "Someone's been filling that newspaper chap with a lot of hot air. That's the sort of stuff they print about anyone that—that does anything; like moving away or dying or—or getting married. It doesn't mean anything, but the trouble is that dad has seen it and I'll bet he believed it."

"Why not? Besides, it says here 'In his classes Richard stands high.' That ought to please him, anyway!"

"I'd like to know what they know about my classes. The whole thing's sickening." [230]

"Oh, I don't know," murmured Stanley judicially, casting his eyes down the column again. "Say, you never told me that 'a number of schools and colleges' were after you, old man. That's hot stuff! You've been hiding your bush under a lightning."

"Well, they really were, Stan, but I didn't brag of it. Not here, anyway. I did show the letters to Blash one time when he was here, just as a sort of joke. But I don't see how the paper got hold of it. I suppose Sumner White blabbed."

"Well, cheer up, Dickie. Folks may not think you wrote that yourself. There's always that chance. Even if they do——"

"Stan! Does it—does it sound as if I'd—I'd done it?"

"N-no, only the election to the Banjo——"

"The High School *Argus* got that from *The Leader*, you idiot! I suppose the guy that wrote all this drivel found it in the *Argus* and just—just dilated on it."

"Dilated is good," chuckled Stanley. "Whoever he is, I'd say he delights to dilate. Well, cut it out and paste it in your scrap-book, Dick. It'll interest your grandchildren some day."

"Yes, I will!" declared Dick venomously. He seized the paper and tore it into shreds and then [231] cast it from him into the general direction of the waste-basket. "Like fun!"

"When—er—that is, how many do you think there'll be in the party, Dick?" asked Stanley innocently.

"What party?" Dick scowled his puzzlement.

"Why, the party that's coming on to see you——"

But he didn't finish, for Dick was on him like a whirlwind, the chair went over backward—Stanley accompanying it—and there was a rough time in Number 14 for the ensuing four minutes. At the end of that time Dick sat astride Stanley's chest and demanded apologies, and Stanley, weak from laughing, gave in. "Just the same," he added, wiping his eyes as he scrambled to his feet again, "just the same, Dick, I think you ought to make some sort of plans for their entertainment—All right! All right! I won't open my mouth again! I was just thinking——"

"Don't think!" ordered Dick sternly. "Sit down there and help me write a letter to that editor man that'll blister his hide and make him let me alone after this! Come on now. How would you begin it?"

In the end it turned out to be a very brief and very formal and extremely polite epistle which [232] thanked the Leonardville *Sentinel* for its interest but requested that hereafter Mr. Richard Bates's name be excluded from its columns since Mr. Richard Bates disliked publicity.

"Great stuff!" commented Stanley when Dick had read over the final draft. "Sounds so fine and modest. Hadn't you better enclose a check for that write-up, though? You don't want him to think ——"

Stanley, however, was now looking into the muzzle of a paper-weight, so to speak, and his words dwindled to silence. Dick, cowing him further with a sustained glare, replaced the paper-weight and directed an envelope. When the letter was sealed and stamped Dick again fixed his companion with a ferocious and intimidating look. "You keep quiet about this, Stan," he said, "or I'll bust you all up into a total loss! Understand?" Stanley nodded.

"Well, say so then!"

"Dick, you have my sacred word of honour that never so long as I do live will I so much as breathe a single syllabub of this thing save that I do have your permission to so do, though wild hearses drag my body asunder and——"

"Oh, shut up! But you remember! If I find you've told Blash or—or anyone I'll lick you, Stan!" [233]

"I hear and I obey in fear and trembling," responded Stanley humbly. "Least of all will I ever divulge a word to that exclusive organization, the Banjo and Mandolin Club, Dick! And if you want any assistance in entertaining——"

Stanley beat the paper-weight to the door by one fifth of a second, establishing what was undoubtedly a record over the course!

Dick mailed the letter to the editor of the *Sentinel* and tried to dismiss the annoying affair from memory. In this effort he was well aided by Coach Driscoll, for the coach didn't allow him much time that week for vain regretting. Dick and Stone were alternated in practice every day and none could have said with any degree of certainty that either was the favourite. Cardin was quite evidently relegated to third place, in token of which he drove B Squad around the field in signal drill while Dick and Gus Stone confined their attentions to A. The Second Team was licked to a frazzle on Tuesday in a thirty-minute session, was held scoreless on Wednesday, although given the ball eight times on the First's ten-yard-line, and was again decisively beaten Thursday. On [234] Friday the First Team went through signals and did some punting and catching and then were sent back to the showers. But work was no longer over when twilight fell these days, for there was an hour of black-board talk in the gymnasium Trophy Room after supper each night. There, with the squad seated on some old yellow settees dragged in from the balcony, Coach Driscoll, with chalk and eraser and pointing finger, explained and questioned. On Friday night Mr. Driscoll talked defence against shifts, first chalking his diagram on the black surface beside him.

"Chancellor uses several forms of shift plays," he began. "For a punt she uses a tackle-over. You know how to meet that, I think, but we'll go over it again to refresh your memories. When you see the opponent shifting a tackle to either side you must yourselves shift a full space in that direction. I'm speaking to the five centre men now. Suppose Chancellor calls for 'tackle-over left.' Centre, guards and tackles move a space to the left. That brings centre opposite the opposing right guard and left guard opposite the opposing right tackle, as shown on the board. Our left tackle is out here opposite their right end, our left end still further out where he can dash around to spoil the kick—if he's smart enough! Right end stays well out and a little back of the line, and [235] it's his duty to spot fakes and give the news the moment he does it. If a forward-pass develops on his side his place is under the ball. Right half-back plays about three yards back, between his guard and tackle. Full-back occupies a similar position on the other side, ready to go in or out, as play develops. He and left tackle must look after the opposing tackle and end. Behind him, more to the right and well back, is the left half. The quarter, of course, is up the field. Chancellor will almost always punt from that formation, but she may fake, and it is those fakes you must watch out for. Full-back must be especially alive. He must watch the enemy's back-field and her right end too. If the latter goes out to receive a pass he must get to him promptly and block him. On the other hand, if a punt comes, as it is likely to nine times in ten, this defence puts three men where they ought to be able to sift through in time to hurry the punter if not to actually block the kick. And if you can hurry the punter, in Chancellor's case her left half-back, you are doing something. For 'tackle-over right' you merely reverse this diagram. Chancellor will sometimes punt from ordinary formation to fool you, but not often, for her punter likes plenty of room. Now, [236] fellows, are there any questions? Let's have this perfectly understood, for it's a formation you'll have to use often tomorrow."

Sometimes they adjourned to the gymnasium floor and lined up and then walked through the evolutions of some play not clearly understandable in the Trophy Room. After these evening séances Dick, for one, was likely to have much difficulty in getting to sleep, his mind being a weird confusion of plays and signals.

CHAPTER XIX

[237]

ON THE SCREEN

Parkinson played Chancellor on the latter's home field this year, and a good half of the school accompanied the team to Mount Wansett Saturday morning. Dick, of course, went with the squad of twenty-one players that left on the ten-forty-three train, and others of our acquaintance followed after an early dinner, reaching Mount Wansett with just time to reach the field before Babe Upton kicked off. The line-up for the visitors at the start was, with one exception, what it would be for the Kenwood game a week later. Gleason was at left guard in place of Cupp, the latter being out because of a bad ankle. Stone started at quarter-back and played a good defensive game but was, as usual, slow in getting at the attack. Toward the last of the second period, when Parkinson had finally worked the ball down to Chancellor's twenty-seven yards, Dick took his place, bearing instructions to try a forward-pass and, should that fail, to score on a field-goal. Stone had been intent on hammering the enemy line for a touchdown, without [238] apparently realising that Chancellor was getting more invulnerable with every plunge and that time was working in her behalf. The attempt at a forward almost succeeded, but not quite, and on third down, standing on Chancellor's thirty-five-yard line, Kirkendall dropped a pretty goal directly over the centre of the bar. That was the only score of the half, and it was becoming apparent to Parkinson rooters why Kenwood had been able to win from Chancellor by only one score, and that a field goal.

To Dick's surprise, Cardin started the third period, and played an excellent game. In fact it was due to Cardin that Parkinson secured a second score soon after play was resumed. A muffed punt on Chancellor's twenty yards had been captured by Bob Peters and two plunges had carried the pigskin on to the fourteen yards. There, however, a mass attack on the left of the home team's right tackle had resulted in no gain and a try-at-goal seemed necessary, with the probabilities against success since the ball was at a wide angle with the goal. Cardin solved the difficulty by faking a kick and, after hiding the ball until the Chancellor line had broken through, dodging his way around the enemy's left for enough ground to secure the down. From there Kirkendall and [239] Warden had alternated and had eventually carried the ball across.

Later, Chancellor, not for a moment acknowledging defeat, pulled off two long forward-passes that took her from her own thirty yards to Parkinson's twenty-eight. Two line attacks netted five more and a third was stopped for no gain. Then a long-legged back put a neat field-goal over for the home team's first score. Dick went back at the beginning of the final quarter and, with a line-up consisting largely of second- and third-string players, did his best to hold the enemy at bay, and succeeded, although there were some heart-stirring moments for the visiting audience. When the last whistle blew the score was 10-3 in Parkinson's favour and she had the satisfaction of having bettered Kenwood's performance against the opponent. For Chancellor had scored a touchdown against the Blue but had failed to seriously threaten the Parkinson goal-line. At that, however, the Brown-and-White's superiority over the Blue was still questionable, and wise prophets refused to be unduly optimistic as to next Saturday's contest.

When Dick arrived home long after six o'clock and made a hurried trip to Sohmer to leave his suit-case and prepare sketchily for supper, he found a letter awaiting him. It was from Sumner [240] White, he saw, and he concluded that it could wait until after supper. But, at the last moment, he seized on it as he hurried out of the room and tore the envelope open as he took the stairs three at a time, and skimmed the first page on the way along the Yard to Alumni Hall. At the bottom of the page he came on something that brought him up standing. With a perplexed frown he started back and re-read the beginning.

"I suppose you saw what we did to Norristown (Sumner wrote.) It was a corking game and Sid Nellis got his wrist broken and a lot more of us got pretty well scrapped. The score was 14 to 6, but we sure had to work for it. Jim Cleary played most of the game at full-back and was a wonder, better than Ed ever was. But I guess you read all this. The big news is that three or four of us, maybe more, will be over on the twenty-third to see you play in the Kenwood game. Charlie Stone and Will Meens and Theo Harris and I sure, and maybe Cleary and Townsend. I guess you saw the swell articles in the *Sentinel* last week. I meant to send you a copy, but it got lost, and anyway I guess your father saw to it. I met him on High Street a couple of days ago and he asked me what I knew about that article and I said nothing and he said it was confounded nonsense, but [241] he acted like he thought it was pretty fine just the same, Dick. We're coming over on the midnight from Philly and that will get us to Warne about noon Saturday. Lucky we haven't any Saturday game, isn't it? We hold last real practice Friday and then only do some signal drills Monday and Tuesday. So we have lots of time. Charlie Stone's old man is sort of financing the trip, he and Mr. Harris, but we are all paying part. You mustn't put yourself out on our account, for we know you'll be awfully tied down that day. But we'll dig around to your room when we get in and see you for a few minutes. Then maybe after the game we can have a good chin. Great, isn't it? Gee, I'm crazy about it. Hope you whale Kenwood good. I'll write again about Wednesday and let you know if any other fellows are going. A lot of them want to only they haven't got the coin."

Dick read that remarkable letter over twice and then stuffing it into a pocket, took up his hurried journey again. He didn't know whether to be pleased or peeved. Of course, it was flattering that his old team-mates should want to come all that way to see him play, and he supposed he really appreciated it, but somehow it made him feel sort of foolish too. It wasn't as if [242] he was the captain, or even the first-choice quarter. If fellows here in Parkinson heard of it they'd think him beastly conceited and probably laugh like anything. Besides, hang it all, how did he know he would even get in on Saturday? Suppose Stone played the game right through! Of course, the coach would probably let him in for a minute or two at the end, just as he would Cardin, to get his letter, but what a fool he would feel in that case! Folks coming all the way from Leonardville, Pennsylvania, to see him do stunts and he sitting on the bench all the time! Gee, that would be fierce! He wished Sumner White and Charlie and all the others, especially including the editor of the *Sentinel*, would mind their own business! He was hungry enough for supper to forget the letter in his pocket save at infrequent intervals. When he did recall it the pucker returned to his forehead and he thrust a hand over the offending missive to be sure that it hadn't got away. It would be awful if he dropped it and someone picked it up and read it!

Stanley and Blash and Rusty and he had arranged for a movie party that night. The idea had been Blash's and Dick had at first declined to go, pleading that he would be too tired and that, [243] besides, he had a lot of studying that ought to be done. But he had been persuaded to go, and so he got through supper rather hurriedly, knowing that the others would be waiting. He wanted to read that awful letter to Stanley and ask advice and sympathy, but he would have to wait until they got back from the movie house. On the way there he was silent, and Rusty, walking beside him, rallied him on his "pensivity." Dick was tempted to confide in Rusty, but he resisted, perhaps wisely, and only responded that he was tired. As a matter of truth, he was, for even had he not played a minute, the trip was sufficient to weary one.

"Well, the movies will rest you," answered Rusty gaily. "They do me, always, Dick. After I've studied too hard or anything I can go to a movie house and get rested wonderfully. You see, you have your mind taken from your worries, and you sort of relax your body and there you are! Besides, Dick, it's a corking good picture tonight. And then there's the weekly review. I like that about as well as anything, I think. 'Bath, Maine; Largest schooner afloat is launched from yard of the builders with appropriate ceremonies.' 'Miss Mary Ellen Dingbottle, daughter of Senator Hiram Dingbottle, breaks a bottle of tomato catsup over the bow.' 'In her native element!' 'Los [244] Angeles, Cal., Harold Whosthis, America's favourite moving picture star, signs contract calling for largest salary ever paid to an actor.' 'Tie Siding, Wyoming. Members of Boys' and Girls' Hog Club hold annual parade.' 'Procession passing in review before Mayor Scrugg and invited guests.' 'Little Willie Dingfingle and his prize porker: Willie is at the left of the picture.' 'Minneapolis, Minn. Fire destroys million-dollar barber-shop.' 'Firemen fighting flames as hundreds of celluloid combs explode.' 'New York City. Twelve thousand——'"

"Shut up!" laughed Dick. "That's awfully like it, though! And the picture of the burning barber-shop is thrown on the screen in red."

"Always! Just as a picture of the Whirlpool Rapids taken from an airplane is always blue. There are certain laws that can't be—Well, here we are. Keep your hand out of your pocket, Dick. This is Blash's treat. When Blash shows the least sign of paying for anything, for the love of mud don't stop him! I'm all for the encouragement of miracles! Better get 'em reserved, Blash; there'll be a crowd tonight!" And Rusty winked gravely at Dick.

Blash, however, paid no attention to the disinterested advice, but bought the usual tickets, and [245] the quartette made their way into the darkened theatre and peered about for seats. Fortunately,

Rusty's prophecy proved false and there were plenty of vacancies. There did not, though, appear to be four together, and while Dick suggested sitting in pairs none of the others seemed to like the notion. "Oh, no," whispered Stanley, "let's keep together. It's more fun. There'll be seats in a minute or two."

"I see four now," said Rusty. "On the side there, pretty well front. Come on!"

Dick thought them rather too close to the screen when he was finally seated between Blash and Rusty, with Stanley beyond the latter, but the others declared them to be just right. As Blash was usually a stickler for sitting well back, Dick was slightly puzzled. The first show was almost over and they witnessed the final exploits of Dick's favourite movie hero through half a reel, pretending not to look. Then the house lighted and a brief intermission ensued.

"I do hope they have a good weekly tonight," observed Rusty, "don't you, Blash?"

"Yes," answered the other, rewarding the questioner with a scowl that Dick saw and didn't understand. Beyond Rusty, toward the aisle, Stanley was grinning widely. Dick began to experience the uncomfortable feeling that the others were enjoying a joke that he was not in on, [246] and to wonder if the joke was on him! Then the lights were lowered, an ornate "Welcome" flashed on the screen, the piano began its jig-time music and the weekly review of current events started. There were the usual scenes, so like Rusty's travesty that Dick had to smile. There happened to be no ship launching on this occasion, but there was a series of views aboard a United States warship during target practice, and there was a gorgeous fire, thrown on in crimson hues, and Rusty's parade of the Hog Club was overlooked in favour of a poultry show. Then came the ingenious trademark at the finish and Dick settled back to enjoy the comedy. But the weekly appeared to have taken a new lease of life, for another title flashed on the screen. Dick read idly and then jumped forward in his seat and read again, his eyes fairly popping from his head, read incredulously and amazedly the legend trembling on the white background:

TOWN HONOURS HER HERO

Leonardville, Pa.—Twenty thousand citizens in monster outdoor meeting pay tribute to famous athlete, Richard Corliss Bates.

---

[247]

CHAPTER XX

BLASH EVENS THE SCORE

While Dick still stared, unable to believe his eyes, the title whisked itself away and a picture took its place. A sea of upturned faces surrounded a flag-draped stand on which a large gentleman was gesticulating. Seated figures flanked him and on every haughty chest fluttered a ribbon badge. In the background what looked to be a mile-long factory building stretched. There was an outburst of cheering and waving from the throng, the speaker smiled benevolently and the picture faded from sight!

Not until then was Dick aware of the absorbed regard of his companions. Turning amazedly he looked into the eloquent countenance of Blash. "You never told us!" exclaimed Blash in an awed and choking voice, and: "Oh, Dick!" whispered Rusty hoarsely. "Ain't it grand?"

For one dazed, blank moment Dick stared back into Blash's strangely working face. Then the light dawned. He gave a gasp and——

"Stop it, Dick!" gurgled Blash. "We'll be put out, you s-s-silly ass! Grab him, Rusty!" [248]

And Rusty grabbed him and, breathing heavily, he was forced back into his seat.

"Be good!" begged Rusty in a strangled voice. "Remember you've g-g-ot a reputat-repu—*Oh, gosh!*"

"As a public character," began Blash. "*Quit it!* There's an usher coming, Dick! Be good, won't you?"

"I—I—I'll break every bone in your body," sputtered Dick. "I'——"

"What's the trouble there?" asked a stern voice from the aisle. "You'll have to cut out that noise, fellows, or leave the theatre."

"It—it's all right, Usher," panted Blash. "The—my friend had a slight attack of—of——"

"Vertigo," supplied Stanley. "He's all right now. Feel better, Dick? Yes, he says he feels better, thanks."

"You let go me," growled Dick, writhing in the grasp of Blash and Rusty. "What do I care about the usher? Let go my arms, you pups!"

"Just keep your eyes closed," said Rusty soothingly. "You'll be all right in a second. I've got an aunt who's just that way. Every time she goes to the movies——"

"Hang your aunt!" exploded Dick. "I tell you to let go of me!" [249]

The usher flashed a suspicious beam from his pocket-torch on the convulsed features and muttered doubtfully: "Looks to me like he was havin' a fit!"

"Usher! Usher, there's nothing the matter with him!" exclaimed an indignant voice from the row behind. "Those boys have been acting up ever since they came in, and you ought to make them behave. It's no pleasure for others to have to be annoyed like this and——"

"Oh, madam!" exclaimed Blash, turning an injured countenance. "How can you say so? I assure you——"

"You tell your friend to come out of it," said the usher doggedly. "Either that or you all get out! That goes, see?"

"Oh, thanks so much," said Stanley gratefully. "He's quite all right now. You're all right, aren't you, Dick? Yes, he says he's feeling ever so much better. Maybe——"

"O you Bates!" cried a voice from across the darkened house. "O you famous athlete!" Laughs and chuckles followed. The usher gazed about him bewilderedly. From the balcony came a further interruption. "What did you pay for it, Dick?" inquired an earnest voice. Laughter [250] unrestrained arose from many quarters. A shrill falsetto joined in. "Regular cheers for Bates, fellows! One, two, three!" Someone accepted the challenge and, interspersed with laughter, a ragged Parkinson cheer broke forth: "Rah, rah, rah! Rah, rah, rah! Rah, rah, rah! Bates! *Bates!* BATES!" And, "*Hero!*" added a solitary voice upstairs. Dick slumped into his seat, all fight gone from him.

Three ushers, reinforced by a stout gentleman from the front, hurried along the aisles and begged or commanded silence, and gradually the laughter subsided to chuckles and the chuckles died away. Blash whispered contritely in Dick's ear: "Sorry if I've made you mad, Dick. It was just a joke, you know. Thought you'd take it like a good sport."

"All right," answered Dick glumly. "Shut up, please."

The comedy was half finished and Dick tried hard to put his thoughts on the humours of it but met with scant success. He blamed Stanley for breaking his promise and telling Blash about that article in the Leonardville *Sentinel* and about Sumner White's letter. For of course he had told Blash. Otherwise, how could Blash have known and have concocted that horrible joke? Gradually [251] resentment against Blash—and Rusty, too, since it was apparent that Rusty had known beforehand—waned, for, after all, it was nothing to get angry about. Blash had merely paid him back in his own coin, a little more cleverly. Dick even found heart to grin once in the darkness and to wonder how Blash had managed to persuade the movie manager to present the ridiculous thing! But Stanley—Dick scowled. He wouldn't forgive Stan very soon!

Of course he wouldn't hear the last of it for a long time. Evidently Parkinson fellows were scattered freely through the house and every one of them would return to school with a hilarious version of the incident. Well, that didn't matter. A fellow had to take jokes as well as perpetrate them, and after awhile it would be forgotten. But Stanley had no business to tell. Dick was firm as to that. When the feature picture came on Dick had recovered his equanimity and was able to enjoy it, although he took pleasure in letting Blash and Rusty remain in ignorance of his forgiveness. Afterwards, going out, he had to play the good sport and meet the laughing gibes of acquaintances with smiling unconcern, but he was glad when they were in the less brilliant stretch of School Street. He purposely avoided Stanley and chose Blash as his companion on the [252] way back to school. Blash was inclined to be apologetic and remorseful.

"Maybe it wasn't so pesky smart, after all, Dick," he said. "I didn't think about the other fellows being there. I'm afraid you'll get a lot of ragging."

"Oh, I don't mind," answered Dick. "You had to when we sprung that one on you, you know. But how the dickens did you work it, Blash? Honest, I thought I was seeing things when they flashed that rot on the screen! Thought my—my mind had given way or something! And I didn't get onto it for ages; not until I saw you trying not to explode! How'd you work it?"

"It wasn't hard," said Blash with restored complacency. "I just told the fellow who runs the theatre, McCready, a very decent sort of chap, that I wanted to spring a harmless joke on one of the fellows. Let him in on it enough so's he'd appreciate the stunt. Then I slipped a couple of dollars to the guy who operates the machine up there and he faked up the title and got hold of an old film showing an outdoor meeting of operatives at some shoe factory or something during a Fourth of July celebration. And, gee, it went great, didn't it? That is, it did if you're sure you're not huffed about it, Dick. There's no fun in a joke that goes sour, though!" [253]

"I'm not huffy, Blash. It was a bit of a jolt at first, though! Seeing my name flash out at me like that—was sort of startling! What I don't understand, though, is what—is how——"

"Back to your mark! Start over, Dick."

"Well, then, what put the idea of a—a—where did you get that stuff about my being a hero and all that?" floundered Dick.

"Oh, one hears things," Blash chuckled. "Fame has its—ah—penalties!"

"Yes, I guess one does hear things," said Dick bitterly with a resentful glance at the dimly seen form of Stanley, ahead.

They dropped Blash at Goss and went on to Sohmer, Rusty choosing the longest way home for the privilege of enjoying their society, as he explained. Blash's joke was further discussed, Rusty declaring with a reminiscent laugh that he would never forget the expression on Dick's face when the title was flashed on the screen! Then Rusty took himself off across the turf on a shortcut to Maple Street and Dick and Stanley climbed the stairs in silence to Number 14.

When the light was going Stanley looked questioningly at his chum. “What’s the matter, Dick?” he asked. “Did that business jar you too much?” [254]

“No, I didn’t mind it, thanks,” replied Dick, rather stiffly. “Of course,” he added after a pause, “everyone in school will think me an awful ass, but I suppose that won’t matter. It won’t to you, anyway!”

“Just what does that mean? Why to me?”

“Well, it won’t, will it?” asked Dick defiantly. “If it had you’d have kept your mouth shut.”

“Meaning?”

“Meaning you promised to and you didn’t. You had to go and tell Blash.”

“Oh, that’s it!” Stanley sounded relieved. “Well, let me tell you that I haven’t spoken a word to Blash or to anyone else about that business. I thought you had, though.”

“I’d be likely to!” Dick looked incredulous. “If you didn’t, how did Blash know?”

“Search me, Dick. Maybe he doesn’t know. Maybe he just hit on that by chance.”

“I don’t believe it. Perhaps he saw that thing in the *Sentinel*—But he couldn’t! Well, I’m sorry I suspected you, Stan.”

“Don’t mention it,” replied the other cheerfully. “And look here, don’t get worried over the fellows hearing about it. Of course they will, and of course they’ll rag you a bit, but it’s only a [255] good joke, Dick, and that’s all they’ll think it. It isn’t a patch on the things some fellows have had to stand!”

“N-no, I suppose it isn’t. But—did you hear one idiot there tonight ask how much I paid for it? Maybe they’ll think I did pay for it, Stan?”

“Oh, rot! That guy was just having some fun with you. They all know it was a joke, and they saw Rusty and Blash with us, and they’ll lay it to one of them. As a matter of fact, Dick, it’s a pretty good sign to have something like that sprung on you, because it means that you *are* somebody. If fellows don’t like you they don’t trouble to work practical jokes on you, old top! There’s that satisfaction if you want it!”

CHAPTER XXI

[256]

TWO SCRAPS OF PAPER

Time seemed to fly that next week. Sunday vanished almost before Dick knew it was there, and he scarcely found time to write his letters, one to his father and one to Sumner White. The latter was rather a difficult missive, for he couldn’t manage to get all the cordiality into it that he thought Sumner would expect to find. The words looked all right, but they sounded insincere. Then Monday fled quickly, the afternoon occupied with much hard work on the gridiron for the second-string players and a light warming-up for those who had borne the brunt of the battle against Chancellor. Tuesday brought everyone back into strenuous practice and the afternoon was given over to trying out five new plays against the Second and to a grilling signal drill. The evening sessions continued as well. Mass meetings became almost nightly occurrences and Parkinson sang and yelled and became daily more enthusiastic and more filled with football spirit. Every line of news or rumour from Kenwood was avidly read and discussed and the tide of [257] patriotism ran high. Wednesday noon brought another epistle from Sumner White, a brief and rather chaotic note which was as follows:

“Don’t pay any attention to the Whitworth game. We weren’t out to win and we saved our best men for Thursday. At that the score wasn’t bad and Whitworth wouldn’t have scored the second touchdown if we hadn’t had most of our subs in. Well, it’s all settled for next Friday. Charlie and Will and Jim are coming, and one other. That’s five of us. Theo can’t go. His mother’s sick. Went to the hospital today. And Townsend’s backed out. Some of the girls are crazy to go, but of course they can’t. Everything lovely here. We’re going to win on Thanksgiving, that’s final, Dick. Well, see you Saturday, old scout. So long. Sum.”

Dick wondered who the “one other” might be and why Sumner hadn’t told, but the question didn’t occupy his thoughts long. He read that letter to Stanley, watching ferociously for any sign of levity, and was a bit disappointed when he saw none. He was in a mood to have welcomed a scrap!

That afternoon he and Stone alternated at driving the big team against the Second in the last [258] scrimmage before the final game, and it proved to be the hardest and most blood-thirsty encounter of the season. The Second, with nothing to lose, was resolved to finish in a blaze of glory, and the way they went at the enemy was a marvel. Before scrimmage and after it they might be friends and well-wishers, but while the battle was on friendship was at an end and they fought like wild-cats. They scored in the first ten minutes, pushing straight through the First’s line for a clean touchdown and kicking a goal afterwards, and they scored again from the field within twenty seconds of the final whistle. And the best the First could do in retaliation was to get two touchdowns without goals. So the score at the end was 12-10 and the Second viewed the result as a nominal victory and ended the training season in a condition of wild triumph, parading

around the field, singing and cheering, to their own delight and the amused approval of the school at large.

Dick emerged from the fracas with a damaged nose and several painful but unimportant contusions, and scarcely anyone else fared much better. The Second Team players were tattered and disfigured and gloried in their wounds. Altogether, it was a disreputable and motley bunch of vagabonds that gathered in the locker room after the trouble was over, and, having buried the [259] hatchet, discussed the late unpleasantness in all its details and speculated as to its bearing on the big game. The coaches, for Mr. Driscoll had been assisted by two and sometimes three enthusiastic graduates during the past week, wore expressions of satisfaction, just such expressions, as “Short” Davis, confided to Dick, as the spectators doubtless wore in ancient Rome after a particularly gory entertainment in the arena! Dick accidentally heard one of the assistant coaches confide to another that “whether those chaps can lick Kenwood or not, Perry, they sure can fight!”

Perhaps some of the fighting mood remained with Dick after he had washed away the stains of battle and was on his way across to Sohmer in the deepening twilight. At all events, the theory serves as an explanation of what happened when, just outside the hall, Sandy Halden and another fellow encountered the returning gladiator.

“Behold the world-famed athlete!” declaimed Sandy, adding a laugh that was far more annoying than the words. His companion laughed, too, but somewhat embarrassedly. Dick scowled and pushed past toward the steps. But Sandy wasn’t through. “Hicksville’s Hero!” he went on grandiloquently. “He says so himself!”

What happened then was performed so quickly that Dick was nearly as surprised as Sandy. [260] Sandy was prone on the grass well beyond the edge of the walk, his companion was a dozen yards away in flight and Dick was standing supreme on the first step at the entrance. Presumably Dick had pitched Sandy where he lay, but Dick had little recollection of having done so. Or of having regained the steps afterward. He had given way to a sudden and overmastering anger and had acted without conscious thought. Now, however, the anger was gone and in its place was a wholesome amusement.

“Better get off the grass, Halden,” he volunteered cheerfully. “That’s just been seeded there.”

Halden got off, but he didn’t resent the attack. Instead, he brushed himself silently and unnecessarily, avoiding a glance at Dick until he straightened up again. Then with a look so malevolent that Dick wondered at it, he said in a low voice that shook with passion: “All right, Bates! That settles you!”

Dick laughed, but not with much amusement. Somehow, the threat conveyed in the other’s tone precluded amusement, even though, as Dick reasoned a moment later, Halden had no power to [261] harm him. Sandy turned and rejoined his waiting but discreet companion and went his way without further notice of his assailant. Dick, already ashamed of his fit of temper, went on upstairs. Fortunately, perhaps, none had seen the swift incident, and he was very glad of it. He didn’t say anything about it to Stanley although that youth was doubled up on the window-seat reading.

Dick had heard a good many gibes, generally good-natured, about his “heroism” and athletic fame, for the story of the happening at the movie house Saturday night had swiftly gone the rounds of the school, and had shown no resentment until Sandy Halden’s taunt. He had meant to keep his temper under any provocation, for the best way to banish ridicule is to laugh at it, but Sandy had somehow managed to touch him on the raw. Perhaps had he been less tired and less sore he would have treated Sandy’s taunt with the same smiling insouciance with which he had accepted others. For some undefined reason the incident bothered him all the rest of the evening, even during the blackboard lecture in the Trophy Room when his thoughts ought to have been given entirely to Coach Driscoll’s expositions. Afterwards he viewed that uneasiness as a premonition.

It was at eleven on Thursday that the blow fell. A hurry call led him from a Latin recitation to [262] Coach Driscoll in the gymnasium office. The coach looked unusually solemn, Dick thought, as he pushed open the door and entered. Mr. Tasser, the physical director, was there as well, but he went out immediately, leaving his room to the coach and Dick.

“Sit down, Bates,” began Mr. Driscoll. “I’ve got rather an unpleasant matter to discuss, my boy.” He took a long white envelope from a pocket and from it produced two pieces of paper which he handed to Dick. “Ever see those before, Bates?” he asked.

Dick accepted them wonderingly. One was a fragment of letter paper, much creased, the other the lower right hand corner of an envelope, roughly matching the scrap of letter paper in shape, suggesting that the latter had been in the envelope when torn and that both had subsequently been crumpled up together. The fragment of envelope bore the words:

ood Academy,
Kenwood,
Mass.

The envelope had been torn in such manner that the name of the addressee was lacking. Dick [263] studied the two fragments in puzzlement. Then he handed them back.

“I’ve seen this before, sir,” he answered. “It’s the corner of a letter I wrote and didn’t send. This piece of envelope doesn’t belong with it. The writing is not mine and I never saw it before.”

Mr. Driscoll shot a sharp glance at the boy which Dick met unflinchingly. “You’re quite certain of that, Bates?” he asked.

“Quite, sir.”

Mr. Driscoll looked thoughtfully at the fragments in his hand. “These have every appearance of belonging together,” he objected. “You say, however, that this is not your writing on the envelope.”

“No, sir, it isn’t,” answered Dick positively. “You can see the difference yourself.”

“Perhaps, but frequently one unconsciously alters the appearance of his writing when addressing a letter. One uses rather more care in an effort toward legibility, Bates. At least, the two writings are much alike, aren’t they?”

“Yes, sir, in a general way. But I never make a capital K like that. I don’t think I could. And the A isn’t much like mine either.”

“I see. Now in this letter, Bates, there seems to have been a good deal about football. At the [264] bottom here I read: ‘call this the Two-Over and use it only when other fellow is playing his backs well out.’ That refers, I presume, to the tackle-and-half-over play that we’ve been using in practice lately.”

“Yes, sir.”

“Who were you writing to Bates?”

“Sumner White, sir. He’s captain of our high school team at home.”

“And home is somewhere in Pennsylvania?”

“Leonardville. You see——”

“One moment, please, Bates. Have you been in the habit of writing to this fellow White about our plays?”

“No, sir, not exactly. He asked me when I came away to tell him about anything new that he could use. There wasn’t much, though. I explained our defence for the ‘big shift’ and told him about a lateral pass and about this ‘two-over.’ I guess that’s all, sir. I suppose I shouldn’t have done it, but it never occurred to me that there was any harm in it. You see, Mr. Driscoll, the coach at home isn’t much. He doesn’t know about new stuff, and he just pegs away at the things folks used five years ago. And the teams we play—I mean that the High School plays—are pretty up-to-date. So I tried to help the fellows by telling them about anything I learned here that might [265] be useful. I—I guess I oughtn’t to have, though.”

“No, you ought not to have done that, Bates,” agreed the coach gravely. “You see, you never can tell where a secret is going to land. It would seem safe to say that Kenwood would pay no attention to anything going on in a place like Leonardville, away off in Pennsylvania; would never hear of it. But suppose, for instance, some fellow in your town had a friend at Kenwood and wrote him that the local high school had a pretty nifty play and sent him a diagram of it.”

“I’m pretty sure there isn’t any fellow in Leonardville, though, like that, Mr. Driscoll.”

“I’m not saying there is. I’m only giving you an example of the way secrets get around. There are other ways in which that ‘two-over’ play might reach Kenwood. A newspaper writer might explain it in an account of a game, for instance. It isn’t safe to even write about such things in your letters home, Bates. I didn’t caution you or any of the players, for I supposed you’d realise that what goes on in practice is a secret and not to be spoken of off the field. When was this letter written?”

Dick thought hard a moment. “About two weeks ago, sir.”

“And it wasn’t sent. Why?” [266]

“I hadn’t finished when it came time to go to a recitation and I slipped it in a book and couldn’t find it later. So I wrote another. And then, a couple of days afterward, I came across this one in the book and tore it up and threw it away.”

“Where did you throw it?”

“I don’t remember, sir. I think, though, I dropped it in one of the paper barrels on the Front; maybe the one at this side of Parkinson.”

“Anyone see you do it?”

“I suppose so. I guess there were fellows around.”

“Hm. Who do you know at Kenwood, Bates?”

“No one, sir.”

“Positive? I understand that you have corresponded with someone there quite regularly since you came here.”

“That’s not so, Mr. Driscoll. I’ve never written a letter to Kenwood Academy in my life and I don’t know anyone who goes there. I suppose what happened is that the piece of my letter and the piece of envelope happened to be found together. Who found them, sir?”

Mr. Driscoll shook his head. “I agreed not to bring him into it, Bates. There’s no reason why I should. He has, I guess, no wish to appear in the rôle of a spy. He found this evidence and [267] handed it over to me as it was his duty to. I wish——” He fell silent, frowning at the two scraps of

paper. Then: “Are you a rapid writer, Bates?” he asked.

“Not very, I guess.”

The coach took a pad of paper from the desk beside him and a fountain pen from his pocket. “Suppose you write what I tell you to on that,” he said. Dick laid the pad on his knee and waited. “Ready? Write ‘Massachusetts Academy Kenwood,’ please.”

Dick wrote and the coach accepted the result and viewed it intently. Then he shook his head. “Your K and your A aren’t like the others, Bates, but there’s a certain similarity. Honestly, I don’t know what to think. I want to believe you, my boy, but this—this evidence is rather convincing. Look here, can you prove to my satisfaction that this letter was intended for this friend in Loganville and not meant for someone at Kenwood?”

“Leonardville, sir. I don’t know. I can get Sumner to write to you and say that I sent him a letter containing what you read there, although worded differently, probably, and some other letters like I’ve told you. Would that do?”

“It would certainly help. Hang it, Bates, you must see yourself that the thing looks bad!” [268]

“Yes, sir, I guess it does,” agreed Dick dispiritedly. “All I can say is that it was done thoughtlessly and that I’ve never had any correspondence with Kenwood. Why should I want to give away our plays to Kenwood, Mr. Driscoll?”

“I don’t know, Bates. You’ve worked hard and made good and I don’t believe you’re the sort of fellow that would do a dishonourable act. You have been careless and thoughtless, but I’d like mightily to believe that your account of it is right. If you’ll wire to this fellow White——”

“Why, he’s coming here Saturday, sir! I just remembered! Would it do if we waited and—and talked to him?”

“Coming here? Of course it would! That’s fine! But how does it happen that he’s coming to Warne?”

Dick somewhat shamefacedly explained and the coach smiled at his embarrassment. “Well, it seems that you’re more of a hero than I suspected, Bates,” he said quite in his usual manner. “I had heard something about it, too, of late.” He added that with a twinkle, and Dick smiled ruefully.

“That was a beastly joke of Wallace Blashington’s sir. He—he heard somehow about—about this [269] and thought he’d have some fun with me.”

“I see. Well, now, Bates, let’s see where we stand. You produce this White chap Saturday before the game and if he can put a quietus on this story I’ll be satisfied. No one has heard anything about this matter except—the fellow who found these pieces of paper and I. And no one will hear. I guess I’m pretty well convinced already, my boy! Now don’t let this bother you. It will come out all right, I’m sure. And if it does—as it’s going to—we’re going to need your best work the day after tomorrow. Come and see me Saturday, Bates, and—— By the way, what time do you expect this Mr. White?”

“I think he will be in on that train that gets here at twelve-ten, sir.”

“Hm, rather late! But that can’t be helped. You switch him over here to me as soon as he arrives and we’ll nail this thing right away. That’s all, Bates. Sorry this had to come up, but as it has I’m glad we’re going to clear it up so nicely.” Mr. Driscoll offered his hand and Dick shook it and went out.

---

[270]

CHAPTER XXII

BLASH CONFESSES

“Of all the crazy things to do!” marvelled Stanley when, at noon, Dick found him in the room and poured out the story to him. “Didn’t you know you weren’t supposed to give your plays away like that?”

“I guess I didn’t think,” said Dick humbly. “Besides, Leonardville is so far away——”

“Well, no use talking about it now. Who do you suppose found the letter?”

“I don’t know. Most anyone might have. I dare say I tossed the whole thing at the barrel and this piece that Mr. Driscoll has fell outside.”

“Yes, that’s probably what happened. But where did the bit of envelope come from? I don’t believe that was any accident, Dick!”

“What do you mean?” demanded Dick warmly. “Do you think I lied——”

“Hold your horses! What I mean is that—well, I don’t know just what I do mean, Dickie. But if anyone had found that piece of your letter and wanted to get you in wrong all he’d have had to do [271] was——”

“I thought of that, Stan, but there isn’t anyone who——”

Dick stopped and frowned thoughtfully at his chum.

“Sure of that?” asked Stanley.

“You mean——”

“Yes, how about Sandy? He has it in for you, hasn’t he?”

“Why, yes, I suppose he has. In fact, he’s got a good big mad on with me, Stan. I didn’t tell you, but I had a bit of an argument with him yesterday afternoon, down in front of the door. Do you think——”

“What sort of an argument?” asked Stanley suspiciously.

So Dick told and Stanley snapped his fingers in triumph. “Why, it’s as plain as the nose on your face, Dick!” he exclaimed. “Either Sandy came across that piece of paper by accident or he saw you tear the letter up and pulled it out after you’d gone on. Then, yesterday, he fixed up that envelope to look as if it belonged with the letter! You didn’t ask Mr. Driscoll when he got them, did you? Well, I’ll wager it was last night after you’d thrown Sandy down or early this morning. [272] It’s a mean thing to say, Dickie, but the thing’s just the sort of low-down plot that Sandy would take to. Shows ingenuity, too, and Sandy’s no fool if he is a villain! Why don’t you put it up to Driscoll straight! Tell him you know who supplied the incriminating evidence and tell him the whole yarn.”

“But I can’t prove anything, Stan.”

“What of it? You can show that Sandy has a grouch and Driscoll’s got sense enough to see that the whole thing’s a frame-up.”

“I might go to Sandy and make him tell the truth,” said Dick.

“How? He’d deny it, of course. Well, after all, it’s no great matter. Driscoll doesn’t believe it and when your Leonardville chum gets here he can clear the whole thing up. Best thing to do is forget it. It’s rather a sell on Sandy, though, for I guess he expected Driscoll would fire you off the team!”

“Somehow, I sort of think that’s what he meant to do when I first went in there.”

“You can bet he didn’t want to, Dick! He’d have done it, though, in a minute, if he hadn’t believed your story! Say, if I was you I’d take a crack at Sandy, just for luck, the first time I met him!”

But Dick didn’t do that. For one reason, he didn’t see Sandy that day or the next. He might [273] have found him, but Dick concluded that his hold on the position of substitute quarter-back was uncertain enough at present without taking any chances! And so long as Sumner was coming to clear up the mystery he could afford to keep the peace.

That Thursday evening Dick and Stanley went over to Goss to call on Blash and Sid. It was raining great guns and an easterly gale was howling around the corner as they set forth and, in violation of a school ordinance, cut across over the turf and under the dripping branches of the bare lindens. Both Blash and Sid were home and hailed the arrival of visitors with loud acclaim. Blash pulled the “larder,” as he called it, from under the window-seat and produced sweet crackers and the remains of a pineapple cheese and Sid disappeared down the corridor and presently returned with three bottles of some sweetly sickish concoction called Raspberry Squash. It was a quarter of an hour later, after the last bit of cheese had disappeared that Dick, idly prospecting among a pile of magazines and papers—many of them moving picture monthlies —happened on something that brought an exclamation of surprise to his lips. The others, busy in [274] talk, neither heard nor noted and Dick drew from concealment a copy of the Leonardville *Sentinel*, opened with the third page uppermost. “Leonardville is Proud of Him,” read Dick. He didn’t go on, for he remembered the rest of it perfectly. Instead, he laid the paper down and thoughtfully stared across at Blash, who was too enthralled in the conversation to heed. Dick kept silence for a good five minutes. Then, to the astonishment of the others, he broke in rudely and abruptly.

“How did you know about my brother Stuart, Blash?” he demanded.

“Eh? What’s that?” Blash looked across startledly, striving to accommodate his mind to the sudden change of subject.

“And where we lived?” pursued Dick.

“Oh! Well, what was it you asked?” Blash floundered badly, his gaze falling on the paper under Dick’s hand and a slow grin curving the corners of his mouth.

“I asked how you knew my brother’s name and where he lived,” explained Dick calmly; “and where we lived.”

Blash looked at Dick for an instant and then shrugged. “I didn’t, Dick,” he answered. “That part was supplied by the editor man, I suppose. All I did was to write a nice little press notice and mail [275] it to the paper. I didn’t know whether they’d use it, but they did, and they sent me a copy of it. Honest, now, don’t you think journalism is my line? Dana or Bennett or any of those top-notchers got anything on me, Dick?”

Stanley was staring wide-eyed. “D-do you mean that *you* wrote that thing about Dick in the Leonardville paper?” he gasped.

“Most of it,” replied Blash modestly. “Of course, as I’m telling you, I couldn’t supply the—the intimate details.”

“Well, I’ll be jiggered!”

“Same here,” laughed Sid. “Blash, you’re as crazy a loon as they make!”

“Seems to me,” said Dick, “you’ve spent most of your time of late working practical jokes on me. After this I’ll never believe a thing until I’ve made sure you’re not at the bottom of it. Well, I wonder if you know that that tommyrot of yours here about my high school friends coming to see Saturday’s game started something.”

“Started something!” Blash asked eagerly. “No. What?”

“Five of the fellows read that drivel and decided to follow the suggestion. Blash, I hope you choke!”

[276] Blash had gone off into a gale of laughter. Stanley and Sid grinned doubtfully, wanting to laugh, too, but fearful of wounding Dick’s feelings.

“O boy!” gasped Blash. “Dick, I guess we’re more than even! I’ve paid in full, eh?”

Dick smiled at last. “No, you still owe me some pennies.”

“Not a cent! You telephoned me that night at the movie house that I needn’t pay the last seven and a half cents: or, at least, ‘Uncle John’ did!”

“That’s so,” acknowledged Dick, laughing. “I’d forgotten.”

“When you get back,” said Stanley, “you can read what I wrote on the piece of paper one night. Remember?”

Dick nodded. “Better tell me now, though. I never could stand suspense.”

“I wrote ‘Blash will chisel a penny in two and send half as the last payment.’ Was I right, Blash?”

“Right as rain! Fact is, the two halves are in that top drawer over there this minute. But you’ll never get either of them, Dick. I’ve paid my debts!”

“You have,” agreed Dick heartily. “You’ve more than paid them, and I hope I’ll live long enough to hand you back the change!”

---

[277]

CHAPTER XXIII

KENWOOD SCORES

Friday was a hard day to live through. Excitement was in the very air and football tunes assailed one at every turn. For the players the day was a nervous period of suspense. Dick was heartily glad when recitations took his thoughts off the morrow. There was some punting and a light signal drill on the field in the afternoon, but it was all over by half-past four. A final blackboard talk was held in the evening and after it most of the players went over to the final mass-meeting and sat on the stage and were wildly cheered. Everyone who could think of anything to say that evening said it: Mr. Morgan, Chairman of the Athletic Committee, Coach Driscoll, Captain Peters, Billy Goode, Manager Whipple and one or two lesser luminaries. And the musical clubs played and the Glee Club sang and everyone joined in, and enthusiasm held sway until late.

[278] Saturday morning dawned brisk and fair, with a light westerly wind sweeping along the Front. Kenwood began to appear on the scene as early as half-past ten, and from that time on blue banners were almost as numerous as brown-and-white ones. The Kenwood team came at shortly after twelve and went at once to Alumni Hall for an early luncheon, heartily cheered on their way by friend and foe. On the train that brought the thirty husky warriors came also five persons whose affiliations were evidently with Parkinson, for each of the five wore a brown necktie, differing somewhat in shade, and two wore brown-and-white arm-bands. In the confusion existing in and about the Warne station they were not discovered by the reception committee of one for several minutes. Then Dick gave a yell, charged through the throng, grabbed Sumner White and spun him around.

“Sum! You old scoundrel! How are you?” Dick was surprised to discover how glad he was to see Sumner.

“Fine! Gee, Dick, you’ve grown an inch! Say, you needn’t have come to meet us. I told your——” Sumner stopped, grinning. “See who’s here?”

“Hello, Charlie! Hello, Jim! Say, I’m awfully glad——” Dick’s words stopped in his throat. Then: “*Dad!*” he gasped.

[279] Mr. Bates laughed a trifle embarrassedly as he took Dick’s hand in both of his own. “Yes, it’s me, Dick. I—I thought I’d come along and keep these young fellows in order, you know. Well, how are you, son?”

“I’m great,” answered Dick, “but I’m so knocked in a heap—Think of you coming, dad! Gee, I’m glad to see you! How are you? Let’s get out of here where we can talk.” Dick took his father’s arm and piloted him out to the sidewalk. Taxicabs were not to be thought of, for the demand already exceeded the supply six to one, and so they set off along the street afoot, Dick talking and asking questions and all the others chiming in every minute. It wasn’t until they were crossing

the campus, Dick pointing out the sights, that he remembered the appointment with Mr. Driscoll. Then he hurried them all to the room in Sohmer and left them in charge of Stanley while he and Sumner went on to the gymnasium. On the way Dick explained the situation to his companion, perhaps not very lucidly, and Sumner was still in a most confused condition of mind when he faced the coach. But it didn't matter, for Mr. Driscoll's questions were few and somewhat perfunctory after Dick had had his say about Sandy Halden. "I think, sir," Dick ended, "that [280] Halden didn't find that piece of an envelope at all. I think he addressed it himself, copying my writing the best he could."

"And I think you're right," agreed Mr. Driscoll. "I'll have something to say to Halden after this game's out of the way. He's a dangerous fellow to have around."

Five minutes later they were back in Number 14, in the midst of a merry din of talk and laughter. Dick couldn't remain with them long, however, for luncheon for the players was at a quarter to one, or as soon as the Kenwood party vacated the dining hall, and so, giving the tickets he had obtained for them to Sumner, he hurried away. "Stan will look after you," he shouted back from the door. "There's a stand-up lunch in Alumni for visitors at one-thirty, or you can get real food in the village. Stan will take you over to the field in plenty of time and I'll see you here after the game. So long, dad! So long, fellows!"

"Go to it, Dick!" cried Sumner. "Eat 'em up, old scout! We'll be rooting for you!"

A sketchy luncheon in the dining hall, with no one eating much, not even the veterans like Bob Peters and Harry Warden, a flight by way of the service entrance to the gymnasium and the usual confusion of changing to playing togs and listening to final instructions at the same time. Then, at [281] last, just before two o'clock, a heartening, quiet talk of a minute by the coach.

Kenwood was already at practice when Parkinson reached the field. The home stand arose and gave the "long cheer" and the base drummer of the Warne Silver Cornet Band thumped vigorously. Counter cheers mingled from across the field and then the visitors cheered for Parkinson, and Captain Bob led his men forth and a ten-minute warming-up followed, with three squads trotting up and down and the punters stretching their long legs down by the east goal. It was four minutes past two when the teams took their places and the din of cheering and singing subsided.

In seats half-way up the centre of the south stands Mr. Bates and Sumner White and the other three visitors from Leonardville watched intently. Sumner had just discovered that Dick was not in the Brown-and-White's line-up and had proclaimed the fact disappointedly.

"What's that mean?" asked Mr. Bates anxiously. "Isn't he going to play, Sumner?"

"Oh, yes, sir," replied Sumner, assuming more confidence than he felt. "You see, a quarter-back doesn't often last a whole game. It's a pretty hard job. So they generally put in one to start the [282] game and then run the other fellow on later. I guess Dick will get in before the half's over, Mr. Bates. I think I see him down there on the bench. Yes, there he is, sir."

Mr. Bates had to have his son pointed out to him, and then a shrill whistle blew and Kenwood, having lost the toss, kicked the ball high and far into the sunlight.

For the first ten minutes of that game Parkinson and Kenwood tried each other out and neither team approached a score. Kenwood had what advantage lay in a mild westerly breeze and she punted often. But if she expected fumbles or misjudgments she was disappointed, for either Stone or Warden caught unfailingly and usually took the ball back over one or two white lines before being stopped. Just at first Mr. Bates, whose football education had been sadly neglected, thought the game much too rough and predicted broken legs and worse, but before that first quarter was at an end he was inured to the ungentle behaviour of the contestants and was following the varying fortunes of the game with grim lips and flashing eyes.

Parkinson made one first down and Kenwood two in the initial period, the second of the Blue's [283] successes coming just at the end when a back shot unexpectedly around Peters' end and made all of seven yards before he was pulled to earth and enthusiastically sat on by most of the Parkinson team! Two attacks on Newhall and Wendell added the three more and the chain was trailed to a new position. But the Blue was still well away from the home team's goal and shortly after the second quarter began she had to punt again.

Neither team appeared to be able to gain consistently through the opposing line, while neither team had shown thus far much ability to run the ends. It looked like a punting duel all the way, with the victory depending on a "break" in the defence of one side or the other. It was a ding-dong affair for thirty minutes of playing time, and when the first half ended neither team could claim the advantage.

"You wait till Dick gets in, though," said Sumner to Mr. Bates when the field had emptied and the Silver Cornet Band was blaring forth again. "That quarter they've had playing may be good, but I'll bet Dick can play all around him. He's awfully slow, for one thing——"

"Dick is?" inquired Mr. Bates, anxious to learn football lore.

"No, that fellow Stone. Dick's a streak when he gets started. Why, he can do the hundred in ten [284] and two-fifths, sir!"

"You don't say!" murmured Mr. Bates. He wondered what the hundred was and how Dick "did" it, but he had no intention of exhibiting his ignorance any further. He was still recalling Sumner's expression when he had innocently asked which team the little man in the grey flannel trousers—he happened to be the umpire—played on!

Stone, however, was still in the line-up when the third period began and Dick was anxiously looking on from the bench, one of some fifteen other equally anxious substitutes. It was when the last half was but four minutes old that Kenwood sprung her big surprise. The surprise was a tow-headed youngster who had been substituted at right half. Someone near the Leonardville contingent said his name was Marvel, and Sumner declared heartily that he was well-named. The next day's papers called him Marble, which was probably correct but not nearly so descriptive. Marble was the nearest imitation of an eel that the Parkinson team had ever had to contend with. Kenwood played him close to the line, gave him the ball on a direct pass from centre and then set him loose. After he was loose he was about as easy to locate as a flea, and, having been located, [285] about as easy as a flea to capture! His first stunt, and one that brought the visiting rooters to their feet with a sudden fierce and triumphant yell and sent Parkinson hearts into Parkinson boots, was a dash through the brown-and-white line outside left tackle. He went through much as a hot knife cleaves its way through butter, and after he was through he feinted and squirmed and doubled and twisted until only Stone stood between him and the Parkinson goal. And Stone missed him!

That forty-seven-yard run that ended in a touchdown squarely between the posts was just the medicine Parkinson needed, however, and with the score seven to naught against her, for Kenwood couldn't have missed that goal with a blind and one-legged kicker, she set to work with a new determination and a new vim. Stone remained in just two plays after the kick-off. Then, not a little groggy, he limped off, loyally cheered, and Dick took his place.

Dick carried but one instruction with him. "Hustle your team, Bates," Mr. Driscoll had said quietly.

With the coach's encouraging thump on his shoulder to remember and the knowledge that his father and Sumner and the others were wishing him luck, Dick raced on with every nerve tingling [286] and a big, hot desire in his heart to vindicate their faith in him. Bob Peters hailed him joyfully. Bob was as happy as a clam, despite an ensanguined nose. "Ata boy, Dick!" he sang out as Dick came up. "Look who's here, fellows! What do you say?"

The others said many things, somewhat breathlessly but heartily, and Dick hurried back to his position the instant he had reported. "All right now, Parkinson!" he cried cheerfully. "Let's see what we can do when we *try*! Every fellow on his toes and play fast! You've been asleep, every one of you! Let's have some action. Let's show 'em the game!"

---

[287]

CHAPTER XXIV

QUARTER-BACK BATES

The ball was still Kenwood's on her forty-six and she had made five yards in two downs. Another thrust added a yard more. Then came a forward-pass, and Peters spoiled it while brown-and-white banners waved. Dick came running in, piping his signals on the way.

Then started one of those long and steady marches down the field that, while less thrilling, less spectacular than runs or passes, are far more gruelling. If Parkinson had played slowly before she played so no longer. Never on that field had plays been run off faster, never had backs started quicker or linemen lunged harder. The pace told on the enemy before the thirty-yard line was passed. Dick chose his plays wisely, uncannily, thrusting here and there unexpectedly, trying this end and that and always somehow managing to get his ten yards in four downs. Sometimes the distance had to be measured and often the result was in doubt until the referee's hand waved to the chain holders, but from the enemy's forty-seven to her eight the advance continued [288] remorselessly. Kirkendall and Warden were the heroes of that invasion, although Gaines and Peters, the latter twice sweeping around from position for short gains, took part as well. But on the eight yards Kenwood dug her toes and refused to give another inch. On the second down Kirkendall was doubled up for no gain, after Warden had failed off right tackle, and the big full-back was sent to the eighteen yards for a try-at-goal. But there was an attempted double pass first, and if Gaines had taken the throw from Dick in better shape it might have come off. As it was, however, Gaines almost dropped the ball, recovered it and was downed before he could toss across the line to the expectant Bob Peters. So, after all, that march tallied but three points for the Brown-and-White, and came near to not tallying at all, for Kenwood found a weak spot on the Parkinson right and plunged through desperately as Kirkendall booted. The pigskin cleared the upstretched hands by inches only, but cleared them and sailed safely over the bar.

Parkinson cheered and demanded further scores, but the third quarter ended in an exchange of punts after the kick-off and when the final period began the score was 7-3, with Parkinson on the [289] short end and, so many thought, likely to stay there.

Coach Driscoll put in a new right guard and a new right tackle, Bartlett and Cairns, so bolstering what, all the season, had shown as the weakest part of the brown-and-white line. Scoville also went in, Furniss having played himself to a stand-still at left end.

Kenwood started from her twenty-nine yards when the period began and unloosed Marble again for a fifteen-yard romp, and again got him loose for twelve more, taking the ball well into Parkinson territory. Then two plunges failed and a forward-pass went wrong and the visitors punted to Dick on his twelve. A Kenwood end upset him before he had gained his speed.

Parkinson started another march then, but it went less smoothly now and ended at her thirty-five, and Kirkendall punted. Kenwood returned on second down, losing several yards on the exchange. Again Parkinson took up her weary advance, but the plunges at the enemy line netted shorter gains and it was a forward-pass, Dick to Peters that took the home team to the enemy's twenty-two yards. Here an attempt by Gaines around his own left was nipped in the bud. A penalty for holding set the Brown-and-White still further back and again she punted. Kenwood once more [290] accepted the challenge and Warden caught near the boundary on his thirty-eight.

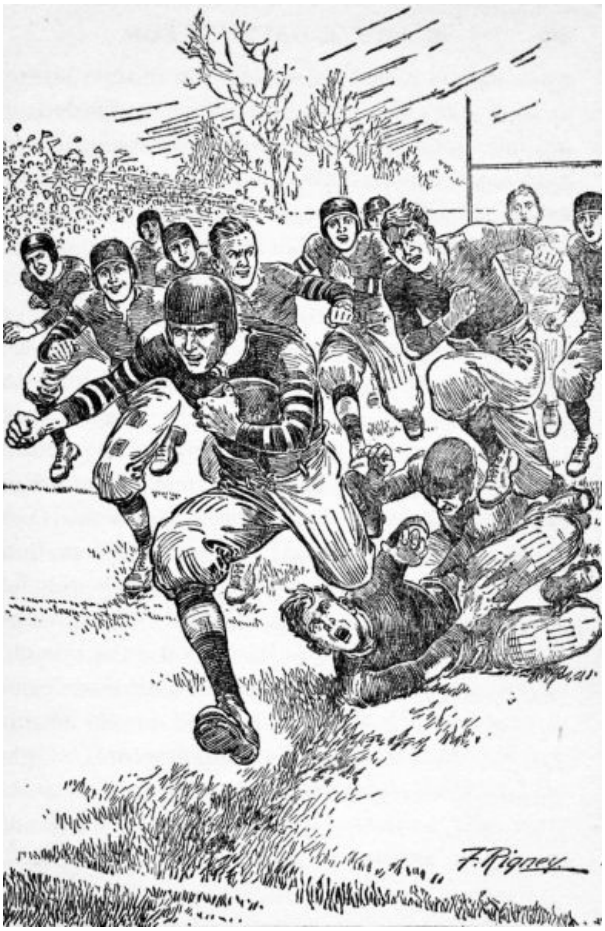
Kenwood began to make substitutions in earnest and Coach Driscoll called Gaines out and sent Long in. Many of the Parkinson team were showing the effects of the game by now and Bob Peters, though still confident and cheerful, looked like a wreck. Dick tried to persuade him to go off, but Bob indignantly spurned the notion. Time was flying fast and something less than six minutes remained when Parkinson lined up near the edge of the field on her thirty-eight. Long got two through the Kenwood centre and lost it on a second attempt at the same place. Dick ran half across the field for a scant three yards and Kirkendall romped around his own right for eight. Then another forward failed, for Scoville was far out of position for the catch, and Warden was knifed through the Kenwood left for two. With eight to go on third down, Kirkendall faked a kick and threw a short pass across the centre of the line which Peters just missed, and Kenwood took the ball.

Four minutes only remained and Kenwood tried every known method of wasting time. In the end, though, she was forced to punt, for Marble was stopped twice—the youngster had been used [291] hard and was showing the result—and the pigskin was Parkinson's on her forty-one. Kirkendall was pulled down for a loss and had to go out, and Trask, who took his place, made but a yard outside right tackle. Long skirted the enemy left for seven, however, and then made it first down on a plucky slam straight at centre. But it was hopeless to expect to snatch a victory by such slow methods, for the hands of the timekeeper's watch were ticking off the seconds fast. Dick tried a forward, Trask to Peters, but Kenwood was not to be fooled and Bob never had a chance at the hurtling ball. The "two-over" netted four where the Kenwood line split to meet the shift. Dick tried the same play again on the opposite side and got three. Warden was hurt and gave way to Skinner. Trask punted to Kenwood's seven and the fleet-footed and elusive Marble caught and brought the pigskin back to twenty-three, through the whole Parkinson team. Twice Kenwood dared to buck the brown-and-white line and then punted to safety.

But what seemed safety was not. For Dick made the catch on his twenty-eight yards, and for once the interference was all he could have asked for. Skinner and Peters upset the Kenwood ends and a hastily formed cordon of Parkinson players blocked the others. Dick looked and [292] whirled to the left, cutting diagonally across behind his interference. Then he had to side-step an eager Kenwood tackle, and after that to run his hardest to throw off the Blue's right half. But he did it, for he had found his stride now and that ability of which Sumner White had boasted to Dick's father came to his aid. Straight along the side-line he flew, some five yards inside it, hard and fast, with the enemy speeding after him and the quarter-back coming down upon him. The fifty-yard-line went underfoot and the pursuit had not gained. But the enemy quarter was almost on him now. Dick eased his pace the littlest bit and veered further into the field. Whatever happened, he did not mean to be forced over the side-line. Not until he had passed the middle of the field did the thought that he might win the victory for Parkinson come to him. Until then he had thought only of getting free, of gaining what he might before he was thrown to the turf. Now, though, with only the quarter-back before him he caught a brief and wonderful glimpse of victory! If only he could get by the last of the enemy!

Then it happened, almost before he was ready to meet it! The Kenwood player poised, waited, [293] sprang! Dick whirled on his heel, his right arm stretched before him, locked, and spun dizzily. Arms grasped his thighs, were torn loose, settled about his knees, held! Dick felt despair at his heart even as he strove to wrench free, to set his feet in new strides. And somehow, his hand thrusting at a head and his knees tugging at the bonds that held them together, he staggered free! Staggered and fell to one knee and one hand, but found his feet beneath him again and the goal beckoning!

The pursuit had closed in now and foremost friend and enemy were but a few yards behind, but Dick's speed was still to be counted on and, although his lungs hurt and his legs felt leaden, he gained at every stride and sped on and on over one white line after another. Behind him panting players surged despairingly or joyously and beside him a thunderous surge of shouts and a wild din of cheers kept pace. Then the end was in sight. Here was the ten-yard-line beneath his feet, there the last trampled yellow-white mark and the padded posts of the goal! Only a few more strides, only a few more agonising gasps for breath!



The pursuit had closed in now and foremost friend and enemy were but a few yards behind

Dick never knew when he actually crossed the line, never knew when, having crossed it, he circled the nearer post and dropped weakly to the earth to be pounced on as weakly by a Kenwood back. When he did know things clearly the world was a medley of triumphant shouting and the blaring of instruments and the thump-thumping of a bass drum. He was still fighting for breath when Trask kicked the goal that put the score at 10-7. And 10-7 it stayed, for there was only time for an exchange of punts and a discouraged rush by Kenwood when the whistle signalled the end of the game and the end of the season, the victory of Parkinson and the defeat of a worthy foe. [294]

An hour later Dick sat in state in Number 14 Sohmer and received the congratulations of his friends. His father sat beside him, very proud and erect, beaming on all; on Blash and Rusty and Sid and Stanley and many more who stormed the hero's retreat that November afternoon. And there let us leave him, with Blash's words in our ears: "Two dozen citizens," declaimed Blash, "in monster indoor meeting pay tribute to famous athlete, Richard Corliss Bates!"

This Isn't All!

Would you like to know what became of the good friends you have made in this book?

Would you like to read other stories continuing their adventures and experiences, or other books quite as entertaining by the same author?

On the *reverse side* of the wrapper which comes with this book, you will find a wonderful list of stories which you can buy at the same store where you got this book.

Don't throw away the Wrapper

Use it as a handy catalog of the books you want some day to have. But in case you do mislay it, write to the Publishers for a complete catalog.

Football and Baseball Stories

Durably Bound. Illustrated. Colored Wrappers.
Every Volume Complete in Itself.

The Ralph Henry Barbour Books for Boys

In these up-to-the-minute, spirited genuine stories of boy life there is something which will appeal to every boy with the love of manliness, cleanness and sportsmanship in his heart.

LEFT END EDWARDS
LEFT TACKLE THAYER
LEFT GUARD GILBERT
CENTER RUSH ROWLAND
FULLBACK FOSTER
LEFT HALF HARMON
RIGHT END EMERSON
RIGHT GUARD GRANT
QUARTERBACK BATES
RIGHT TACKLE TODD
RIGHT HALF HOLLINS

The Christy Mathewson Books for Boys

Every boy wants to know how to play ball in the fairest and squarest way. These books about boys and baseball are full of wholesome and manly interest and information.

PITCHER POLLOCK
CATCHER CRAIG
FIRST BASE FAULKNER
SECOND BASE SLOAN
PITCHING IN A PINCH

THIRD BASE THATCHER, By Everett Scott

GROSSET & DUNLAP, *Publishers*, NEW YORK

THE TOM SLADE BOOKS

By PERCY KEESE FITZHUGH
Author of “Roy Blakeley,” “Pee-wee Harris,” “Westy Martin,” Etc.

Illustrated. Individual Picture Wrappers in Colors.
Every Volume Complete in Itself.

“Let your boy grow up with Tom Slade,” is a suggestion which thousands of parents have followed during the past, with the result that the TOM SLADE BOOKS are the most popular boys’ books published today. They take Tom Slade through a series of typical boy adventures through his tenderfoot days as a scout, through his gallant days as an American doughboy in France, back to his old patrol and the old camp ground at Black Lake, and so on.

TOM SLADE, BOY SCOUT
TOM SLADE AT TEMPLE CAMP
TOM SLADE ON THE RIVER
TOM SLADE WITH THE COLORS
TOM SLADE ON A TRANSPORT
TOM SLADE WITH THE BOYS OVER THERE
TOM SLADE, MOTORCYCLE DISPATCH BEARER
TOM SLADE WITH THE FLYING CORPS
TOM SLADE AT BLACK LAKE
TOM SLADE ON MYSTERY TRAIL
TOM SLADE’S DOUBLE DARE
TOM SLADE ON OVERLOOK MOUNTAIN
TOM SLADE PICKS A WINNER
TOM SLADE AT BEAR MOUNTAIN
TOM SLADE: FOREST RANGER
TOM SLADE IN THE NORTH WOODS

GROSSET & DUNLAP, *Publishers*, NEW YORK

THE ROY BLAKELEY BOOKS

By PERCY KEESE FITZHUGH
Author of “Tom Slade,” “Pee-wee Harris,” “Westy Martin,” Etc.

Illustrated. Picture Wrappers in Color.
Every Volume Complete in Itself.

In the character and adventures of Roy Blakeley are typified the very essence of Boy life. He is a real boy, as real as Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer. He is the moving spirit of the troop of Scouts of which he is a member, and the average boy has to go only a little way in the first book before Roy is the best friend he ever had, and he is willing to part with his best treasure to get the next book in the series.

ROY BLAKELEY
ROY BLAKELEY’S ADVENTURES IN CAMP
ROY BLAKELEY, PATHFINDER
ROY BLAKELEY’S CAMP ON WHEELS
ROY BLAKELEY’S SILVER FOX PATROL
ROY BLAKELEY’S MOTOR CARAVAN
ROY BLAKELEY, LOST, STRAYED OR STOLEN
ROY BLAKELEY’S BEE-LINE HIKE
ROY BLAKELEY AT THE HAUNTED CAMP
ROY BLAKELEY’S FUNNY BONE HIKE
ROY BLAKELEY’S TANGLED TRAIL
ROY BLAKELEY ON THE MOHAWK TRAIL
ROY BLAKELEY’S ELASTIC HIKE
ROY BLAKELEY’S ROUNDABOUT HIKE

GROSSET & DUNLAP, *Publishers*, NEW YORK

THE PEE-WEE HARRIS BOOKS

By PERCY KEESE FITZHUGH
Author of “Tom Slade,” “Roy Blakeley,” “Westy Martin,” Etc.

Illustrated. Individual Picture Wrappers in Color.
Every Volume Complete in Itself.

All readers of the Tom Slade and the Roy Blakeley books are acquainted with Pee-wee Harris. These stories record the true facts concerning his size (what there is of it) and his heroism (such as it is), his voice, his clothes, his appetite, his friends, his enemies, his victims. Together with the thrilling narrative of how he foiled, baffled, circumvented and triumphed over everything and everybody (except where he failed) and how even when he failed he succeeded. The whole recorded in a series of screams and told with neither muffler nor cut-out.

PEE-WEE HARRIS
PEE-WEE HARRIS ON THE TRAIL
PEE-WEE HARRIS IN CAMP
PEE-WEE HARRIS IN LUCK
PEE-WEE HARRIS ADRIFT
PEE-WEE HARRIS F. O. B. BRIDGEBORO
PEE-WEE HARRIS FIXER
PEE-WEE HARRIS: AS GOOD AS HIS WORD
PEE-WEE HARRIS: MAYOR FOR A DAY
PEE-WEE HARRIS AND THE SUNKEN TREASURE

GROSSET & DUNLAP, *Publishers*, NEW YORK

THE WESTY MARTIN BOOKS

By PERCY KEESE FITZHUGH
Author of the “Tom Slade” and “Roy Blakeley” Books, Etc.

Individual Colored Wrappers. Illustrated.
Every Volume Complete in Itself.

Westy Martin, known to every friend of Roy Blakeley, appears as the hero of adventures quite different from those in which we have seen him participate as a Scout of Bridgeboro and of

Temple Camp. On his way to the Yellowstone the bigness of the vast West and the thoughts of the wild preserve that he is going to visit make him conscious of his own smallness and of the futility of “boy scouting” and woods lore in this great region. Yet he was to learn that if it had not been for his scout training he would never have been able to survive the experiences he had in these stories.

WESTY MARTIN
WESTY MARTIN IN THE YELLOWSTONE
WESTY MARTIN IN THE ROCKIES
WESTY MARTIN ON THE SANTA FE TRAIL
WESTY MARTIN ON THE OLD INDIAN TRAILS

GROSSET & DUNLAP, *Publishers*, NEW YORK

THE HARDY BOYS SERIES

By FRANKLIN W. DIXON

Individual Colored Wrappers and Text Illustrations by
WALTER S. ROGERS
Every Volume Complete in Itself

The Hardy Boys are sons of a celebrated American detective, and during vacations and their off time from school they help their father by hunting down clues themselves.

THE TOWER TREASURE

A dying criminal confessed that his loot had been secreted “in the tower.” It remained for the Hardy Boys to make an astonishing discovery that cleared up the mystery.

THE HOUSE ON THE CLIFF

The house had been vacant and was supposed to be haunted. Mr. Hardy started to investigate —and disappeared! An odd tale, with plenty of excitement.

THE SECRET OF THE OLD MILL

Counterfeit money was in circulation, and the limit was reached when Mrs. Hardy took some from a stranger. A tale full of thrills.

THE MISSING CHUMS

Two of the Hardy Boys’ chums take a motor trip down the coast. They disappear and are almost rescued by their friends when all are captured. A thrilling story of adventure.

HUNTING FOR HIDDEN GOLD

Mr. Hardy is injured in tracing some stolen gold. A hunt by the boys leads to an abandoned mine, and there things start to happen. A western story all boys will enjoy.

GROSSET & DUNLAP, *Publishers*, NEW YORK

THE TED SCOTT FLYING STORIES

By FRANKLIN W. DIXON

Individual Colored Wrappers and Text Illustrations by
WALTER S. ROGERS
Every Volume Complete in Itself

No subject has so thoroughly caught the imagination of young America as aviation. This series has been inspired by recent daring feats of the air, and is dedicated to Lindbergh, Byrd, Chamberlain and other heroes of the skies.

OVER THE OCEAN TO PARIS

In which we meet Ted Scott, daring young American, who flies alone from New York to Paris.

RESCUED IN THE CLOUDS

After his return from Paris, Ted tours the country in his plane, and rescues his chums from a blazing machine a mile in the air.

OVER THE ROCKIES WITH THE AIR MAIL

In this volume Ted Scott goes back to his “first love,” The Air Mail Service and is lost in the wilderness of the Rockies through the treachery of his enemies.

FIRST STOP, HONOLULU!

After breaking the world’s altitude record, Ted sets out to conquer the Pacific and in a thrilling attempt flies from San Francisco to Honolulu.

THE SEARCH FOR THE LOST FLIERS

Two of Ted’s best friends disappear while flying near Porto Rico. After a series of exciting adventures the young air ace rescues them in the nick of time.

GROSSET & DUNLAP, *Publishers*, NEW YORK

Transcriber’s Notes:

Except for the frontispiece, illustrations have been moved to follow the text that they illustrate, so the page number of the illustration may not match the page number in the Illustrations.

Punctuation and spelling inaccuracies were silently corrected, except as noted below.

Archaic and variable spelling has been preserved.

Variations in hyphenation and compound words have been preserved.

The author’s em-dash and long dash styles have been retained.

Inconsistencies in formatting and punctuation of individual advertisements have been retained.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK QUARTER-BACK BATES ***

Updated editions will replace the previous one—the old editions will be renamed.

Creating the works from print editions not protected by U.S. copyright law means that no one owns a United States copyright in these works, so the Foundation (and you!) can copy and distribute it in the United States without permission and without paying copyright royalties. Special rules, set forth in the General Terms of Use part of this license, apply to copying and distributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works to protect the PROJECT GUTENBERG™ concept and trademark. Project Gutenberg is a registered trademark, and may not be used if you charge for an eBook, except by following the terms of the trademark license, including paying royalties for use of the Project Gutenberg trademark. If you do not charge anything for copies of this eBook, complying with the trademark license is very easy. You may use this eBook for nearly any purpose such as creation of derivative works, reports, performances and research. Project Gutenberg eBooks may be modified and printed and given away—you may do practically ANYTHING in the United States with eBooks not protected by U.S. copyright law. Redistribution is subject to the trademark license, especially commercial redistribution.

START: FULL LICENSE

THE FULL PROJECT GUTENBERG LICENSE

PLEASE READ THIS BEFORE YOU DISTRIBUTE OR USE THIS WORK

To protect the Project Gutenberg™ mission of promoting the free distribution of electronic

works, by using or distributing this work (or any other work associated in any way with the phrase “Project Gutenberg”), you agree to comply with all the terms of the Full Project Gutenberg™ License available with this file or online at www.gutenberg.org/license.

Section 1. General Terms of Use and Redistributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works

1.A. By reading or using any part of this Project Gutenberg™ electronic work, you indicate that you have read, understand, agree to and accept all the terms of this license and intellectual property (trademark/copyright) agreement. If you do not agree to abide by all the terms of this agreement, you must cease using and return or destroy all copies of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works in your possession. If you paid a fee for obtaining a copy of or access to a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work and you do not agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement, you may obtain a refund from the person or entity to whom you paid the fee as set forth in paragraph 1.E.8.

1.B. “Project Gutenberg” is a registered trademark. It may only be used on or associated in any way with an electronic work by people who agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement. There are a few things that you can do with most Project Gutenberg™ electronic works even without complying with the full terms of this agreement. See paragraph 1.C below. There are a lot of things you can do with Project Gutenberg™ electronic works if you follow the terms of this agreement and help preserve free future access to Project Gutenberg™ electronic works. See paragraph 1.E below.

1.C. The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation (“the Foundation” or PGLAF), owns a compilation copyright in the collection of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works. Nearly all the individual works in the collection are in the public domain in the United States. If an individual work is unprotected by copyright law in the United States and you are located in the United States, we do not claim a right to prevent you from copying, distributing, performing, displaying or creating derivative works based on the work as long as all references to Project Gutenberg are removed. Of course, we hope that you will support the Project Gutenberg™ mission of promoting free access to electronic works by freely sharing Project Gutenberg™ works in compliance with the terms of this agreement for keeping the Project Gutenberg™ name associated with the work. You can easily comply with the terms of this agreement by keeping this work in the same format with its attached full Project Gutenberg™ License when you share it without charge with others.

1.D. The copyright laws of the place where you are located also govern what you can do with this work. Copyright laws in most countries are in a constant state of change. If you are outside the United States, check the laws of your country in addition to the terms of this agreement before downloading, copying, displaying, performing, distributing or creating derivative works based on this work or any other Project Gutenberg™ work. The Foundation makes no representations concerning the copyright status of any work in any country other than the United States.

1.E. Unless you have removed all references to Project Gutenberg:

1.E.1. The following sentence, with active links to, or other immediate access to, the full Project Gutenberg™ License must appear prominently whenever any copy of a Project Gutenberg™ work (any work on which the phrase “Project Gutenberg” appears, or with which the phrase “Project Gutenberg” is associated) is accessed, displayed, performed, viewed, copied or distributed:

> This eBook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this eBook or online at www.gutenberg.org. If you are not located in the United States, you will have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

1.E.2. If an individual Project Gutenberg™ electronic work is derived from texts not protected by U.S. copyright law (does not contain a notice indicating that it is posted with permission of the copyright holder), the work can be copied and distributed to anyone in the United States without paying any fees or charges. If you are redistributing or providing access to a work with the phrase “Project Gutenberg” associated with or appearing on the work, you must comply either with the requirements of paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 or obtain permission for the use of the work and the Project Gutenberg™ trademark as set forth in paragraphs 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.3. If an individual Project Gutenberg™ electronic work is posted with the permission of the copyright holder, your use and distribution must comply with both paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 and any additional terms imposed by the copyright holder. Additional terms will be linked to the Project Gutenberg™ License for all works posted with the permission of the copyright holder found at the beginning of this work.

1.E.4. Do not unlink or detach or remove the full Project Gutenberg™ License terms from this

work, or any files containing a part of this work or any other work associated with Project Gutenberg™.

1.E.5. Do not copy, display, perform, distribute or redistribute this electronic work, or any part of this electronic work, without prominently displaying the sentence set forth in paragraph 1.E.1 with active links or immediate access to the full terms of the Project Gutenberg™ License.

1.E.6. You may convert to and distribute this work in any binary, compressed, marked up, nonproprietary or proprietary form, including any word processing or hypertext form. However, if you provide access to or distribute copies of a Project Gutenberg™ work in a format other than “Plain Vanilla ASCII” or other format used in the official version posted on the official Project Gutenberg™ website (www.gutenberg.org), you must, at no additional cost, fee or expense to the user, provide a copy, a means of exporting a copy, or a means of obtaining a copy upon request, of the work in its original “Plain Vanilla ASCII” or other form. Any alternate format must include the full Project Gutenberg™ License as specified in paragraph 1.E.1.

1.E.7. Do not charge a fee for access to, viewing, displaying, performing, copying or distributing any Project Gutenberg™ works unless you comply with paragraph 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.8. You may charge a reasonable fee for copies of or providing access to or distributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works provided that:

- You pay a royalty fee of 20% of the gross profits you derive from the use of Project Gutenberg™ works calculated using the method you already use to calculate your applicable taxes. The fee is owed to the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, but he has agreed to donate royalties under this paragraph to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation. Royalty payments must be paid within 60 days following each date on which you prepare (or are legally required to prepare) your periodic tax returns. Royalty payments should be clearly marked as such and sent to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation at the address specified in Section 4, “Information about donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation.”

- You provide a full refund of any money paid by a user who notifies you in writing (or by e-mail) within 30 days of receipt that s/he does not agree to the terms of the full Project Gutenberg™ License. You must require such a user to return or destroy all copies of the works possessed in a physical medium and discontinue all use of and all access to other copies of Project Gutenberg™ works.

- You provide, in accordance with paragraph 1.F.3, a full refund of any money paid for a work or a replacement copy, if a defect in the electronic work is discovered and reported to you within 90 days of receipt of the work.

- You comply with all other terms of this agreement for free distribution of Project Gutenberg™ works.

1.E.9. If you wish to charge a fee or distribute a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work or group of works on different terms than are set forth in this agreement, you must obtain permission in writing from the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the manager of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark. Contact the Foundation as set forth in Section 3 below.

1.F.

1.F.1. Project Gutenberg volunteers and employees expend considerable effort to identify, do copyright research on, transcribe and proofread works not protected by U.S. copyright law in creating the Project Gutenberg™ collection. Despite these efforts, Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, and the medium on which they may be stored, may contain “Defects,” such as, but not limited to, incomplete, inaccurate or corrupt data, transcription errors, a copyright or other intellectual property infringement, a defective or damaged disk or other medium, a computer virus, or computer codes that damage or cannot be read by your equipment.

1.F.2. LIMITED WARRANTY, DISCLAIMER OF DAMAGES - Except for the “Right of Replacement or Refund” described in paragraph 1.F.3, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, and any other party distributing a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work under this agreement, disclaim all liability to you for damages, costs and expenses, including legal fees. YOU AGREE THAT YOU HAVE NO REMEDIES FOR NEGLIGENCE, STRICT LIABILITY, BREACH OF WARRANTY OR BREACH OF CONTRACT EXCEPT THOSE PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH 1.F.3. YOU AGREE THAT THE FOUNDATION, THE TRADEMARK OWNER, AND ANY DISTRIBUTOR UNDER THIS AGREEMENT WILL NOT BE LIABLE TO YOU FOR ACTUAL, DIRECT, INDIRECT, CONSEQUENTIAL, PUNITIVE OR INCIDENTAL DAMAGES EVEN IF YOU GIVE NOTICE OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH DAMAGE.

1.F.3. LIMITED RIGHT OF REPLACEMENT OR REFUND - If you discover a defect in this

electronic work within 90 days of receiving it, you can receive a refund of the money (if any) you paid for it by sending a written explanation to the person you received the work from. If you received the work on a physical medium, you must return the medium with your written explanation. The person or entity that provided you with the defective work may elect to provide a replacement copy in lieu of a refund. If you received the work electronically, the person or entity providing it to you may choose to give you a second opportunity to receive the work electronically in lieu of a refund. If the second copy is also defective, you may demand a refund in writing without further opportunities to fix the problem.

1.F.4. Except for the limited right of replacement or refund set forth in paragraph 1.F.3, this work is provided to you 'AS-IS', WITH NO OTHER WARRANTIES OF ANY KIND, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR ANY PURPOSE.

1.F.5. Some states do not allow disclaimers of certain implied warranties or the exclusion or limitation of certain types of damages. If any disclaimer or limitation set forth in this agreement violates the law of the state applicable to this agreement, the agreement shall be interpreted to make the maximum disclaimer or limitation permitted by the applicable state law. The invalidity or unenforceability of any provision of this agreement shall not void the remaining provisions.

1.F.6. INDEMNITY - You agree to indemnify and hold the Foundation, the trademark owner, any agent or employee of the Foundation, anyone providing copies of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works in accordance with this agreement, and any volunteers associated with the production, promotion and distribution of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, harmless from all liability, costs and expenses, including legal fees, that arise directly or indirectly from any of the following which you do or cause to occur: (a) distribution of this or any Project Gutenberg™ work, (b) alteration, modification, or additions or deletions to any Project Gutenberg™ work, and (c) any Defect you cause.

Section 2. Information about the Mission of Project Gutenberg™

Project Gutenberg™ is synonymous with the free distribution of electronic works in formats readable by the widest variety of computers including obsolete, old, middle-aged and new computers. It exists because of the efforts of hundreds of volunteers and donations from people in all walks of life.

Volunteers and financial support to provide volunteers with the assistance they need are critical to reaching Project Gutenberg™'s goals and ensuring that the Project Gutenberg™ collection will remain freely available for generations to come. In 2001, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation was created to provide a secure and permanent future for Project Gutenberg™ and future generations. To learn more about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation and how your efforts and donations can help, see Sections 3 and 4 and the Foundation information page at www.gutenberg.org.

Section 3. Information about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation

The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) educational corporation organized under the laws of the state of Mississippi and granted tax exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service. The Foundation's EIN or federal tax identification number is 64-6221541. Contributions to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation are tax deductible to the full extent permitted by U.S. federal laws and your state's laws.

The Foundation's business office is located at 809 North 1500 West, Salt Lake City, UT 84116, (801) 596-1887. Email contact links and up to date contact information can be found at the Foundation's website and official page at www.gutenberg.org/contact

Section 4. Information about Donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation

Project Gutenberg™ depends upon and cannot survive without widespread public support and donations to carry out its mission of increasing the number of public domain and licensed works that can be freely distributed in machine-readable form accessible by the widest array of equipment including outdated equipment. Many small donations ($1 to $5,000) are particularly important to maintaining tax exempt status with the IRS.

The Foundation is committed to complying with the laws regulating charities and charitable donations in all 50 states of the United States. Compliance requirements are not uniform and it takes a considerable effort, much paperwork and many fees to meet and keep up with these requirements. We do not solicit donations in locations where we have not received written confirmation of compliance. To SEND DONATIONS or determine the status of compliance for any particular state visit www.gutenberg.org/donate.

While we cannot and do not solicit contributions from states where we have not met the

solicitation requirements, we know of no prohibition against accepting unsolicited donations from donors in such states who approach us with offers to donate.

International donations are gratefully accepted, but we cannot make any statements concerning tax treatment of donations received from outside the United States. U.S. laws alone swamp our small staff.

Please check the Project Gutenberg web pages for current donation methods and addresses. Donations are accepted in a number of other ways including checks, online payments and credit card donations. To donate, please visit: www.gutenberg.org/donate

Section 5. General Information About Project Gutenberg™ electronic works

Professor Michael S. Hart was the originator of the Project Gutenberg™ concept of a library of electronic works that could be freely shared with anyone. For forty years, he produced and distributed Project Gutenberg™ eBooks with only a loose network of volunteer support.

Project Gutenberg™ eBooks are often created from several printed editions, all of which are confirmed as not protected by copyright in the U.S. unless a copyright notice is included. Thus, we do not necessarily keep eBooks in compliance with any particular paper edition.

Most people start at our website which has the main PG search facility: www.gutenberg.org.

This website includes information about Project Gutenberg™, including how to make donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, how to help produce our new eBooks, and how to subscribe to our email newsletter to hear about new eBooks.