Young Joe Crowfoot was behind the bat, and though the balls came over the plate as if shot from a cannon, the Indian got them every time.
CHAPTER I.
PERSEVERANCE AND REPARTEE.

It was a time of feverish anxiety, for "exams" were on. Many a chap who had, not long since, been accustomed to idle away his time on the campus or in some lively resort of good fellows was missing from his usual haunts. He might have been found wildly grinning or tutoring in a desperate, sweat-dripping, heart-breaking effort to plug up in order to "get by." Men who had lingered in the soft, grateful shade of the old elms, now hustled, grim-faced and concerned, from study to classroom and from classroom back to study to buckle down at the hateful tasks. There were disquieting rumors in the air; Logan had owned up that he expected to "get it in the neck;" Hampstead had taken to drinking; Penfield was reporting "inside information" on the fact that there would be at least four catch questions sprung on the senior class; Bowcock had lost hope, and, willing to take another year, had managed to arrange for an important message calling him home—and so on.

But the most disquieting rumor of all was the one which more than hinted that Dick Merriwell, captain of the varsity, might be conditioned and put on probation, which would prevent him from pitching in the Harvard series.

A few who secretly hated Dick, the most popular man in college, rejoiced over this; but only a fool would dare to let his pleasure be publicly known. For such an unwise fellow would certainly find himself the most despised man in college.

With Merriwell missing from the slab—even with the new star, Darrell, doing the twirling—the Els had little real confidence that the blue would triumph over the crimson.

At last examinations were over, and the students settled back in relief or dread to await the reports.

Blessed Jones, looking like a mourner at a funeral, followed by Tommy Tucker, wearing the air of a martyr, dropped in upon Merriwell and found him lounging on his big Morris chair. Buckhart was out.

"Verily, verily," droned Jones, "he is much to be envied who contenteth his soul in peace in these parous times."
"Peace!" moaned Tucker. "I don't know what it means. The only taste I've had of it I got last night when I took that fall which made me unconscious for several hours."

"A fall?" exclaimed Dick, waving them to chairs. "I didn't hear about it. Where did you fall, Tommy?"

"I fell asleep," sighed the little chap, seating himself.

"I've not known what it was to close my eyes in peaceful slumber, lo, these many nights," said Jones, likewise sitting down.

Bigelow came in, puffing, with Claxton sauntering at his heels.

"Is there any one here who can swear with unlimited eloquence?" gurgled the fat fellow. "For if there is, I'd like to hire him to swear for me about half an hour. I'll bet four hundred dollars I got it in the neck. If my rank is more than sixty, I'll fall dead from joy."

"That reminds me," said Merriwell; "the last time I was in New York I saw a big crowd in front of one of those tremendous skyscrapers. I pushed my way through, inquiring what was the matter. Somebody told me a man had broken his neck. I asked what story he had fallen from. They replied that he didn't fall—just tried to see the top of the building."

"Foolish person!" murmured Tucker, lighting a cigar, and puffing at it savagely.

"Whew!" grunted Bigelow, blowing the smoke aside. "What brand is that?"

"It's called the 'Soldier Boy,'" answered Tommy.

"Huh!" grunted Bigelow. "I thought it belonged to the ranks."

"Don't use that word rank again, suh," pleaded Claxton. "It's sho'ly getting on my nerves."

Joe Cohen stuck his head into the room.

"What is it, a funeral?" he grinned.

"It will be—yours, if you come around here sniggering that fashion," snapped Tucker. "Come in and look hopeless. You know you're suffering the anguish of suspense."

"What's the use?" said Joe, closing the door behind him, and proceeding to find a seat on top of the study table. "The struggle is over. We'll have to take our medicine, whether it's bitter or sweet."

"At the club last night," said Tommy, "a lot of fellows were taking their medicine."

"You look as if you had raised Ned at the club," said Cohen.

"I did," sighed Tucker; "and the blame chump raised me back. We had a lively little debate."

"What was the subject?" inquired Dick.

"Whisky."

"Then it must have been an interesting topic, for doubtless the members were all full of the subject."

"He, he!" laughed Tommy mirthlessly. "Very funny—not. I tell you one of our members is a fine speaker—that man Tooksbury. He's a perfect star."

"Star!" cried Dick. "He's a regular moon. He becomes brighter the fuller he gets."

Tommy poised his cigar and stared hard at Merriwell.

"There's something in your remark, sir," he observed.

"There's usually something in Tooksbury," countered Dick.

"Will somebody please crack a smile?" pleaded Cohen. "Seems to me this scintillating wit is good enough to provoke a gentle ripple of mirth. That reminds me, too. I met a deaf and dumb man to-day, who had every joint of his fingers broken."

"Terrible!" muttered Jones. "How did it happen?"

"He had been cracking jokes on them," cried the young Hebrew, instantly putting up his fists in a defensive attitude.

The others all looked at him solemnly and sadly, with the exception of Merriwell, who seemed to perceive the humor of the situation and appreciate it far more than the humor which lay in the rather stale chestnuts which those solemn fellows were springing.

"Come, Tucker," he cried, "you look as if you had the toothache."

Tommy put his hand to his jaw.

"By Jove! I have," he said. "Didn't realize it before. I have got to see my dentist. He's a Cuban from Havana."

"A kind of Havana filler, eh?" smiled Merriwell.
The little chap gasped.  
"Haven't we suffered enough?" he moaned.  "I came here seeking consolation, and now I get things like that chucked at me."

"You're beginning to realize how it is, aren't you?" said Cohen.  "When you're feeling just right, you never spare others.  I'm surprised to see you looking like a man down in the ditch."

"You needn't be.  Just now I'm pretty low down because I'm blamed hard up."

"Hard up, eh?  Busted, what?"

"Busted wide open."

"How does that happen?  Haven't been speculating in stocks, have you?"

"You guessed it the very first time.  Needed a little extra cash, and tried the margin game in the market."

"Were you a bull or a bear?"

"Neither; I was an ass."

The manner in which Tucker made this confession finally brought a grin to the face of Bigelow.

"Queer," grunted Bouncer, "how long some people live before they find out just what they are.  By the way, anybody here know the time of the first financial transaction?"

"Let us have it, suh," urged Claxton.  "When was it?"

"Why, when Noah watered the stock in the ark," shorted the fat fellow, his sides shaking.

"Please—please don't, Blessed!" cried Merrivell, putting out a remonstrating hand toward Jones, who was looking wildly around the room—"don't kill him with a club or a chair or anything like that; use an ax."

"For your sake," said Blessed, "I won't mess up your rugs with his gore.  Despite the fact that the most of us are hard up, we must admire our great Napoleons of finance.  Now, for instance, wouldn't you like to shake Morgan's hand?"

"I'd rather pull his leg," said Tommy.  "Had to hock my watch yesterday.  When I took it to my uncle, he observed that the last time he let me have money on it it had a solid-gold case, while now the case was silver.  I acknowledged that his memory served him correctly, but reminded him that circumstances alter cases."

"I noticed lately that you've been looking a bit seedy," said Cohen.  "Suppose you've had to soak your new spring overcoat, too, for I see you're wearing that old-fashioned short coat."

"Oh, that's all right," said Tucker.  "It will be long enough before I can afford a new one.  Tailor came around to see me about that coat yesterday.  He has been coming around every few days lately.  Appeared to be sort of piqued and fretful the last time, and reminded me that time is money.  I told him I knew it, and I intended to pay him—in time.  Speaking about that watch of mine, I want to tell you a remarkable thing.  I dropped it in the washbowl the other day—bowl plumb full of water—and it never stopped running."

"Of course not," said Dick.  "It was used to being in soak."

"No," said Tommy, "I think the mainspring was dry."

Jones had to grin a bit—he couldn't help it.  This sort of persiflage was coming too fast for him to maintain his solemn demeanor.

"Mainspring of his watch takes after Tucker," he said.  "Why, Tommy has got so he doesn't dare use a towel on his face because it makes him dry."

"You're always dry," snapped Tucker.  "You're so dry that you're crusty."

"There was a wooden wedding on York Street last night, gentlemen," said Claxton.

"That so?" inquired Cohen.  "Who got married?"

"Two Poles," answered the Virginian.

"Regular back-fire vaudeville show, this is," laughed Dick.  "Nobody would have looked for such hilarious wit and humor when you fellows came prowling in like a band of mourners."

"By the way," said Bigelow, turning on Tucker, "do you know you're liable to get into trouble?  You've been going around telling lies about me."

"Oh, never mind," said Tommy; "don't let that disturb you.  When I begin telling the truth you'll have something to kick about."
"You've been telling that I smore," wheezed Bouncer.

"Well, you do."

"Huh! Do I? I'm sorry to hear it."

"So am I."

Joe Cohen was convulsed with laughter.

"By the way, Tucker," he said. "I thought you were in a peck of trouble a while ago. They reported you were engaged to a Midway dancer."

"I was," confessed Tommy.

"Oh, really?"

"Yes, but it fell through."

"What was the matter?"

"She wiggled out of it."

"Well, you were better off than the sea captain I read about in the paper this morning. He married an actress and she ran away from him."

"Oh," said Tucker, "he took her for a mate, but she was a skipper."

"Speaking about marriage," said Dick, "it's an old saying, you know, that married men have better halves."

"And the bachelors—" began Bigelow.

"Have better quarters," finished Dick.

"This is better than a circus," chuckled Bouncer.

"Last circus I went to they had a most intelligent animal—a reading pig. Now, did you ever see a reading pig in a circus, Merriwell?"

"Never; but I've seen a spelling bee in the country."

This time Jones actually laughed outright—and everybody looked shocked, for not one of them had ever before known him to laugh aloud.

"Excuse me," he entreated; "I suppose I'm a bit hysterical. The strain of examination must be too much for me. It affects fellows differently, you know. Now I've seen some men who were so thundering ugly—"

Bang!—the door flew open, and Brad Buckhart strode into the room, his face looking like a thundercloud.

CHAPTER II.

THE HOT-HEADED TEXAN.

The Texan glared around at them.

"Hello, hello!" chirped Tucker. "Here's a chap who must have been eating Indian meal. It's made him savage."

"Waugh!" exploded Brad. "What's this yere gathering, anyhow?"


"Consolation party," said Cohen.

"Well, you galoots ought to have some place where you can stay a part of the time without roosting around here."

"Verily, he is savage," murmured Jones.

"On the warpath all right," nodded Claxton. "He looks like a man who might commit a heinous crime."

"And then he would be sent to prison," said Tucker. "Give him spurs and long hair and chaps, and he would be a great hit in a dime museum. By the way, does anybody know the difference between the admission to a dime museum and the admission to prison?"

"I'll buy it," said Cohen. "What's the difference?"

"Oh, one is ten cents and the other is sentence."

"Rotten!" said Brad. "Have you been springing many of those, Gimlet?"

"Hey?" cried Tucker. "Gimlet? What makes you call me that?"

"Because you're such a bore," flung back the Texan, without the slightest symptom of a smile.

"Ho, ho, ho!" rumbled Bigelow, shaking with delight. "That's one right from the shoulder. Say, old Kicking Horse from the Big Range certainly can hand 'em out, can't he?"

"It would sure give me great pleasure to hand you out," said Brad. "You'll notice that I've left the door wide open."

"Huh!" grunted Bouncer, his merriment subsiding at once. "Well, I suppose that's a gentle hint to go."

"Maybe it's what you would call a gentle hint," murmured Claxton, as he strolled toward the door: "but as for me, I call it pretty broad. So-long, everybody."

"There's a gent," said Brad, as the Virginian dis-
appeared, "who certain has a plenty of good sense. You don't have to kick him out."

"Lo and behold, I believe he is threatening us," said Jones, beginning to back toward the door. "I don't propose to give him a chance at any remote portion of my anatomy."

"I don't know but I'll be slipping along," murmured Tucker. "When this bucking broncho gets into his present humor, it usually means fight. I was in a scrap last night. An empty banana hit me in the eye, but I didn't mind it much. I was always told to keep my eye peeled."

Cohen let himself down off the study table.

"Mr. Buckhart," he said, "I am shocked. I see you're in a quarrelsome mood, and a groundless quarrel always reminds me of wireless telegraphy, for it's practically words over nothing. Good day, sir."

In this manner the Texan swiftly cleared the room of the visitors. When all were gone, he closed the door, and returned to find Dick regarding him with a quizzical smile.

"What's happened to rile you, Brad?" Merriwell asked. "I hope you haven't flunked."

"Oh, I don't care a tinker's hoot about that, although I got a notice requesting me to call at the dean's office to-day."

"You did?"

"Sure."

"And have you been there?"

"Yes, I've been there. Perhaps you've never been up before the dean. I was let in to wait for him in an outside room. The door of his room happened to stand open, and I couldn't help hearing him talking with somebody in there. Didn't try to listen, but I just had to hear it. Say, his visitor was old Professor Pottle, the sneaking old--"

"Hold on, Brad. You're all riled up."

"You bet I am! You would have been if you had heard that thin-blooded old fish running you down."

"Running me down?"

"Yes, you."

"Why—why, Brad, I think you must be mistaken."

"Not a blame bit of it. Now, what have you ever done to Pot?"

"I've never done anything that I know of," answered Dick; "but I'm aware that Professor Pottle does not like me for some reason."

"He sure don't. Why, he was trying to soak you underhand and sneakish."

"Soak me? In what manner?"

"Well, you yourself have admitted to me that you didn't know as you would pass exams."

"I am doubtful," confessed Dick. "My sickness put me back in my studies."

"Old Pottle claims you never were very sick. He claims it was all a bluff. Says you've always been wasting your time at baseball or athletics, regardless of studies."

The warm color rose in Dick's face, and his dark eyes glowed with resentment.

"Did Professor Pottle say that to the dean?"

"He sure did."

"Well, it was unjust and untrue. I've never neglected my studies—never until forced to do so lately on account of my inability to keep up."

"But he claims you kept on your feet and chased up baseball a right long time while you were neither studying nor attending lectures. Know what that old snake-in-the-grass was trying to induce the dean to do? Well, he wanted you conditioned, put on probation, fixed so you couldn't play baseball—and you, the captain and mainstay of the nine! Say, my blood sure boiled. I wanted to take Pot by the woorie and squeeze him good and plenty."

"It's really astounding!" muttered Dick. "I don't see why one of the minor professors should take so much trouble to knock me to the dean."

"It's simply because he's a measly sneak!" fumed Buckhart, prancing up and down the room. "He is an old back number who hates baseball and out-of-door sports of any kind. If he could get his way, he would cut athletics out of every college in the country. He told the dean that your example and your influence were pernicious—that you led others to neglect studies, which accounted for the unusually low percentage made at the examinations. He went on a long tirade about such fellows as you being more vicious and dangerous than chaps who carouse and hit the pace."

TIP TOP WEEKLY.
"Apparently, he’s simply a crank," said Dick. "I've long known he was something of the sort, and I've never come in contact with him that he hasn't given me the fishy eye."

"Well, the old snoozer sure heard from me some."

"What do you mean, Brad? You didn't——"

"Didn't I? Say, I held on just as long as I could, then I waltzed right into the dean's office. I can't tell you what I said, for I was so blame mad that I didn't know myself."

"Brad!" cried Dick aghast. "What have you done?"

"Well, you bet I relieved my mind a whole lot. I had to let off steam, or I'd blown into a thousand pieces."

"You were crazy, Buckhart!" declared Merriwell, who was now on his feet—"plumb crazy!"

"Well, pretty near it," nodded the Texan. "I'll bet old Pottle never-before heard such a truthful description of himself."

By this time Merriwell was almost in a panic.

"What have you done? What have you done?" he kept repeating. "Don't you know what the consequences will be?"

"I didn't stop to bother about consequences any whatever. All I knew was that the old thin-blooded snoozer was defaming you."

"And on my account you've insulted Professor Pottle in the dean's office! Buckhart, you'll be expelled!"

"Mebbe," nodded Brad. "Anyhow, I reckon I'd been hung on a peg, for I didn't try to pass exams."

"You didn't?"

"No."

"Why not?"

"Well, you were saying you didn't expect to get by, and didn't really care if you had to take another year in college. I kind of made up my mind I'd be with you. I would have been, too, only for this slanderous old hypocrite who was backbiting you."

Dick sat down again, looking dismayed and helpless.

"You'll be expelled," he repeated; "and here we are going right up against Harvard! Good heavens, Brad! Don't you ever think of the consequences? Don't you ever look ahead? What can we do without you?"

The Texan scratched his head.

"I suppose I will get it good and plenty and in a hurry," he muttered; "but how was I to reckon on that while that man was knifing you in the back?"

"It's a calamity!" muttered Dick. "Oh, Brad, why couldn't you have stopped to consider? Why didn't you keep still and come to me? I don't believe Professor Pottle could have done me any harm with the dean. By Jove! Yale will get it in the neck now! Can't you realize what you've done? Why, you won't be here next year—you'll be expelled!"

"I suppose that's right, partner. I was reckoning on having another year in college with you; now I'll be booted out. Never mind, I stood up for you. I remember telling them that you was the biggest influence for good in the whole college. I told them something about your doing more by your example and influence to uplift the morals of the students than all the other forces in college combined."

"What did they do? What did they say?"

"Well, the dean choked me off after a while. He tried to stop me at the start. Finally, he actually took hold of me and pushed me toward the door. I reckon I knocked old Pottle dumb, for he just gasped and gurgled and spluttered. I didn't wait to see why the dean had sent for me. As soon as he pushed me out of the room, I piked it, and here I am."

Dick rose again, and stepped forward, laying both hands on the shoulders of his chum.

"Brad," he said, "you’re the finest, most loyal friend a man ever had. I appreciate it more than I can express in words. But I'm sorry—wretchedly sorry this thing happened."

CHAPTER III.

THE ONLY COURSE.

Troubled beyond words, Dick Merriwell walked the floor. Again and again Buckhart begged his chum to "squat and take it easy."

"'Tain't no use tearing things up over it now," said
the Texan. "What's done is done, and there isn't any chance to undo it."

"I doubt if this thing can be undone," admitted Dick; "but perhaps it might be patched up somehow."

"Patched up? How can it be?"

Dick shook his head.

"I don't know," he confessed. "If you had done almost anything else except talk saucy to a professor when——"

"The old sneak!" boiled the hot-blooded son of the plain once more. "I admit now that I made a blazing fool of myself, but if I do get it in the neck—which I sure will—I'm going to take another fall out of Uncle Pot."

"Take another fall?"

"You bet your boots."

"What do you mean?"

"I am going to meet up with that scrawny old pug again before I shake the dust of New Haven from my hoofs, and I'll curry him down from mane to fetlock."

"Brad!"

"What?"

"You don't mean you'll do him violence? You don't mean you'll put hands on him?"

"Oh, no," grinned Buckhart. "He's too old for that—his age saves him. But so help me, Davy Crockett, I'll give him a tongue trimming that he will remember to the last day of his life."

"You had better not. It won't do any good."

"Oh, yes, it will."

"How?"

"It will do me a heap of good. I'll be beyond his power then. He won't be able to do me any further damage, for I reckon he will hand me all that's coming without the slightest delay or reluctance."

"When the college hears of this there's going to be mourning," said Dick. "Every one will realize what your loss means to the nine."

"Oh, say, pard, I opine you can fill my place behind the pan all right. I'm not such-a-much, anyhow. You're the only gent who really thinks me some good."

"No, no, Brad; you're mistaken. You're inclined to underestimate your own value. You're too modest."

"Whoop!" grinned Buckhart. "Tell that to some of these gent's who think I'm a blowhard, will you? I know how they size me up, some of 'em. I know there are galoots around this old institution who reckon me a first-class hot-air artist."

"You do talk occasionally," nodded Dick; "but the fine thing about it is that you always back up your talk."

"That's natural; most Texans do so. Then, again, I inherit it from old man Buckhart. He's become more silent in later years, but there was a time when he had a way of announcing what he proposed to do—and then doing it. I suppose the governor will be plenty sore over this business."

"Do you think he will blame you much?"

"Not a bit when I tell him the facts. He knows you, pard, and he likes you a-plenty. He wouldn't have me keep still and listen to any one maligning you—nary time. Yes, he will be some sore, but he will feel sore toward the college. He never did care a great deal for Yale, you know; wanted me to go to Harvard. Now, I suppose if I get a slice of parchment, I'll have to yield and put in a year at Cambridge. Waugh! That will be punishment a-plenty—and then some."

Dick continued to pace the floor and meditate upon the situation. Finally, he plunged into the wardrobe, and brought forth his derby.

"Here, where you going?" cried Brad.

"For a walk."

"I'll pike along."

"No, I'm going alone."

"Eh? Oh, all right, if you don't want me——"Brad looked hurt, and Dick hastened to say:

"I have my reasons. I'll explain when I return."

He went to see the dean, and was relieved to find him in his office. For nearly half an hour Dick was closeted with the dean. When he came forth, there was something like a faint look of relief and hope upon his face.

Back at Durfee, he found Buckhart whistling rather
untunefully as he went about gathering up and assembling his personal belongings.

"What are you doing, Brad?"

"Making preparations for that swift kick that's coming. I was just thinking perhaps I'd resign some before I got the hoist."

"You can't. You know it wouldn't be accepted. You've got to stand by like a man. Texans don't run away."

"Well, I allow it isn't their custom of procedure," nodded Brad. "The greasers under old Santa Anna certainly found out as much when they bucked up against Crockett and Bowie and the rest of that bunch."

"You'll stand by your guns."

"All right, that goes."

"And maybe you won't be fired."

"Eh? Why—why, what do you mean? I—I—"

"I've been to see the dean."

"You've what?"

"Been to see the dean."

"Oh, say, pard, what made you do that?"

"It was the thing to do. You are in serious trouble."

"But it wasn't for you to get into the mess."

"Wasn't it?"

"No."

"I think it was. You got into the mess over me. You stood by me to your own serious harm, and now you can bet I'm going to stand by you and pull every rope I can to help you."

"What can you do? What did the dean say?"

"I'm not at liberty to repeat all he said, but you know the dean is advanced and modern and liberal in his ideas. He believes in proper athletics and healthy sports just as firmly as Professor Pottle disbelieves in them. He's a baseball enthusiast. He knows what it will mean—your loss to the nine."

"Look here, pard," said Brad slowly, "you're not telling me that there's any chance whatever for me to play it out on the nine, are you?"

Dick shook his head.

"No, Brad," he answered honestly, "I don't think there's any chance whatever of that."

"Then, what good did you do by your visit to the dean?"

"I apologized for you."

"I'm sure a plenty ashamed that I ever brought you down to that. But you certain were taking liberties, partner—I didn't ask you. If I had known what you meant to do, I'd roped you and trussed you up hand and hoof before I'd ever let you go there. You admit it was a waste of time."

"No, I don't. Listen, Brad, but don't repeat what I tell you. I am satisfied that in his secret heart the dean dislikes Timothy Pottle almost as much as you do. Nevertheless, he can't ignore your hot-headed act and your sauciness to Pot, who has demanded punishment for you."

"Of course; old Pot wouldn't lose a minute in demanding that."

"I called the dean's attention to your clean record in college. You've never been in any unpleasant scrapes; you've stood well in your classes; you haven't dissipated or hit the high places. These things are known to the faculty. Lots of fellows fancy they can go on here at college, year after year, living a fast life without the faculty ever becoming aware of it. As a rule, they are gregariously mistaken. They may cover up their tracks for a time—indeed, they may do this so successfully that only a little becomes known concerning their life and character. A college man in these days is not supposed to be a dish-watery chap; he's reckoned as a fellow with red blood in his veins. But there's a difference between clean fun, honest skylarking, and being sporty and dissipated and fast. Your record will help you."

"Huh! How much?"

"I don't know how much. It may save you from expulsion if you follow the only course left open to a man in your place who loves his alma mater."

"I'm some puzzled, partner," confessed the Texan.

"I don't know what you mean when you speak of the only course. Give it to me concise and clear."

"You must apologize to Pottle."

"Never—never in this world!" roared Brad.

"Then you'll be expelled."
CHAPTER IV.

DICK'S PERSUASIVE POWERS.

"What do you take me for?" snarled Brad. "Think I'm going to crawl around after that old fish and humble myself? Think I'm going to take back the truth—for that's what I handed him? I can't go to him and say I was mistaken; I wasn't. I can't get down on my marrow bones and snivel. Wow! Woosh! I'd rather be shot!"

"At one time," said Dick, "I really thought you were loyal to the core—loyal to the blue."

"I am—I sure am."

Dick shook his head.

"I'm afraid not."

"What's that?" rasped the Texan resentfully. "Are you going back on me? Do you mean to insinuate that I'm disloyal? Say, pard, this hurts me a-plenty."

There was no doubt about it, it did hurt him; he betrayed it in his face, his eyes and his tone of voice. Nevertheless, Dick was aware it would not do to recede one iota from the stand he had taken. If he were to handle his obstinate, hard-headed chum, he must be unyielding as iron.

"A man who really has the love of his college in his heart," said Dick, "will do anything that's not dishonorable for that college."

"Um—um!" mumbled Brad. "I suppose that's correct."

"He will sacrifice himself and his pride."

"Um—umm, mebbe so."

"It's pride that's stiffening your backbone now, Brad. Deep in your soul you know that expulsion from Yale is going to hurt you sorely."

"Yes, I reckon it will. It will leave a stain and a scar that I won't get over."

"Just so. And perhaps this calamity may be averted if you have the courage to crush your pride and apologize to Pottle."

"Oh, I can stand it," growled Brad.

"You're thinking of yourself; you're not thinking about Yale. Can Yale stand it?"

"Oh, I don't know. If I'm suspended I can't catch any more this season."

"There's another season coming. If you did not pass in your examinations—and you say you will not—think of next year. Then you may have your chance to redeem yourself, to heal this wound without a scar. And I want you to think of me, too."

"You? I sure did think of you. That's what led me——"

Brad stopped short, for somehow he was beginning to feel that there was something like selfishness in this repetition of the fact, even though it might be the plain truth.

"But think of me here in college another year—without you."

The Texan bent his head and scowled at the rug; any one might have fancied that inoffensive importation from Turkey merited his whole soul hatred.

"Think of me here at old Yale—and you in Cambridge!" Dick went on. "Think of me with the bunch gone—alone. Of course I'll have friends."


"But not like the old bunch, old man. There can never again be friends like these. We'll both make new friends for years to come, but we'll not find any who will step in and fill to completeness the places of the old ones. You know the saying about 'old friends, old wine,' and so forth; I'm not especially qualified to pass on the old wine part of it, but I feel dead sure there's deepest truth in the saying about old friends. You have deliberately flunked the exams in order to stay here in college with me one more year. Now I beg you, don't let your pride, your stiff-necked self-esteem, even though you may feel it justified, balk you in your design. Do you know how I felt when you told me you had messed exams in order to stick by me another year? You don't, Brad, and I can't tell you, for I haven't words to express it; but there was something stirred and swelled here in my heart that came near choking me. For a moment, although you were tearing around and boiling over with wrath at Pottle, I fancied I was going to get sloppy and behave like a girl. I wanted to hug you, Brad."

Was it possible that the Texan's square jaw quivered a bit? Was it possible that a faint mist crept into those clear, keen, far-sighted, range-born eyes?
Dick went on without giving his chum a chance to speak.

"I want you, Brad," he said quietly. "We'll keep these old rooms. They seem like home to me. We'll come back in the fall—come back eager and joyous over our return. From these same windows we will watch the leaves sift down, brown and bare, from the elms. We'll hear the fellows singing down at the fence. We'll see the snowflakes sifting over the campus. Here before the old grate we'll study and lounge and talk of the past and plan for the future. We'll have another year at the game on the diamond and the gridiron. Again and again our blood shall be stirred by the war songs and battle cries of Old Eli. You and I, Brad—you and I together! We'll——"

"Great horn spoon, let up, pard! What are you trying to do? Holy smoke! You'll have me blubbery in a minute."

Dick smiled, putting out his hand.

"What do you say, Brad?"

"Partner, I'd give my old boots, chaps, spurs, and a few other cherished trinkets to have it that way. You've won. I surrender."

CHAPTER V.

A MAN WITH A SECRET.

Holding Buckhart's sinewy hand in a firm grip, Dick said:

"Now let's have a complete understanding, Brad. Do you promise me that you'll apologize to Pottle?"

"Yes, I'll squeal—I'll play the meaching jackass. I'll go to him privately and tell him how blame sorry I am. I'll lie like a trooper."

"I think," said Dick, "you will have to apologize to him in the presence of the faculty."

"What? Wow! Whoop! I guess not!"

"You'll have to, I'm sure. He will demand it. He will demand more than that. But if you're wise and diplomatic, I feel certain the dean will use his influence to have you punished as lightly as possible. The whole matter will be hushed up, unless I'm mistaken, but you'll be suspended for a time."

"Get down on my narrow bones to Pot in the presence of the faculty!" muttered Brad. "The son of old man Buckhart groveling to a thin-blooded snake-in-the-grass! I'd face lynching just as cheerful. You hear me chirp."

"You'll not be compelled to get down on your narrow bones. It will be necessary for you to bear yourself with an air of contrition. It will be necessary, likewise, for you to express your apology in careful, well-chosen language, and never show for a moment by a look or sign that you're not sincere. If I can carry to the dean the assurance that you will do this, he will get busy in your behalf. Pottle will be choked off. He will be prevented from tattling or making an uproar over it."

"I don't know as I can do it, partner. I am afraid my flow of language will be some deficient."

"I'll attend to that. Together we'll dope out your apology, and you'll get it by heart.""Sort of learn my little speech, eh? Well, I've promised."

"And now," said Dick, once more catching up his hat, "it's me back to see the dean again."

Early the following day Brad was summoned before the faculty and made his apology to Professor Pottle.

Dick waited anxiously for the reappearance of his chum. When he saw Brad returning across the campus he hastened to meet him.

"Well," questioned Merriwell, his heart sinking at the look of dejection on the Texan's face, "what is it? Not expulsion?"

"No," answered Brad. "You figured it out right—suspension."

The captain of the nine slipped his arm through Buckhart's, and they walked toward Durfee.

"You couldn't look for anything else."

"Oh, I didn't. I allow I'm lucky to get off that easy. All the same, I'm chewing over it inside of me. If you had been there to hear old Pottle and to see how he tried to nag me into another outbreak—well, I reckon you'd felt like choking him. I did. My paws itched to squeeze his woolly. But say, you should
have seen me! Remembering all your tips and instructions, I certainly was the picture of humble contrition. I got a beautiful lecture from the dean. Say, that old boy is all right. He handed it to me straight from the shoulder, but all the time I somehow felt that away in one corner of his heart there was a little bit of sympathy hidden, and it helped pull me through and keep me in line."

"The dean is a man—as fine a man as ever filled such a position."

"How do you suppose old man Pottle ever got into the outfit?"

"I presume his kind are to be found in almost every college. He really doesn't cut much ice. If he had, you would not have escaped with mere suspension, old fellow."

Somehow it became known that very day that Buckhart was suspended. The consternation which this created was most profound. No one seemed able to say just why the Texan had been punished in this manner, and those who sought information from him obtained very little satisfaction.

Once more the loyal Els who had been again buoyed by hope over Merriwell's rapid recovery from illness were cast down in the deepest depths of despair. For what could the nine do against Harvard without their star backstop? It was universally conceded that Buckhart's work behind the bat was of the greatest assistance to Merriwell in the box.

Hugo Carlin and Edgar Brighton, two fellows who believed they had the best of reasons for disliking Merriwell and his set, heard the report and hastened to carry it to one of their ilk, Dunbar Clay.

They found Clay in his rooms half reclining on a big Morris chair with the windows tightly closed, although the day was most balmy and delightful.

"Whew!" breathed Brighton, sniffing the stuffy air of that close room. "What a peculiar odor. Say, old man, why don't you open your windows?"

"Yes, for the love of goodness open up and let a little fresh air in here," said Brighton, crossing the room and opening a window wide.

Clay looked at them dully, sleepily.

"'Lo," he said, somewhat thickly. "You spoiled a delightful dream."

He was an unhealthy-looking chap, with a waxen pale face and a thin hand which was growing almost transparent.

"What do you mean by moping around in your den on such a day as this?" cried Brighton. "You should be out. You're not grinding."

"Oh, no," said Clay, with a queer, far-away smile; "no need of that now. No use; I couldn't make port under full sail. The summer sea is beautiful, isn't it? When the sunshine ripples on it and the blue islands rise in the distance—"

"What in blazes are you talking about?" growled Carlin, staring at Clay wonderingly. "Any one would think you were still dreaming. Say, you dream too much, that's what's the matter with you."

"Your voice is very harsh, Hugo. I don't like your voice. I have heard the voices of sirens, soft and low and musical."

"It wasn't an automobile siren," grinned Brighton. "Nothing soft and musical about them. Wake up, Clay. Come out of it. Have you heard the news?"

"I should have locked my door," said Clay.

"And kept us out, eh—us, your friends? Say, you'll become a regular hermit by and by. Have you heard the news? You should hear it. You wouldn't be so indifferent if you knew the gossip of the college."

Clay seemed to rouse himself with an effort.

"Oh, hello, fellows," he said. "When did you come in?"

Carlin and Brighton exchanged puzzled glances.

"Why, we came in just now. You spoke to us," said Hugo. "Are you ill, old man?"

"Never was better in my life," assured Clay. "You know I have daydreams sometimes. Pass me the cigarettes, Brighton, please. They are there on the table."

Brighton passed them.

"Yale has got it in the neck after all," he said. "Harvard will have a snap."

Clay produced a handsome match safe and lighted a cigarette.

"Help yourselves," he invited. "Oh, you don't
smoke 'em much, do you? I forgot. What are you talking about, anyhow?"
"You can't guess," grinned Carlin.
"Then I won't try. Take your time about telling me."
"Buckhart's suspended," blurted Brighton. "What do you think of that?"
"Suspended? Suspended? You mean—what do you mean?"
"He's suspended, I tell you—suspended by the faculty. He can't catch for the nine in the Harvard games."
"Really?" exclaimed Clay, beginning to show a little animation. "What has he done to be suspended?"
"Nobody knows. We couldn't find out. He won't tell himself, and the faculty haven't published their reasons."
"Rather singular, don't you think?"
"Deuced singular," agreed Brighton. "It's got us guessing. Nevertheless, it's a cold fact, and the whole college is up by the ears. Without Buckhart behind the bat, Merriwell can't be at his best on the slab. Harvard's pitcher, Sparkfair, is a wiz beyond doubt. The fellow who bets his long green on the crimson this year will rake in some easy money."
"But the suckers won't be as thick as usual."
"There are always plenty of suckers," said Carlin. "Lots of chumps bet on their college team out of principle, even when they know the chances are against them. Then there are the old grads and the outsiders who think Yale must be it all the time. There will be lots of them in Boston town."
"And it's us for Boston town, Hugo and I," said Brighton. "We're going to rake up all the loose coin we can and make a killing to wind up the term with. What do you say, Clay—coming along with us?"
"Well, I—I don't know. Merriwell's chum, eh? That must hit Merriwell pretty hard. I'm glad of it. Now if that fellow Darrell could only get his! Say, wouldn't I like to hand it to him!"
"I don't just understand why it is you hate Darrell so bitterly, unless it's because he's friendly with Merriwell, too," said Brighton. "You've never stated your reasons for such intense feeling toward him."
"Haven't I? Well, perhaps not. I have my reasons—good reasons. Never mind what they are, fellows. No use to talk these things over. Why, yes, if I can arrange it, I'll go along with you."
"Then," said Carlin, "we'll make application for rooms in the Brunswick. We can room together in one suite."
"We can have connecting rooms," said Clay; "but you know my peculiarity—I must have my privacy."
"Oh, that's all right. What an old shellfish you're getting to be, Clay! You keep pulling off by yourself more and more, and you act like a man with a secret. I reckon we're your best friends, but you have us guessing sometimes."

CHAPTER VI.

DOWN ON HIS LUCK.

Those were feverish days. In athletic circles the games with Harvard and the race on the Thames became practically the entire topic of conversation. But class day and graduation approached. Anxious papas and mammas were distressing or amusing their hopefuls with many messages. Some parents had even made their appearance in New Haven. Old grads who had found it possible to return on class day were wiring and phoning the hotels for accommodations. There was now little loafing beneath the campus elms. Even the freshmen caught the spirit of eagerness, anxiety and bustle. Another term was swiftly approaching its close. Soon another class of world conquerors would be let loose to revolutionize modern business methods.

But oh, there was agony and apprehension over the things Harvard might do to Yale on the diamond. Not even the intense yearning to wipe out the misfortunes of recent years upon the water was as strong and soul disturbing as the fear of defeat at baseball. Not even the knowledge that Buckhart's position would be filled by Joe Crowfoot, the remarkable young Indian who had demonstrated that he was a marvelous utility man by playing various positions on the nine, could bring complete relief and reassurance.

"He never can handle Merriwell's pitching as Buckhart did," declared the wise ones; "and with Merri-
well still a bit weakened from his recent illness, it needs a wizard behind the bat."

Even the members of the team were not wholly optimistic, although they made a great pretense of being so. They saw Dick and Joe working together each day, with a coach zealously watching Merriwell, lest he should overdo. And while they prayed for the best, apprehension yet lingered in their hearts.

At last the day came for the team to leave, and it was given the usual rousing send-off. In fact, it seemed as if the students combined to make that send-off somewhat more enthusiastic than usual. A tremendous throng of cheering, shouting fellows escorted the team to the station and made the smoky dome resound with their yells until the train bore the young warriors away.

Accommodations for the players had been obtained in Boston at the Brunswick.

Here, likewise, Carlin, Clay and Brighton arrived with plenty of time before them to "catch suckers." They had secured two connecting rooms, one of which was given over entirely to the use of Clay, who retained the key to the door.

Brighton went forth upon an angling expedition at his earliest convenience. An hour later he returned exultant, accompanied by Carlin, whom he had picked up in the office.

They found the door between their room and that of Clay closed and locked. After they had rapped upon it a few minutes and called to their companion, it was opened by him.

"Well, say, why are you moping here, old man?" cried Brighton, striding in.

Clay returned to the easy-chair which he had secured for his use by request after registering. He was wearing a dressing gown. The windows of the room were closed.

"I was just doing a little thinking," he murmured, sinking on the chair. "You disturbed a reverie."

Carlin flung open a window.

"I'd like to know what kind of perfume you use," he growled. "Don't like it. It has an odd, sickening odor."

"You're always growling, Carlin," said Clay. "You ought to be out looking for good things," chuckled Brighton. "I found one."

"Did you?"

"Yes."

"What sort of a good thing?"

"Oh, an easy, enthusiastic chump, who actually offered odds on Yale. What do you know about that?"

"What did you do?"

"What did I do? Great sacred codfish! I grabbed him and held on, ready to fight if any one tried to take him away from me. He didn't have much coin; had a great deal more tongue. Nevertheless, I got a little wager just the same."

"How much?"

"He had thirty planks in his jeans. I bet twenty against 'em that Harvard would win. Easy money —well, say, you bet!"

"I thought you came over to Boston on the make, Clay," said Carlin, pushing aside the water pitcher and half seating himself on the top of the table, which creaked beneath his weight.

"I did."

"Well, you'll never make anything denning up in your room. I'm surprised, but there's plenty of even money to be had. Supposed the fishes would be wary."

"Get out your tackle, Clay, old man," cried Brighton, lighting a cigar and walking up and down. "All you need is a silver hook."

"Yes," nodded Clay, as if making a confession, "that's what I need."

His friends looked at him inquiringly.

"What you need?" said Carlin. "Why, you—you always have plenty of mazuma. You've lived rather like a prince."

"I've lived like a gentleman's son," said Clay. "I've accumulated a few nice fat debts, and, while doing so, I've prepared vials of wrath which are soon to be spilled upon my head."

"I don't think I get you," said Brighton.

"Well, it became necessary to render my accounts. The old man has seen them. I haven't heard that he has been stricken with apoplexy, but I have heard that
he has risen, girded up his loins, and mounted his high horse. He's sore, fellows—devilish sore. Why, I simply asked him for two hundred or so to tide me through, and he sent me—a sizzling hot communication. No money."

"Oh, is that it?" cried Brighton.

"There was a time," continued Clay unemotionally, "when I had a string of easy ones ready to be plucked. They got wary, however, with the loss of a few feathers. Recently I couldn't seem to get up a poker game if I tried."

"Huh!" grunted Brighton. "Hugo and I formerly contributed to your cash account, but we found we couldn't afford to play poker with you. You had too much luck."

The emphasis he placed on that final word was extremely significant.

Clay lifted a thin, protesting hand.

"I hope you don't suspect me of cheating my friends," he said gently. "You know I wouldn't do that."

"Oh, of course not," put in Brighton quickly.

"But in poker friendship ceases," said Carlin.

"It may with some, but not with me," declared Clay.

"I was lucky at cards, but lately fortune has turned against me in every way. I'm up against it, fellows."

"Oh, your old man will fix things all right, I'm sure," said Brighton cheerfully. "He can do it."

"He can do it if he will," nodded Clay.

"If he will!" exclaimed Carlin. "How is he going to help it? He can't squirm out of it."

"But that doesn't help me at present, you know. Nevertheless, I am expecting a little ready cash any time. It ought to reach me soon enough for me to get a few bets."

"If I was flush—" began Brighton.

"Oh, yes, I know how it is. You fellows would help me out if you had plenty of ready money, but you need all you have at present."

"Precisely."

"Let it go at that. If I get this money I'm expecting, I'll get into the game and make a killing, all right. If I don't get it—well, never mind."

His indifference was remarkable; it caused Carlin and Brighton to exchange looks.

Suddenly Brighton strode forward and seized Clay by the shoulder.

"Come on," he cried. "Get up and get outdoors. Why, your blood scarcely circulates in your veins. There's something the matter with you."

"Please don't," requested the man in the dressing gown. "You're extremely rough and boisterous, Edgar; you've been drinking again."

"Oh, just a few to make me feel good and frisky, that's all."

"A bad habit, old chap—a very bad habit. It will be your undoing if you're not careful. You know how such habits creep on a fellow little by little until finally they get such a hold upon him that he can't shake them. He isn't aware of his danger until it's too late."

"Are you going to turn preacher—you?"

"Perhaps he's speaking from experience," grinned Carlin.

"Now what bad habit would you fancy I had?" questioned Clay.

"Well, for one thing, you've got the habit of loafing around indoors and closing your windows. You don't take enough exercise to keep yourself alive. You never were hot on it, but there was a time when you got out occasionally while old Sol was in the heavens. Now you only seem to wake up after nightfall—and then you don't get real wide awake and frisky."

"Some men take too much exercise. In these times it seems as if people have gone dotty over exercise and athletics. I'm firmly convinced that in many cases it's carried to excess. Look at the records. There are many known instances of men who have been great football players or have rowed on their crew and afterward went to pieces. There was Morefield of Harvard, stroke for his crew in 'umpity three; last year, although apparently in perfect health, he suddenly dropped dead at the age of twenty-eight. Doctors said he had hurt his heart rowing; he never recovered from it."

"Well, you'll never hurt your heart or your legs by
exercise,” said Brighton in disgust. “Won’t you come out?”

“Not now. Please let me alone, fellows, to figure matters over a while longer. This room is quiet; I like to be quiet. If you don’t mind, you might close the door when you leave.”

Carlin got off the table.

“Come on, Edgar,” he said; “let’s leave the old crab in his shell.”

He marched back into the other room, and Brighton followed. A few moments later they heard the key softly turned in the lock.

CHAPTER VII.

THE DANGER.

“What’s the matter?” said Brighton, turning on Carlin.

“With him?”

“Yes.”

“You tell me.”

“You can’t guess?”

“Not I.”

“There’s something wrong.”

“No doubt about it.”

“Never saw such a change in a man. It hasn’t come merely because he’s hard up.”

“I don’t think so myself. It has been coming on for some time. I’ve noticed it gradually creeping over him.”

“So have I. Why, he’s half dead. Every time he holds up a hand I shiver. Makes me think of the hand of a corpse.”

Brighton paced twice the length of the room and then faced his companion again.

“Carlin, there’s something wearing down that man. It’s killing him. Is it his conscience?”

Hugo laughed.

“Not much. His conscience never would do that. He isn’t built that way.”

“Do you notice he’s always making cracks about bad habits and how they fix themselves on a man?”

“I’ve noticed.”

“At every excuse for it he springs that line of talk.”

“Well?

“Men who have had experience in such things usually talk about them.”

“You’ve got an idea that he is the victim of some habit that is doing him up?”

“Some bad habit that is ruining his health—that’s slowly killing him.”

“Cigarettes?”

“No, not cigarettes.”

“But he smokes stacks of ‘em.”

“Nevertheless, cigarettes don’t have that effect on a victim. They make him thin and nervous, but Clay doesn’t seem so very nervous.”

“At times he is. Oh, yes, he’s nervous sometimes. I’ve seen him in a state of nerves that was almost pitiful.”

“And then you’ve seen him so placid and languid and lifeless and indifferent that he didn’t seem to have any nerves at all.”

“Yes.”

“Well, think it over. What was the cause of that nervousness? and why does he have those spells of languor? Why does he stay around in his closed room and dream? Sometimes when you arouse him from one of those midday reveries he is actually stupid. His mind rambles, and he talks queerly. Sometimes he can’t seem to keep track of conversation in which he is taking part. I’ve known him to jump from one subject to another, apparently forgetting in ten seconds what he had just been saying.”

“I’ve observed the same.”

“That man is on the verge of a mental, as well as a physical, breakdown. He needs a doctor.”

“Why don’t you propose it to him?”

“I have.”

“And he said—what?”

“He sneered at me. All the same, occasionally he has hallucinations that he’s beset by all the ills to which flesh is heir. He has fancied himself the victim of heart disease, consumption——”

“Perhaps he has consumption. Perhaps that’s what it is.”

“No. You never heard him cough in your life.”
"Oh, but a cough does not always accompany that disease."

"It's not consumption, old chap; it's something fully as bad, but a great deal more mysterious. We may as well speak frankly, now that we're talking about him. I know we've both wondered over him a great deal, although we've refrained from discussing the subject. If Dunbar Clay doesn't take a brace, he won't last a year. Inside of a year's time he will be under the daisies."

Carlin now lighted up a cigar, at which he chewed and puffed. His brows were wrinkled in a frown.

"It's right that he often speaks of a man's bad habits getting a grip on him and being mighty hard to shake. Do you suppose he has some secret practice of which we know nothing? Do you suppose that he is a—"

"A what?" breathed Brighton eagerly. "You may as well say it. It's on the end of your tongue."

'A user of dope?"

'A drug fiend, eh?"

'Yes."

'Well, I can't say. I've thought of it. But it's mighty queer we've never caught him at it."

'Is it queer? Persons who acquire such habits become secretive and crafty. They realize the shame and disgrace of it, and they keep the secret guarded as faithfully as possible."

'That's true, I presume."

'Look here, you know how many times lately we've found him moping in a close room?"

'Yes."

'And you know how that room has smelled. It has had a peculiar odor. The air has been almost nauseating to me. Let me stay in that room two minutes without opening the windows or letting in fresh air, and I feel a bit dizzy."

'What do you make of it?"

'He is using dope of some sort, I'm convinced."

'It's a tough thing to think of. If he has permitted such a habit to get a hold on him, there's only one salvation for him."

'There may be none."

"The truth must be known by his friends—by those who take a personal, intimate interest in him. He must be placed in an institution where he can be restrained. He must be guarded and doctored. If this is not done soon—and our suspicions are correct—he's a gofer."

'Why, I should think he would realize it."

'They never do."

'I should think he would see the habit growing on him, getting a firmer and more deadly grip with each day. I should think it would fill him with the utmost terror. I should think he would seek some method of breaking away from it."

'The drug fiend never seems to realize that he hasn't the will power to break off his habit. He's always telling himself that he's going to do so soon. Perhaps he tries to cut down the dose. But after a certain period has been reached that is impossible—it takes the full dose to produce the effect, and gradually it requires more and more. The minute the victim tries to use a smaller dose he finds himself inexpressibly wretched; he realizes that he might as well not have taken any at all. But without any he's in such a condition of breakdown and distress that his sufferings are most acute. Did you ever read DeQuincy's 'Confessions of an Opium Eater?'"

'No."

'Well, it's worth reading, in order that one may realize the terrible danger of meddling with drugs. DeQuincy tried to conquer the habit, and more than once he thought he had. At last, however, he became reckless in his practice. He didn't care who knew about it. He even wrote praises of the joys of opium. But the stuff made him—a natural genius—a vacillating, irresponsible, useless wreck. Under the influence of some drugs the user feels strong in body and mind. It gives him the impression of quickened mental powers and great superiority over his fellows. I've seen such symptoms in Clay. He regards himself occasionally as mentally the superior of any man he knows. He seems to fancy that his mind is capable of grasping and solving the greatest problems of the world. Yes, we've hit it; he's a dope fiend."

For a few moments both were silent. Then Brighton exclaimed:
"It's horrible—by Jove, it's horrible! Say, Carlin, I'm frightened. He's always been rapping me about drinking. He has told me it would be my ruin, and he has spoken with an air of conviction and authority which made him seem like one who knew from experience that his words were true. Great Scott! you don't suppose I'm a booser, do you?—You don't suppose— Oh, rot!"

Carlin shrugged his thick shoulders.

"You drink pretty regularly, don't you, old fel?"

"Oh, I take my bitters right along every day, but I'm no lusher—I don't go on sprees and get laid out."

"I take a drink sometimes," nodded Carlin; "but I've heard it's worse for a man to drink regularly than it is for him to get jagged occasionally. The steady drinker forms a habit that gets a hold on him, just the same as drugs get a hold on the persistent user of them."

"Gee!" breathed Brighton; "I believe I'll go on the sprinkler. I wonder if I can? Oh, pshaw! of course I can!"

"Are you sure?"

"Say, if I thought I couldn't I'd be disgusted with myself, all right. I've never intended to become a drinking man, but you know how a fellow gets into the habit. He knows a lot of chaps who are jolly good fellows, and he falls in with them every day. There's nothing more sociable than hobnobbing over a glass. Then a few drinks gives a man that feeling of intense vitality and clears the cobwebs from his brain."

"Just like drugs," said Carlin, tapping the palm of his left hand with the index finger of his right. "They do the same thing in a more intensified degree. Drinking has ruined more men than dope."

"Oh, well, that's because so many drink."

"Of course. If it was lawful to sell dope in its various forms, just as booze is sold, and there was no greater public stigma attached to the use of drugs, the disaster and ruin that would follow would cause the downfall of nations."

"Well, I'm going to quit," declared Brighton grimly. "I've made up my mind to that."

"When? Now?"

"Oh—oh, perhaps not to-day; perhaps not until after this little trip is over. You know we'll be around in bars where there will be lots of fellows who know us, and it will look rather queer if I refuse to take a drink now and then when invited. But I'll knock off when we get back to New Haven."

In this manner he temporized, betraying his weakness by putting off the time when he would abandon the dangerous practice. He was the sort of a man to do this again and again. He lacked courage, resolution and stamina which leads a man who has fallen into bad habits to turn his face squarely about and shun temptation forever more.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE STOLEN SCARF PIN.

Dick, having just left his room, was rushing along the corridor of the Brunswick when a man stepped out through an open door and grabbed him.

"I say, Merriwell!"

"Oh, Hazelton!" exclaimed the Yale captain, recognizing Prince Hazelton, the son of a wealthy New York broker.

"Excuse me, old man," said Hazelton; "I heard you running, and I thought you might be some one else. Stepped out and grabbed you before I saw who you were. I've—I've lost something."

"Lost something?"

"Yes; my scarf pin."

Now Merriwell had more than once noticed Hazelton's scarf pin, a ruby set around with diamonds. It was a pin of great value beyond question.

"How did you lose it?" asked Dick.

"Don't know for sure, but I have an idea it was swiped from my room. Met some fellows downstairs a short time ago, and one of them—a particular friend of mine—mentioned that my pin was not in my tie. I felt for it. It was gone. Then I decided I had left it in my room here. I came up to see, feeling sure I would find it all right."

"And you didn't find it?"

"No; it was gone."
“Chambermaid, perhaps,” suggested Dick in a low tone.

“Perhaps,” nodded Hazelton; “but I’m not sure about it. I did a very careless thing. I went out without locking my door.”

“By Jove! that was careless.”

“But I didn’t suppose I had left anything of particular value lying around loose in the room.”

“Perhaps it was taken out of your tie,” suggested Dick. “A fellow hates to feel that he has been touched, but there are plenty of slick-fingered crooks who can swipe scarf pins and——”

“No,” said Hazelton, “I always wore a safety clip on it. It was too valuable to take the chance of having it pinched in crowded places, and so I had it fixed in such a manner that a man would have been compelled to pull my necktie half off in order to get it. I left it in the room, and somebody lifted it. If I had locked the door, I could feel pretty certain that it was one of the hotel employees. As it is, it may have been anybody. I am going down to the desk and report.”

“I’m very sorry, Hazelton,” said Dick, “but I hope you didn’t think——”

Hazelton laughed.

“I had just made sure the pin was gone when I heard you scudding through the corridor,” he said. “Didn’t know but it might be a bellboy, who had hidden and was making his getaway. Oh, no, Merriwell, don’t you worry.”

Two hours later Dick, having been out to a sporting-goods store to purchase a leather wrist strap, started to return to the hotel by making a short cut. Now the streets of Boston wander round and round in such an erratic manner that one who is not thoroughly familiar with them soon loses his bearings. Those who are familiar can make all sorts of short cuts through byways and alleys, but the stranger who attempts this is almost certain to become sadly muddled. Not only did Dick become muddled, but, to his surprise and shame, he got completely turned around. Had such a thing happened in the mountains or the forests, he would have felt inexpressibly mortified and humiliated. Now, however, after his first sense of dismay, he laughed. Then, instead of asking directions, he doggedly set about finding the right course. His footsteps led him into a somewhat disreputable part of the town.

Suddenly he paused and sidestepped into a doorway.

He had caught a glimpse of some one a short distance ahead, and that brief glance was enough to make him instantly decide he himself did not wish to be seen.

The person he had observed was Dunbar Clay.

In itself it was somewhat remarkable that Clay should be wandering in this part of the city; but at this moment the Yale student was talking earnestly with a most disreputable-looking young man—a fellow who looked like a tough.

“Now, what does that mean?” thought Merriwell. “Why is Clay chinning with such a customer?”

He peered forth with caution, and saw Clay hastily glance around as if to make sure he was not watched. Then something passed swiftly from the Yale man’s hand to that of his shabby companion.

“A beggar, perhaps,” thought Dick—“a beggar giving him the touch.”

But instantly he decided that this was not the case, for the manner in which Clay had handed that object over, whatever it was, was not the manner of a man who gives a panhandler a dime or a quarter. It was a sly, secretive, guilty movement; and again Clay looked around, as if fearing he might be watched.

“Something crooked,” Merriwell decided.

A moment later he saw Clay turn and walk away with unusual haste, disappearing round a corner.

The man’s disreputable-appearing companion came slouching along the street and passed Dick.

“I’ll follow you,” decided the Yale captain. “I know where to find Mr. Clay when I want him.”

Ten minutes later, Merriwell saw the man descend some steps into a basement pawnshop.

A policeman came sauntering along.

“Officer,” said Dick quickly, “I wish you would do me a favor. I believe I’m on track of stolen property,
If it’s not taking you off your beat, would you mind following me into that pawnshop? Keep a little distance behind me, and give me a chance.”

The policeman, after sizing Dick up, agreed to this, and the Yale man made haste to reach the pawnshop and slip soft-footed down the steps. The door had not been tightly closed, and Merriwell pushed it open, stepping in with the same silent tread.

Two men were leaning over a dirty counter, one behind it, one in front. Their heads were close together, and they were looking at something. Dick was at the young tough’s back ere either of them became aware of his presence. Over the fellow’s shoulder he saw what he had more than half expected he might see—Hazleton’s scarf pin!

Quick as a flash, Dick reached over both shoulders of the man, and grabbed his wrists. There was a cry and a struggle, but the fellow was helpless in the grasp of the Yale athlete.

The policeman came hurrying in.

“Got him,” cried Dick exultantly—“got him with the goods! Look out, officer! He has dropped it—that scarf pin on the floor.”

The policeman picked it up.

Behind the counter the old pawnbroker was spluttering in great agitation.

“Vot iss it?” he cried. “Vot iss der matter?”

The officer collared the man Dick had grabbed.

“You’re bound to get into trouble, Cohen,” he said to the Jew, “if you continue to receive stolen goods.”

“So hellup me Moses, I didt not know——”

“Oh, of course not!” sneered the policeman. “That’s always the excuse; but it won’t go sometimes. I’ve got him, young man. You’ll come along to the station house, eh? It’s your scarf pin, is it?”

“Not mine, but a friend’s,” said Dick. “It was stolen out of his room at the Brunswick Hotel today.”

“Well, you’d better come along to the station just the same.”

“All right, I will.”

The captive had ceased to resist. His face wore a sullen, dejected expression. He offered no explanation.

At the police station Merriwell told his story, and the prisoner, after standing a crossfire of questions, was locked up. Ere they took him away, however, he spoke a few words to Dick.

“I’m a Yale man,” he said. “Oh, don’t look surprised—I am an old grad. Booze put me down to this. But I want to tell you something, and it’s on the level, though you may not believe it. I didn’t know that scarf pin was stolen.”

“You can tell that to the judge,” said the sergeant.

“I will,” was the reply. “Maybe it won’t do me any good, but I’ll tell him just the same. Look here, Dick Merriwell”—Dick had given his name to the sergeant—“I want you to take a message for me. I want you to tell Mr. Dunbar Clay that I’m pinched. Will you?”

“Indeed, I will,” said Dick. “Perhaps you’re not lying; perhaps you didn’t know that scarf pin was stolen.”

The sergeant grinned doubtfully.

“It’s a ten-to-one shot he knew all about it, young man,” he said, as he waved his hand for the prisoner to be led away. “Who is this Dunbar Clay he speaks of?”

“A Yale man who is stopping at the Brunswick.”

“What connection is there between them?”

“I cannot answer that question, sir.”

“Bring him back, Murphy,” cried the sergeant, as the escort was about to disappear with the prisoner. “I have a word more for him.”

When the unfortunate fellow was again facing the desk, the sergeant once more questioned him savagely, demanding to know how the scarf pin came to be in his possession. The effort to learn the truth was again ineffectual, however, for the man shut his lips and refused to answer.

“You’ll get some of that taken out of you,” rasped the sergeant. “All right, Murphy; lock him up.”

“Don’t forget to tell Dunbar Clay, Merriwell,” called the prisoner over his shoulder as he was hustled away.
CHAPTER IX.
FALLEN TO THE DEPTHS.

Dick found Hazelton with a bunch of his friends in the café of the Brunswick. At Merriwell’s request for a private word with him, the man excused himself and followed the Yale captain aside.

"I’ve found it," said Dick.

"You have—what?"

"I’ve found your scarf pin."

"Really?"

Hazelton was filled with wonderment.

"Yes, really."

"Where did you find it?"

"On Green Street."

"Green Street?"

"In the West End."

"On Green Street?" repeated Hazelton, puckering his brows a bit. "Well, now, I must say that’s rather remarkable. How did it wander over there?"

"I found it in a pawnbroker’s shop," explained Merriwell.

Hazelton frowned still more.

"Remarkable! So some one soaked my pin, did they?"

"No."

"No? Why, you said——"

"That I found it in a pawnbroker’s shop. It had not been pledged."

The rightful owner of the stolen pin intensified the piercing look he was giving Merriwell.

"If it had not been pledged," he said, "I don’t understand how you could find it in a pawnshop."

"I followed the man who had it into the shop and nabbed him with the goods."

"Remarkable!" exclaimed Hazelton once more.

"You’ve got me guessing a bit, old chap."

"The man who had the pin," continued Merriwell, "claims to be an old Yale grad."

"Still more remarkable."

"To-day, however, he is down and out, a whisky wreck. He claims that his name is Carl Driggs."

"Driggs? Never heard of him."

"No more have I. He had taken the pin into the shop to pawn it. I caught him just in time."

"And the pin—you have it?"

"No."

"Why, I—I thought perhaps——"

"Feeling satisfied that I might be on the track of your stolen property, Hazelton, I asked a policeman to follow me into the pawnshop. He did so, and Driggs is now locked up. Your pin is in the hands of the police at the station house."

"Absolutely amazing!" breathed Hazelton. "Look here, Merriwell, what sort of a man are you? Two hours or so ago I discover I have lost a valuable piece of jewelry. I tell you about it, and now you bring me the staggering information that you have found my property and nabbed the thief. Talk about Sherlock Holmes and Arsène Lupin—you’ve got them both trimmed, my boy."

Dick laughed.

"I’m not dead sure," he said, "that the man who was trying to hock your property is a thief."

"Eh? Come again, please. Why, he had it, didn’t he? You say you nabbed him with the goods."

"He had it, but he swears he didn’t steal it."

"Oh, of course; that’s the most natural thing in the world."

"Can you imagine a ragged, disreputable, whisky-soaked fellow could enter this hotel and steal anything from one of the rooms?"

Hazelton meditated a moment, and then shook his head.

"I can’t," he admitted.

"That was not the way in which Driggs obtained possession of the pin. It was given him by another party."

"Ah! Then he is an accomplice."

"He declares he did not know it had been stolen. He may be lying. Such a man would not be above lying, possibly."

"I should say not, judging by your description of him."

"Of course I know the pin is yours—I recognized it instantly. In order to recover it, however, you will have to go to the station house, and, doubtless, it will be necessary for you to appear in court when Driggs is arraigned."
"Which I shall willingly do. By Jove, Merriwell, this is a remarkable piece of detective work, but as yet I can't quite understand how you accomplished it."

"I'll clear up any dark places later on, if you don't mind, Hazelton."

"Oh, of course not. I'll be mighty glad to get the pin back. Will you be good enough to go to the station house with me? I'll call a taxi, and——"

"If you'll wait a short time, I'll accompany you, Hazelton. Before I do so, there's a little matter I wish to give my attention. You don't mind waiting, do you?"

"Oh, no," was the laughing assurance. "I'm quite at ease, now that I know I'm going to get my pin back. I had a particular affection for that little trinket, but I wasn't crying over spilt milk. No use shedding tears when you're up against it, you know; may as well call it all in a lifetime and let it go at that."

Leaving Hazelton with his gay companions, who were singing college songs, Dick went to the office and took a look at the register. Finding Dunbar Clay's name and the number of his room, he proceeded to look for the man.

It chanced that Clay was in. Merriwell's raps finally brought about the unlocking and opening of the door.

Unhesitatingly, Dick stepped into the room, and closed the door behind him.

Clay was astonished.

"You?" he muttered. "I think you've made a mistake, sir."

"Oh, no, I haven't," said Dick grimly. "You're the man I want to see."

"Well, I don't care to see you."

"That's unfortunate—for you. You look a bit tired. Will you sit down?"

Merriwell's manner brought a sensation of apprehension to Clay.

"No, I'll not sit down," was the retort. "I don't know why you've intruded here. If you have anything to say to me, say it in a hurry—and get out."

"It will be necessary for me to take my time," was the cool rejoinder. "I have come on a matter of grave importance—to you. Are you aware that there was a valuable piece of property stolen from a room on this floor to-day?"

Clay felt his nerves give a jump. His face could not turn paler than it was, however, but something like a momentary expression of alarm appeared in his eyes. An instant later it was gone, and he remained the same impassive, languid man.

"What's that to do with me?" he asked. "I've lost nothing."

"Prince Hazelton's scarf pin was stolen from his room. Hazelton carelessly left his door unlocked when he went out. A short time later he discovered the pin was not in his tie. Returning to the room, he looked for it in vain."

"Unfortunate for Hazelton," said Clay; "but, not being acquainted with the man, I can't feel strongly concerned. Why the devil do you come to me with this tale of Hazelton's misfortune? I'm not interested."

"Oh, yes, you are—you're very much interested, Clay, for you took that scarf pin."

For a moment it seemed that Dunbar Clay would attack his visitor. His lips drew back from his teeth in a snarl, and his thin, bloodless hands were clinched and half lifted.

Not a shadow of alarm came to Merriwell's face. He watched the man closely, but did not make a move to place himself on the defensive. Nevertheless, Clay felt certain the visitor could not be taken off his guard.

"Why, you miserable, lying——"

"Stop!" The word came from Dick's lips like the
crack of a pistol. "You're in no position to mouth insolence. Had I told what I know, you would be under arrest this minute, Clay."

"What are you trying to do, Merriwell? I know you hate me, and you'd gladly ruin me. But if you have put up any sort of a job on me, I——"

"Clay, if I hated you, as you claim, I could have driven you out of college in disgrace some time ago. I could have exposed you as a smoker of opium and a user of drugs. You know that. I haven't exposed you because——"

"Because you didn't dare. Because you knew if you did I would retaliate on your pet, that little whelp, Andy Dean, the mascot of the nine. It was to protect him that you kept silent about me."

"I had proof that you were a dope fiend before you tried to debauch Dean by seeking to compel him, under terror of exposure, to drug Hal Darrell in the Cornell game. Clay, I pitied you."

The man forced a derisive laugh.

"I was sorry for you," persisted Merriwell, "and I'm still sorry for you. I understand that you come from a most respectable family. It's a pity that you have allowed your inclinations and your appetite to wreck your life. It's a pity that you've permitted your weakness to drag you down to your present level, for you are the slave of drugs. I don't like to think that in your normal, healthy condition, you could have been induced under any circumstances to steal. I attribute your action to the fact that drugs have sapped and deadened your normal nature. You have now reached a stage in which such a crime as theft does not appall you as it would once."

"I tell you, Merriwell, you're barking up the wrong tree," protested Clay weakly. "If there has been such a theft as you claim. I know absolutely nothing about it."

"Then, why were you in the West End less than an hour ago?"

"In the West End? I was not."

"It will do you no good to lie, Clay. I saw you there."

"You—you did not!"

"I saw you there," repeated Dick grimly. "I was watching you when you handed over the stolen scarf pin to Carl Driggs."

At last Clay staggered. This blow nearly floored him.

"Driggs?" he finally muttered chokingly. "I know no person of that name."

"It's useless, Clay; Driggs has been arrested."

This second blow, following so closely upon the other, sent Clay tottering to his chair.

"Arrested?" he mumbled. His chin quivered, and his head shook as if he had been attacked by palsy.

"He is locked up now," Merriwell went on. "He was caught in the act of trying to pawn the pin."

"I tell you I know nothing of such a man," cried Clay shrilly.

"Ere he was led away to a cell," said Dick, "he requested me to inform you of his arrest."

"It's a put-up job—a put-up job! I don't believe it! What if he did tell you such a thing? He's an unfortunate man—a Yale man who has——"

Clay stopped, choking and floundering.

"A moment ago you declared you knew nothing about him. You can see how useless it is, Clay."

The miserable fellow leaned back against his chair, and for a moment Merriwell feared he would collapse entirely.

"I have not yet told Hazelton of the part you played in this business," Dick went on. "When he gets his pin back it is possible he may be induced, considering the fact that you're a Yale man, not to press the case. It would be a horrible thing for your parents, should the truth become publicly known. I have taken that into consideration, and I've also taken into considera-
tion the fact that such a thing would brand you for all time as a criminal. I'm even willing to do all that can be done for you. I'll intercede in your behalf with Hazleton. Perhaps we can fix it so that the truth will not be made public. It all depends on whether it is possible to silence Driggs. Thus far he has implicated you in no other way than to request that you should come to him at once."

"I'll go," whispered Clay—"I'll go, Merriwell. I don't know why you should care what happens to me. I can't understand it. Really, it doesn't make much difference on my own account. My life is ruined."

There was something pitifully pathetic in the man's words and manner, and Dick's heart was powerfully moved.

"While there's life there's hope, Clay," he said. "You will not return to college, of course. You couldn't do that. But if you have any moral strength left and you get clear of this fearful entanglement, you will begin a battle against the demon that has you in his clutches. You will fight for your life, and it will be a fight worth winning. If you could do this and conquer, I would be only too glad some day to take your hand."

Again Clay's chin quivered.

"You're—you're a queer, queer fellow!" he muttered. "I don't believe there are many like you. There can't be. If I were in your place and you were in mine, I know I could never withhold my hand: Merriwell, I don't think I've quite understood you before this. I've never fathomed your nature. My eyes are opened a bit now—and it's too late."

"I tell you, Clay, it's never too late while a man has his life and a bit of his fighting strength left. You've promised to see Driggs."

"Yes."

"And then—will you see Hazleton? If you wish, I'll go to Hazleton with you. Our interview shall be absolutely private. I'll do my level best in your behalf. He's not a revengeful man, I fancy. If I can make him understand, I believe he will refrain from pushing you, for he will get his pin back and suffer no real loss. What will you do?"

"I'll—I'll do anything, Merriwell. Just give me a little time. Let me have a chance to talk to Driggs. Do you suppose they will permit me to talk to him privately?"

"I don't know about that; you can find out. When you have done this, come back here and we will try to fix it with Hazleton. Your pledge, please."

"I give it," said Clay, rising unsteadily. "I must hurry to Driggs."

But Merriwell waited in vain for the return of Dunbar Clay. Having left the hotel, the man failed to come back.

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CHAPTER X.

THE PENALTY.

The game was on at Soldiers' Field. A roaring, singing crowd which packed the stands watched the two great college nines battling for supremacy. Dale Sparkfair, on the slab for Harvard, was enthusing the crimson cohorts by his brilliant work. He had developed into a truly great pitcher. By the way of giving his team confidence and showing what he could do, he struck out the first two men who faced him. Then, bending the ball over to the next man, he forced him to hit weakly into the diamond.

Sparkfair got a "rouser" as he walked in to the bench.

Then, as Merriwell started forth to take his turn on the slab, the Yale crowd rose and thundered forth a mighty cheer.

Dick began easy, without any flourish or fancy work. The first batter popped up a high infield fly and perished.
The second man drove the ball at Old Pipe Devon, who trapped it handsomely and whisked it across to Furlong at first.

The third batter raised a high foul, which Joe Crowfoot successfully smothered.

Not a strike-out did Dick secure to his credit in that opening inning; but, nevertheless, he had demonstrated that he had confidence in his team as well as in himself, and at the same time he had held his steam in reserve for some critical moment to come.

Behind the bat, Crowfoot was easy and graceful. The Indian’s soul was filled with deepest joy, for at last the day had come to which he had looked in times long past.

Dick seated himself on the bench, flinging his sweater over his right arm, and Crowfoot sat down beside him.

"Injun Heart," whispered the redskin.

Merriwell started a bit, glanced at Joe, and smiled.

"Long ago in the blue hills," said Crowfoot, "we talked about this day. Have you forgotten?"

The Yale captain shook his head.

"Oh, no," he answered, "I’ve not forgotten, Joe."

"Then," said Crowfoot, "I had never seen a college game of baseball. We were alone in the woods, and you pitched to me. You told me all about it; you made me feel a touch of the thrill, the enthusiasm, the joy of such a game as this. You prophesied that some day I would wear a Yale uniform and be your backstop against Harvard. It seemed impossible that such a time could come, and yet somehow I believed you then. It has come."

"Yes, Joe."

"And it was worth living a whole lifetime for! If we can only win to-day!"

"We’ll try to do our part, Joe. I’m going to take it easy when I can, for I don’t feel that I’m in my best condition yet."

At this moment Buckhart smashed the ball hard, but drove it humming straight at an infielder, who gathered it up cleanly and threw the Texan out.

Darrell, who was filling right field, Crowfoot’s regular position, followed the Texan, and fanned ignominiously, giving Sparkfair an opportunity to smile.

The Cambridge crowd was singing “Fair Harvard.” Besides being a game worth watching, the tremendous throng in summer apparel made a spectacle long to be remembered.

Old Blessed Jones bit at two of Sparkfair’s “fool makers,” and then hit one that rolled straight at the crimson pitcher, who took his time about gathering it up easily and throwing it to first, getting Jones by three yards.

Harvard was chock-full of confidence, for nearly every one knew that Merriwell was in all probability somewhat out of condition; and never had Dale Sparkfair been in better trim.

And now the first batter lifted a fly to centre field. Jones went cantering over the sward and pulled the ball out of the clouds.

Nevertheless, there was encouragement for Harvard in the fact that one man had rapped the horse-hide with such tremendous force. Had the ball been driven only a little farther away from centre, they thought, it might have resulted in a two or three-bagger, instead of an out.

Furthermore, the very next man singled beautifully.

There was a tremendous tumult. Coachers bobbed up, yapping in a lively fashion, and the runner was sent to second on the first ball pitched.

It was a test for Crowfoot. Apparently the man had obtained a fair start, and he was a swift sprinter. Every one watched the redskin’s throw.

Taking the ball cleanly, Joe did not even move from his tracks. With a swift, sure, short-arm swing, he sent the sphere whistling down to Claxton. It reached
the Virginian at precisely the proper height to enable him to tag the sliding man quickly, and this he did.

The cry of the umpire was drowned by the Yale yell of satisfaction, but they saw him fling his hand upward and aside with a sweeping motion which pronounced the man out.

The redskin could throw—they had discovered that fact.

But the batters were hitting Merriwell. By and by they would bunch their hits, and Harvard would take the game. This was the conviction of almost every Harvard man and nearly all sympathizers with the crimson.

Still, with no immediate danger spurring him on, Dick Merriwell held himself in reserve, and pitched easily. Behind the bat Crowfoot was working with the seemingly careless but absolutely effectual deliberation of a professional. Indeed, he handled himself with such ease that there seemed nothing remarkable in his work.

The third man hit the ball also, trying, apparently, for a Texas leaguer.

Pipe Devon went back behind second after that short fly. It was through marvelously quick starting and wonderful ground covering that he was finally able to reach it on the last jump and hold it gripped fast.

Two full innings were over, and neither side had scored. Nevertheless, to the impartial observers it seemed that Sparkfair had the best of the argument.

As the game progressed the suspense became heart-breaking. Two more innings were reeled off swiftly, and still the score books showed nothing but goose eggs for both sides. Merriwell continued to work along in an easy manner, with Crowfoot handling his pitching in beautiful style and the team backing up perfectly.

In the fifth something snapped. Yale opened up with a stinging single, which seemed to disconcert Sparkfair’s backers far more than it did the crimson pitcher himself, for the Cambridge lads began piling up errors, and when the smoke cleared away the Elis had pushed two men across the pan.

The Harvard crowd defiantly answered the wild cheering of the Yale cohorts. The game was still young, and a great many things might happen, although what had already happened was enough to make the crimson rooters weary.

There was unbounded hilarity in the Yale camp, and it grew even more effusive when Merriwell took the "sons of Old John" in hand in the last half of the fifth and fanned two out of three of them.

It began to look like Yale's game, after all; but there were two Yale men in one of the stands who felt no joy over it. They were Edgar Brighton and Hugo Carlin. Clay was not with them. In fact, no one had seen anything of him since his departure from the Brunswick after promising Merriwell that he would return as soon as he had answered the summons of Driggs.

"Howling blue blazes!" growled Carlin, under his breath. "What do you think of this, Ed? You don't suppose Yale is going to win after all, do you?"

"If she does," muttered Brighton, who looked pretty sick, "it will be a case of luck and nothing else. Thunder! I'll be dead broke."

"And I'm another," said Carlin.

Then they settled down in painful silence to watch the progress of the clash.

The sixth inning and half of the seventh went by without any change in the situation.

But in Harvard's half of the seventh there was something doing. The first man up hit to right, and a moment later the one who followed him got a scratch hit on an attempted sacrifice. Then came a rank error, which filled the sacks with no one out.

Up at the stand, Brighton and Carlin were gasping for breath. Their eyes bulging, they watched, and saw
Dick Merriwell finally shot a ball into the ribs of a batter and force a run.

"It's all off!" exulted Brighton. "He's weakened at last. I knew he couldn't hold out. He's gone to pieces, Hugo."

"I think you're right," said Carlin, in deep satisfaction.

They were mistaken; Dick Merriwell had not gone to pieces, although for a few moments he had felt a bit weak and giddy. The gravity of the situation, instead of breaking him down entirely, gave him strength to pull himself together. He knew the one weak spot of the next batter, and with perfect control he tapped that weakness. The man finally hit the ball on the ground, sending it straight at Dick.

Like a panther, Crowfoot had leaped to the plate, and with a scoop and a snap of the wrist Dick got the ball to him. The man coming down from third was out. Joe whistled the sphere past the head of the fellow legging it to first, and got him also.

Dick smiled and nodded amid the tremendous uproar from the Yale stand. Crowfoot surely was doing his part.

With a man on second and another on third, however, Harvard still itched for runs.

Steady as a clock, Dick twisted the ball round the neck of the next batter. The fellow slashed three times and flung down his club in disgust, while the occupants of the Yale stands were bursting one another's eardrums.

That was Harvard's last opportunity, too, for in the next two innings Merriwell pitched in his finest form. Once or twice he resorted to his old-time trick of delivering the ball with his left hand, for he could pitch almost as well with one hand as with the other. Each time he did this, he struck a man out. With the last Harvard batter up in the ninth and not a runner on the sacks, the Yale crowd cheered like maniacs. Nevertheless, Harvard had displayed no signs of quitting.

Not a man had pulled on his sweater or gathered up his belongings. Those on the bench were waiting, as if still confident that they would land a victory.

That last batter made a gallant bid for a two-sacker. He obstinately refused to be led into swinging at coxers. He waited until, with three balls called, Merriwell was forced to put the sphere over. Then he smashed one into left field; but Darrell, running like the wind, pulled it down while at full speed.

The game was over, and at least two Yale men who had bet against their own team were dead broke, stranded, and sick at heart.

When Dick finally escaped from the wildly rejoicing crowd, he ran straight into the arms of Prince Hazelton.

"Say, have you heard about it?" cried Hazelton.

"They've found him."

"Whom?"

"Dunbar Clay. Found him in a cheap rooming house—dead."

"Dead?" gasped Dick.

"Yes; they think he took an overdose of morphine or something of that sort. Too bad."

"Yes, too bad. Poor fellow!" said Dick.

Whether it was suicide or accident, the fellow who had dallied with evil habits, fancying he could do so and still remain master of himself, had finally paid the penalty of his folly.

THE END.

There is an interesting surprise in the next story—one that you will all enjoy. Dick Merriwell supplies it, and certain rascally schenters are stumped. When they get their breath the young Yale man is ready with another shocker, and you won't wonder at the rogues' dismay when you see the stunt performed. The tale in which it is all told in your favorite author's matchless style is titled, "Dick Merriwell's Masked Enemy; or, The Man With the Scar." You'll see a good ball game in this story, along with a lot of other attractive features. Out next week in No. 739.
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Oscar G. Smith, Proprietor.
George G. Smith, Publisher.
79-89 Seventh Avenue, New York City.

“A TIP TOP” BASEBALL TOURNAMENT.

Is the baseball team you belong to out for the Tip Top tournament prize?
If not, jump in and play ball.
The terms of the contest are printed on the last page of the cover. Better read them over carefully, for there have been some changes in the conditions since last year.
The contest ends on October 15.
Turn to the cover where the rules are printed and see just what you must do to try for the prizes.

THE USUAL THING.
The other day Lionel was at a matine with his father, and, when a trapeze acrobat failed to catch the object at which he flew through the air, and fell sprawling into the net, the little boy was greatly excited.
“They are never hurt,” explained his father; “it is a regular trick to make such a miss once or twice to give the audience an idea of the difficulty of the feat, and thereby to intensify the applause when it has been successfully performed.”
Lionel thought a moment, and, with a bright smile, said:
“Do you think I could please my teacher by coming to the circus and missing my lessons now and then?”

NOT THE REASON.
One morning a young lady passing a residence on whose steps was a young man, and in front of which was a dog, trod on a piece of orange peel. In a flash her feet went out from under her, and she went down on the pavement. The dog, in a playful mood, rushed to her assistance, while the young man, not at all embarrassed, asked:
“Did you fall?”
“Well, I should think I had,” said the young lady, rising and rearranging her hair.
“Oh,” responded the youth, “I thought perhaps you sat down to play with the dog.”

A NEW COMPLAINT.
A countryman saw for the first time a schoolgirl going through her gymnastic exercise for the amusement of the little ones at home.
After gazing at her with looks of interest and commiseration for some time, he asked a boy near by if that girl had fits.
“NO,” replied the boy, “the schoolgymnastics.”
“Aah, how sad!” said the man.
“How long’s she had ‘em?”

A Short Story by Your Favorite Author.

THE GHOST OF THE LIVING.
By Burt L. Standish.

I am not naturally a superstitious person, and I do not know that even now I believe the spirits of our dead friends return to hover about us.
But I do know that sometimes we are watched over and protected by the spirits of the living.
I believe this because I have received absolute proof of its truth.

When I graduated from West Point and entered the regular army, no one was prouder of me or more anxious for my safety and welfare than my sister, Amy, whose champion and companion I had ever been up to the time I became a cadet.

“I shall pray for you every night, Roy,” she whispered, as her arms clung about my neck at parting. “It seems so terrible for you to go away out West there among the horrible Indians! What if they should kill you and take your—”

She did not speak the word, but shuddered as she ran her fingers through her curly hair.

“Never fear, sister mine,” I returned, as lightly as possible, for despite the satisfaction of my success, there was a heaviness in my heart at this parting. “I shall be safe so long as you do not forget your prayers.”

Months later, in the midst of an Indian campaign, I often wondered, as I rolled myself in my blanket at night if Amy had remembered to pray for me, and if her prayers really added in any way to my safety.
We had driven the Apaches back into the mountains, and were still hot on their trail, although they had succeeded in avoiding us amid the wild ravines and cañons.

Night and day, so long as the scouts and trailers could keep to the track, we pursued the fleeing marauders, until our jaded animals could scarcely crawl along, and the men were ready to drop from fatigue and heat.

Then the trail was lost.
I confess I received the information with a feeling of relief, for as I had been to outwit and outflank the red rascals, I felt I could not hold out many hours more.

We camped that night in a kind of flat-bottomed valley, with the rugged mountains rising on every hand.

There was plenty of water and grass in the valley, which made it a favorable camping place. Indeed, the grass was as tall and luxuriant as to be found on the open prairies anywhere.
Tired though the men were, some of them filled their pipes for a smoke before rolling themselves in their blankets.
I had seen the sentinels properly posted, and I lost no time in seeking slumber.

As the first rays of the burning heat of the day, an icy cold wind came out of the cañons with the advent of night, and swept across the valley, so the shelter of my tent was something to be grateful for.
I expected to fall asleep immediately, but I simply dozed, and dozed, and dozed, till I heard two soldiers softly whispering.
Had I been wide awake, that whispering would have soon been stopped, but a kind of sleepy numbness held me, and I did not stir.
Still, I could not understand what they were saying, and I listened with an interest that I remember seemed surprising to myself.
The sleepless soldiers were both believers in ghosts, and they were relating stories of the uncanny things they claimed had happened to themselves.
How long I listened I do not know, but the whispering finally turned to snoring—then slept.
Of a sudden, something that gave me a strong shake awoke me and brought me to a sitting posture.
I felt a presence close at hand—I saw it!
The flap of the tent was cast back, and the moon that had risen above the mountain peaks poured a flood of light into the opening.
I saw something besides the moonlight—something white and distinct. It took the shape of a human being, and then I recognized my sister.
I had not a doubt of it, for I saw her as plainly as I ever saw anything in all my life.
She was looking at me appealingly, and on her face was an expression of absolute horror and dread.
As I sat there like one turned to stone, she lifted one hand
and pointed to the south, at the same time motioning with other hand for me to arise.

I felt myself drawn to my feet, and I started toward her. As I did so she burst "danger! danger!" twice repeated, and then she retreated into the moonlight that shone in by the opening, and utterly disappeared.

Finding myself on my feet and wide awake, I decided it was no more than a dream caused by the whispered ghost tale, and I had some time before me, and I decided the two men should be reprimanded in the morning.

Then I lay down again.

I could not sleep.

"Danger! Danger!" I seemed to hear that word repeated again and again.

The voice was that of my sister!

After some moments, I arose and stole cautiously from the tent, in the shadow of which I halted.

How peacefully everything seemed throughout that little valley! To the south a high mountain threw a black shadow far out across the grassy level, and I wondered if the weary sentinels posted there were wide awake and on the watch.

Chirp! Chirp! Chirp!

I started at the sound, but it was only a cricket in the grass.

Chirp! Chirp! Chirp!

As I listened to the repetition, it seemed like a note of warning.

A chill was in my blood, and cold fingers seemed to clutch my heart. I shuddered and listened.

Out of the deep shadow of the mountain came a low, smothered cry—a cry of human agony. I was not afraid, and the camp slept on.

The picketed horses stampeded uneasily, but that was all.

At my very feet lay the bugler, and, almost before I knew what I was doing, his instrument was at my lips.

"Up again! It's game! It's game!" was the call I gave, and the sleeping men leaped up, weapons in hands.

None too soon.

Screeching like a thousand fiends, a band of painted savages shot out of the bushes and charged on the camp.

But we outnumbered them four to one, and, thanks to the mysterious warning I had received, the surprise attack had turned to something of a failure.

We beat them off after a sharp, fierce battle, in which three men were killed and seven wounded.

Later, I found the three sentinels to the south had been killed and scalped, and I have not a doubt I heard the smothered death cry of the last one to perish.

But now comes the strangest part of my story.

Some weeks later, I received a long letter from my sister, and, among other things, she said:

"Our sister is before retiring for the night have I forgotten to pray for your safety, dear brother. That was the night of September eleventh, after I had spent the day with Bessie Linton, who was very ill. I came home tired, which explained I forgot you.

"But the night did not pass without the prayer being spoken, for I was awakened by a terrible dream. I seemed to see a beautiful moonlighted valley amid the mountains, and there a body of soldiers had camped for the night. The soldiers were sleeping—even the sentinels were fast asleep.

"As I looked, I beheld a band of fierce, painted Indians creeping toward the camp through the long grass. I saw them reach one of the sentinels and kill him, and then, nearly dead with terror, I ran to the camp to give a warning.

"Something led me into a tent, and there I found you sleeping, dear Roy. I grasped you and shook you with all my strength, but it seemed you would never awaken. Finally you opened your eyes and sat up, after which you saw me.

"I tried to tell you of the Indians, but my tongue seemed frozen with fear, and I could only motion, while I whispered: 'Danger! Danger!'

"You see, the word you understand, for you arose to follow me from the tent, as I thought. Imagine my horror when I saw you lie down again. I tried to shriek 'danger, danger!' in my excitement I spoke. Then I remembered I had forgotten to pray for your safety, and a moment's delay.

"This is the whole of the story, reader. I leave you to account for it as best you may, confessing I am unable to offer an explanation. As I said at the beginning, I do not know as the ghost tale was true, and departed return to earth, but I do know we are sometimes watched over and protected by the spirits of living friends.

SMILING TED COY, ATHLETIC STAR.

Edward Harris ('Ted') Coy, Yale '10, is not only one of the greatest all in the history of college sports. Walter Camp has called him the greatest football player, and, taken altogether, his record of three years of varsity football, the last under a handicap, would seem to bear out that assertion.

Coy prepared at Hotchkiss, and was captain of the football team there. He also held the school record in the high jump and was a member of the baseball team.

When he entered Yale he "made" his freshmen eleven, and even then was known as the best kicker in college, and in some respects the best player. He was captain of that team and played tackle, and was a member of the freshman track and baseball teams as well.

In 1907, he won his varsity "Y" in football, playing one of the greatest games ever seen on a college gridiron in the Princeton contest on Yale field. He was acting captain of the team in 1908, and not only the smartest player, but a leader in the Harvard game, was out of football nearly all the season.

In that year Coy again played wonderful football against the Tigers, turning a defeat into a victory by tremendous rushing that yielded Yale two touchdowns in the second half.

This past fall, as a varsity captain, he played under the handicap of a serious operation just before the season opened. In spite of this, he was one of the most brilliant players, and practically won the Harvard game by his drop-kicking and stirring, clear-headed leadership.

In 1908 he won his "Y" on the track team in the high jump. He was also a member of the junior prom committee. In minor athletics he has been considered one of the best tennis players in college. In baseball he is a fine pitcher, and will probably make his "Y" in that sport this spring.

As evidence of his all-around ability and popularity, it might be mentioned that he is a fine scholar, a prominent worker in the university Y. M. C. A., a success as a cotillion leader, a member of the Senior Council, the advisory undergraduates' board that regulates minor matters on the campus, and a member of Skull and Bones and D. K., as well as the Apollo Glee Club.

In the class elections he was voted the second most popular man, the one who had done the most for Yale, a third in the race for the one most to be admired. He was also accorded second honors as the most versatile.

Twenty-one years old, he weighs one hundred and ninety-five pounds, and is six feet tall. His brother, Sherman Coy, was graduated from Yale in 1901, and was one of the best ends of his time.

Who is the greatest ballplayer of all time? "Ty Cobb, of Detroit," answers Comisky, veteran captain in baseball, thereby making sure of a lively dispute to go with the early pennant-chasing days of 1910. Already we see the partisans of Hans Wagner sitting up and taking notice. And their name is legion, while not by any means do they live all in Pittsburg, says the New York World.

To compare Cobb with Wagner is something like classing a young colt against a seasoned racer. The Detroit player has been but four years in fast company, while last year was the Smoky City shortstop's thirteenth in major-league service. By the records we find that Cobb led the American League in batting in 1907, and again in 1909, beating Wagner by two points, with an average of .352, in the first instance, and coming out thirty-six points ahead of the National League champion last year, with an average of .372. The Pittsburger has been a batting champion seven times in thirteen years. Of stolen bases, Cobb had eighty-one last year to Wagner's thirty-five. The Detroit shortstop's record in pilfering was made with sixty-one bases, in 1907.

But Comisky is not judging by statistics alone. "Cobb is a
better ballplayer to-day than he was two years ago," he says, and "he will be a better player this year than he was last." The blond fellow from Georgia is a great player for a "first and most important reason that he loves the game." Comisky says he would pass up a day's pay instead of ever playing a day off.

From another source we learn of Cobb's ambition. "I hope," said he, one day last season, "I will some day be the player Wagner is at Boston which gives its own touch to a very pretty and popular controversy.

IN A SERPENT'S COILS.

It was an adventure in a cave on the seacoast in Australia. I had extinguished my candle, and was creeping over the pile of gravel and stones quite unconcernedly, when I was brought up suddenly by a blood-curdling sight. Right across the passage, coiled in long curves which reached from side to side, was the biggest serpent I had ever seen—I and I had been to Barunin's in New York, and he had some large ones.

The great reptile was alert; too; its head was reared up in the midst; it was swaying it to and fro horribly. I could not move, I did not dare to, for directly my eyes fell upon the creature, I was paralyzed with fear. To pass it, I saw, was impossible; to attempt to kill it in that narrow space seemed to be out of the question. Indeed, what weapon I had with my driving pick and shovel—poor tools to face such fearful thing with. I leaned on the pile of dirt, as I gazed intently at the creature. I was wet with perspiration, yet a cold shiver ran through me.

I must have remained thus for half an hour, making no sound. Gradually the snake ceased moving; I saw its head sink on one of its coils, as if it were pressed down and became sleepy to sleep; and I was thinking, wondering what was best to do.

Dare I sneak past it as it slept? Could I do so safely? In that narrow cave I realized that it was not practicable; and yet what other side could I adopt? To test its watchfulness, its alertness, I rolled a pebble gently toward it. Instantly its head was up again, its sinister eyes were open, and for another half hour, at least, it swung from side to side, and my gaze was fixed on it. What a scene and how I wondered at the end was near! All the yarns I had heard about the terrible Australian reptiles came crowding through my memory with their awful import.

I was so afraid; with fear, unavertiéd with horror. I pity any one who has to undergo the torment I suffered that afternoon.

There the great creature lay, blocking my way to safety with its glittering folds, which were dashed here and there with brilliant sunlight. I swung its head, its awful gaze, it reared its head the way I could mark its evil eyes, I could see its forked tongue flickering from its cruel lips, I could fear its hiss. I was in mortal terror—no doubt of it. It was becoming late, too; pretty soon they would be expecting us, as they knew where I was working; they would come for me, fearing an accident—and all I thought to myself, such an accident!

I was so unnerved I could not think very clearly; every idea that came into my head was equally impossible; then it suddenly occurred to me that if, when any one came to search for me, they came into the drive, they would so frighten the snake that it would rush in across the heap on which I lay—and then—the thought almost made me faint.

The opening of the tunnel faced to the west. I saw the sun sinking toward the setting; I could see people passing in the distance, going home from work on the shore. I knew that night was near, and there was I, spellbound; I dared not stir, I almost feared to breathe.

Later, when the full glory of the sun's last raya lit up the opening in front of me, I heard the voice of Charlie Halliday, a friend of mine. He drew I was within, for my hat and overshirt were swung on a bush outside. At the mouth of the cave I heard him. "Tom! Hi! Tom! Are you in there?" he cried.

"Hi! what's anything the matter?"

I saw him coming in, stopping short. As he appeared, the serpent started up eagerly; every inch of it was moving, its awful head was darting about the tunnel, its venomous-looking tongue was constantly protruding and flickering with agitation, and its awful hisses reverberated through the dismals.

Then I burst out—I could contain myself no longer. "Charlie!" I screamed; "stop! Don't come in, don't come nearer! There's a treacherous coil here with me. I can't pass it to come out. What shall we do?"

My voice alarmed my terrible companion; it gave one glance in my direction, then darted toward the entrance, where Charlie was crouching. At sight of him the dread reptile came sliding back again toward me. I pulled in horror, and it turned again toward the opening where Charlie stood. Charlie ordered him to move aside, to make a way for it; but he misunderstood me, for in my agitation I expect I spoke unintelligibly; as when it that I, with one stroke of its tail, killed it; indeed, I must have killed; instead of which, it drew itself back in an attitude of defense, though I had the powerful blow I had seen my dear cham dead at least disturbed.

But the creature thought better of it; it changed its mood, lowered its head again, sought to escape, to hide itself within the earth, and it was impossible to overtake it.

Meanwhile, I had sprung across the intervening ridge of rubbish, and I had nothing between me and my adversary. In my hand I held my shovel only; the position of affairs was really worse than ever, but now my blood was up, a friend was near, I must fight for my life! And fight I did, I can assure you. Fear, excitement, horror, all combined to give me nerve. As the beast glided along the floor toward me, I was ready. It came swiftly, its head but a few inches from the earth. I was braced up, I suppose, with agony, with determination, too; for, as it came within arm's length of me—I really don't believe it saw me, I was so still, so rigid—I brought the shovel flat down, threw it into the earth, and instantly threw my whole weight upon it, striving to hold it.

I did hold it, too; then, like a flash, the great cold coils were wound around me; they were twining about my legs and arms. I could feel its power; it felt its power! It struggled to free itself. I yelled then, I screamed to Charlie to come in, and he did so quickly, and added his weight to mine, and four knees, and, as we pressed and held, the coils of the serpent circled about us both, and made us fear that, even with our strength, with all the power we were exerting, the thing would yet master us, and its head be drawn from underneath us, and we should be at its mercy.

But then Charlie whipped out his big knife, which luckily was sharp, and commenced to hack at the brute's throat just clear of the shovelf. At that the coils, the contortions of the reptile were still more strenuous; it twisted its folds about us with intense vigor, and its head seemed ever to be on the very point of slipping from under us. Still Charlie hacked and slashed. At last he had cut clean through, and we knew that we were saved.

But the headless body of the creature curved and contorted still; yet it did so aimlessly; we felt that we had conquered. Coolly we raised ourselves, and there the head lay impotent —harmless but terrible, for the eyes still rolled, the jaws still moved, though they had no further power of mischief in them; and, oh! how thankful we both felt at our deliverance!

I fell back, exhausted from the terror and the vigor of my friend Charlie, lying near me, trembled with the excitement he had gone through.

It was quite dark in there by this time, but we could still see the entrance plainly. Soon we saw Charlie's father and another, both peering in, who would just call to them that we were there, and in a pretty plight.

They speedily got us home. Later they went back, hauled the dead snake out, and mastur it. It was twelve feet long, and half a foot through at its thickest part.

BUSINESS FIRST.

In a certain town a gentleman was warned to recognize the face of a person who was hawking shoe strings and buttonhooks at a street corner as that of one of his regimental comrades in the war.

He went up to the man, greeted him warmly, and assured him of his sympathy. He was much grieved, he said, to see an old soldier in such a plight.

When he had expressed himself at some length in this manner, he was suddenly interrupted by his former acquaintance.

"I'm much obliged for your pity," he remarked dryly, "but how many pairs of shoe strings will you buy?"

TO JUG HIS MEMORY.

Mother: "Johnny! On your way home from school, stop at the grocer's and get me a cent's worth of candy and a bar of soap."

Father: "What do you want with a cent's worth of candy?"

Mother: "That's so he'll remember the soap."
APPLAUSE FROM TIP TOP READERS

For Its Fine Tales of College Life.
I like "Tip Top" because of its fine stories about college life, and I also like the moral thought which is expressed throughout the stories. I am trying to help my friends, by getting them interested in reading "Tip Top." I loan my back copies out, and nearly every one which I have done so to, is now a regular reader of "Tip Top." WM. ELMER BACHMAN.
Hazleton, Pa.

Hope to Read Frank Merriwell, Jr.
I have read every "Tip Top" out, and think there is no better five-cent weekly published. I lived in Easthampton, Mass., four years, and know of eight or ten fellows there who are taking "Tip Top." They began by reading copies I loaned them. I am now living in Bridgeport, Conn., my old home, and have found out that my sister and brother have been reading "Tip Top" for the last two years. They also think there is no better weekly published, and they hope to live to read a story entitled, "Frank Merriwell, Jr." CHAS. RUSSELL.
Bridgeport, Conn.

Its Stories Are the "Best Ever."
I have read about one hundred and twenty "Tip Tops," and have got eight boys to read it. My mother read one copy and liked it. We have a "Tip Top" athletic club in town. I am baseball captain, and we are going to try for your tournament prizes. I want to hear more of Frank, Jr., Tubbs, and Singleton. I want Dick to marry June, and Buckhart Claude. "Tip Top" stories are the best ever.
ALEX SINGLETON.
Union Springs, Ala.

Former Actor Gives His Reasons.
As I have not written to you since 1903, when I was successful in adding my signature to your little book of "One Thousand Reasons Why 'Tip Top' Leads," I thought I'd write a line to renew old acquaintance. "There's a reason," in fact, so many good reasons for reading "Tip Top," that I will only mention the best ones: It shows one the right and the wrong side of the world. Mr. Standish describes things just as they are, as I have seen many places in this great country that he has described. When I was a mere boy, reading of Frank's adventures on the stage, and on the diamond, I hoped some day that I might meet Mr. Standish to congratulate him personally on his success as "America's foremost Author," for he certainly appeals to me as such. I had two years' experience on the stage in musical comedies, and played three months in vaudeville as a matinee idol doing some snipe-shoe dancing. I was known in the profession as Harry Foye. I mention the above as I wish to tell the readers that Mr. Standish has described everything just as I found it.
H. S. FAUNCE.
Somerville, Mass.

His Only Regret He Can't Get More.
I like "Tip Top" because it is a good, clean weekly. I used to go uptown nights and spend about every cent I could make, but now, when I can get hold of a "Tip Top," I prefer to stay at home and read. Not only I, but others that I know are following the same plan. My only regret is that I cannot get every one of the numbers.
HUGH POOR.
Portland, Ind.

Best Stories of Their Kind.
I think the "Tip Top" stories are the best of the kind printed. I will tell you what they have done for me. I have taken up athletic exercises, and find that I am much better off for following the advice given in "Tip Top."
ROY BAKER.
Fife Bluffs, Ark.

"Best Stories in the World for the Young."
Hurrah for Bert L. and good old "Tip Top." I have been a reader for several years. I think it has the best stories for young folks in the world. After Frank and Dick, old Brad is next for me. I have got lots of new readers for "Tip Top" in the last year. When I get through with one I lend it to save one that is not a Tip Topper; then it is not long before they begin to buy them for themselves.
G. R. JOHNSON.
Mineral Wells, Tex.

Has Lifted Up His Character.
"Tip Top" has lifted my character to a higher level; it has helped me to study more diligently, and it has built up my physical condition. Therefore, I advise all to read it. I am a student at Augustana College and a lover of clean sport. Rock Island, Ill.

Girls Form a Club of Ten.
Although a girl, I am very much interested in "Tip Top." I like your weekly because it contains good literature and does not have a harmful effect on a person's mind no matter how imaginative a person may be. I am very much interested in athletics, therefore I enjoy the baseball, football, and basketball scenes very much. I have interested some of my girl friends and we have formed a club of ten, which we call "The Tip Top Club." We all enjoy reading the weekly very much, and are always glad when we get it. "Tip Top" has helped me very much in my knowledge of football and baseball. I know now what most all of the expressions mean, thanks to "Tip Top."
Rockville, Mass.

Girls Him Good Points in Baseball.
I have read the "Tip Top" Weekly and the books of the Medal Library for over two years regularly, and they have benefited me considerably. When I walked I breathed through my mouth, but now I breathe through my nose, and it has enabled me to do more work and walk or run faster and longer, and in most ways improved my strength. I used to try and make long throws while playing baseball, thereby straining my muscle. I have now found that it is unnecessary to make long throws unless in a tight squeeze. I have also learned that stretching is better to force players on bases to score than making long drives, especially flies. As you might happen to know, there is a college here—St. Bonaventure's by name—against which the town has pit their strength in both football, baseball, and sometimes racing. We generally make it pretty hot for them, too. My brother, sixteen years of age, plays on the college varsity nine and eleven. Hoping to profit more from "Tip Top," I remain, with respect,
Allegheny, N. Y.
J. E. CLARKE.

Finds It to Be in the A1 Class.
I have become a member of "Tip Top" stock, and have found it to be in the A1 class. My favorite characters are Dick, Frank, Brad, Bart, and Chet. I have been a reader for seven months, and during that time have got five new members. What will happen to all of us in undertakings and a long life to "Tip Top" and its publishers, I am.
Louis Hertz.
Denver, Colo.

How a Girl Came to Read Them.
I have wanted to write to "Tip Top" for a long time, and the only reason why I didn't do so is because I was a girl; but when I saw the letter of Miss Evans I wrote a letter, too, as I wanted to tell you how I started to read the "king of weeklies." One day, about three years ago, I found a copy of the "Tip Top" lying on the dresser. Father has read "Tip Top" for the past fourteen years, and he still reads them. And that is how I first got a ' Tip Top.' I had been reading a few stories about June and Dick, and I hope Dick and June will be one some time. I have some of the back numbers, and I read about Cap'n Wiley. I have read where he is supposed to have been killed, but I hope it isn't true. I would like to hear more about some of Frank's and Dick's old friends and enemies, and hope that Mr. Standish will not forget to write more about them. I intend to read the Medal Libraries, for I like to learn about the early adventures of Frank.
Appleton, Wis.

Alice Clark.

Tribute from a Mother.
I am not a subscriber, but when my children have a nickel on hand they are sure to get "Tip Top." I like it more than anything I ever read in the story line. I try to get my boys to read as much like Frank and Dick as possible, and I try to get all my friends to read "Tip Top," and I know several of them do.
(MRS.) LAURA HUGHES.
Sugden, Jefferson County, Ohio.
TIP TOP WEEKLY.

So many inquiries reach us from week to week concerning the various manuals on athletic development, which we publish, that we have decided to keep a list of those standing here. Any number can be had by mail by remitting 10 cents, and 3 cents postage, for each copy, to the publishers.

Frank Merrifield’s Book of Physical Development.
The Art of Boxing and Self-defense, by Prof. Donovan.
U. S. Army Physical Exercises, revised by Prof. Donovan.
Physical Health Culture, by Prof. Fourmen.

ABOUT TRAINING FOR ATHLETIC SPORTS.

I have received so many letters from chums recently about training for running races, jumping, etc., that, instead of answering each separately, I will reply to many of you at once by giving some general information on the subject in question.

Mistaken notions abound concerning this matter of training. There are several reasons for this, but most of the erroneous ideas may be traced back to the days when professional pugilists and runners were the only men who ever entered on any athletic exercise with any sort of organized preparation. For them a severe course of training was possibly a necessity. They were, for the most part, men advanced in years, and naturally flabby; and to achieve the feats which they accomplished they no doubt found it necessary to considerably reduce their weight, and for this purpose to take a great deal of exercise and to avoid all food tending to the formation of flesh. But for the average boy who plays football or baseball, or, in fact, takes the ordinary amount of boy’s exercise, training, as it is generally misunderstood, is quite unnecessary, even if not absolutely harmful.

He has no superfluous fat of which to rid himself, so any swelling which he may do only weakens him and renders him liable to cold. Generally his limbs are in proper order, and, therefore, his wind is good, and so there is no need for him to deprive himself of vegetables, or pies, or puddings in moderation. Be careful to chew your food well. All you want is to lead a healthy, active life, and to do a fair amount of practice in the particular branch of athletics in which you hope to excel.

The exact amount of practice required depends on each individual. The stamina and build of each particular boy. Big, muscular boys can do more work than lightly strung ones of less robust constitution; but it may be better for growth as a general rule that it is better to do too little than too much. Practice should never be continued after you begin to feel tired; and if you still feel the effects of the previous day’s practice, it is always a good thing to rest for a day or two from active work, and, instead, to take a good walk of four or five miles. When your muscles are stiff, as they are bound to be at the beginning, never force them. Get them gradually into working order, and never hesitate to rest entirely if you feel disinclined for exercise.

Rest, in moderation, is always good, and for this reason I advise my chums of all ages who may be training to make a point of going to bed early. To get up early is another rid to leading a healthy life, but I would especially warn you against taking any violent exercise before breakfast. Your bath should be followed by a brisk rub down with a rough towel and then, if you like and can manage it, go out into the open air for a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes. In the same way, never do any practicing immediately after a heavy meal. An interval of at least two hours should elapse to allow of the digestion of food.

Remember that your one object in training is not to force your powers, but to so increase and nurse them that when the time of the race comes you are in your best without fear of hurting or overtraining yourself.

Ten o’clock is quite late enough to retire. A boy in training wants eight, or possibly nine, hours of sound, pleasant, undisturbed sleep, but what is unnecessary, less is harmful.

With regard to medicines, remember this: there is more real virtue in cold baths, regular hours, plain diet, moderate exercise, and persistent attention to nature’s own laws than in all those alternations ever in question.

Here is an excellent gentle exercise to be taken before breakfast. When you have your underclothes on, go through the following extension movements:

Start with the heels together, the toes pointing outward, legs stiff, the body erect, the head thrown well back. Bring the arms above the head, and from thence, keeping them stiff, bring them downward until, bending from the waist, and without bending the knees, you touch the toes. Now face the palms of the hand to the front, and, rising steadily, bring the arms backward and upward until they are above the head again. This movement performed once or twice will stimulate a general circulation, and you may conclude your toilet.

Next week I will give you some points about practicing.

Advice to Marathon Aspirant.

Prof. Fourmen: My age is 15 years; height, 5 feet 6 inches; weight, 102 pounds; waist, 26 inches; wrists, 5½ inches; chest, normal, 30 inches; expanded, 32½ inches; shoulders, 15 inches. My wind is good. How are my measurements? Could I become a good long-distance runner? How could I cure my knock-knees besides riding a horse? How much sleep should a boy of my build get?

William R. Pease.
Brooklyn, N. Y.

You are in fair shape. A little more chest measurement—an inch and a half—would bring you up to the standard. I cannot say, from what your figures and statement tell me, that you would make a good long-distance runner. Better confine yourself to short-distance running; it’s better for the health. Long-distance runs do one harm. Those who win Marathons pay dearly in health for the prizes that fall to them. You’d better give your attention to remedying the knocking of your knees. A professional trainer of such deformities is the person to consult. A boy should have at least eight hours sleep; nine would be better.

Built for the Gridiron.

Prof. Fourmen: I am 14 years 9 months old; my height is 5 feet 3¼ inches; weight, 100 pounds; neck, 15 inches; shoulders, 15 inches; calf, 12 inches; chest, 30⅓-32 inches; waist, 40⅝ inches. What are my weak points, and what can I do to remedy them?

Anthony Voccoli.
Spring Valley, N. Y.

You seem, from the figures given, to be built in excellent proportion to your height and age. You are going to be a stocky chap, and, if you take good care of yourself, ought to make a good football player or a wrestler.

Advice to Would-be Prize Fighter.

Prof. Fourmen: Please tell me what you think of my measurements: Age, 16½ years; weight, 170 pounds; neck, 15½ inches; wrists, 75 inches; ankle, 10½ inches; thigh, 20 inches; waist, 31½ inches; shoulders, 48 inches; chest, 39½ inches; chest, expanded, 37 inches; reach, 24 inches; height, 5 feet 10 inches. Is there any chance of my becoming a prize fighter?

Max Mitchell.
Rochester, N. Y.

You are eighteen pounds below the standard for one of your height and age. Your chest is too small by three inches, and your waist out of all proportion to other parts of your body. You can remedy these defects probably by proper exercise. But don’t try to do it with the idea of becoming a prize fighter. Such an aim is not a good one for any boy. To learn boxing, so that you may be able to defend yourself when attacked is worth while; but the boy who aspires to being a prize fighter is on the wrong track. It is likely to take him into the lowest company and make a thug of him rather than a decent man. You would stand a good chance of having your face permanently disfigured with a broken nose or some other form of disfigurement. Get the notion of being a prize fighter out of your head, and then it will do you no harm to try to attain efficiency in boxing. Judging from your measurements, I think that the chances, even for that, are against you.
ALL OF THE BACK NUMBERS OF
TIP TOP WEEKLY
THAT CAN NOW BE SUPPLIED

PRICE, FIVE CENTS PER COPY
If you want any back numbers of our weeklies and cannot procure them from your newsdealer, they can be obtained direct from this office. Postage stamps taken the same as money.

STREET & SMITH. Publishers, 79 Seventh Ave., New York City
Tip Top Baseball Tournament for 1910 Is On!

CONTEST CLOSES OCTOBER 15

Play Ball and Win a Club Outfit

It's up to you, boys, to land the prizes. Get after them. Do your best.

Make the scores that will put you in right for first or second place.

The rules of the contest for 1910 differ somewhat from those of last year. Read all about it in the form below:

PLAYER'S CERTIFICATES.

In fairness to all the clubs that enter this contest, and that there may be no doubt as to whom the prizes should go, Tip Top has decided to require a certificate from each member of the nine as well as the Club Certificate. Below is the coupon which each member should cut out, sign and give to the manager of the nine that he may send it along with the Club Certificate. Write in the names of the clubs that played, the date of the game, the score and the name of the winner.

PLAYER'S CERTIFICATE.

TIP TOP BASEBALL TOURNAMENT FOR 1910.
This is to certify that I have played in the game between the ___________ and the ___________
on ___________ and that the score was ___________ in favor of ___________.

(Signature)

TO DECIDE A TIE.

Should there be a tie, in runs and games played, of two or more clubs in the highest score class, such tie will be decided by the batting and fielding record of the tied clubs. The one having the best record in that respect will be declared the winner. The captains of competing teams are advised, therefore, to preserve the general, or detailed score, of every game played, but not to send it to Tip Top with the Club Certificate. You will be called upon for the general score only in case your club should be one of those in a tie.

CONDITIONS OF CONTEST.

The two teams which, at the end of the season, have the highest average—that is, play the greatest number of games, score the most runs, and lose the least number of games—will be declared the winners. Of these two the one having the higher average will be declared the TIP TOP CHAMPIONSHIP TEAM OF THE ALL-AMERICAN BASEBALL TOURNAMENT OF 1910, and will receive a beautiful silk pennant bearing suitable words. Each winning team will receive a full equipment, consisting of trousers, shirt, stockings, shoes and cap for nine members. For each game played the score, signed by the manager, must be sent to the editor of Tip Top. The manager must see to it, also, that every player of his nine signs one of the certificates printed at the left of this—the one headed, "Player's Certificate." Each player must sign a separate certificate, and these—nine in all for each game—must accompany every Club Certificate—sent to this office. To substantiate the score, get your postmaster, or one or more of the newsdealers of whom you buy your Tip Tops, to sign the Club Certificate on the line printed at the bottom. When possible, send in newspaper accounts of the games. No notice will be taken of any score not entered on a Club Certificate cut out of Tip Top; nor will any notice be taken of a score not accompanied by a signed Player's Certificate for every member of the nine.

CLUB CERTIFICATE

1910—TIP TOP BASEBALL TOURNAMENT—1910

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WINNER: ___________.  FINAL SCORE: ___________.  MANAGER: ___________.

Newsdealer or Postmaster Signs Here.