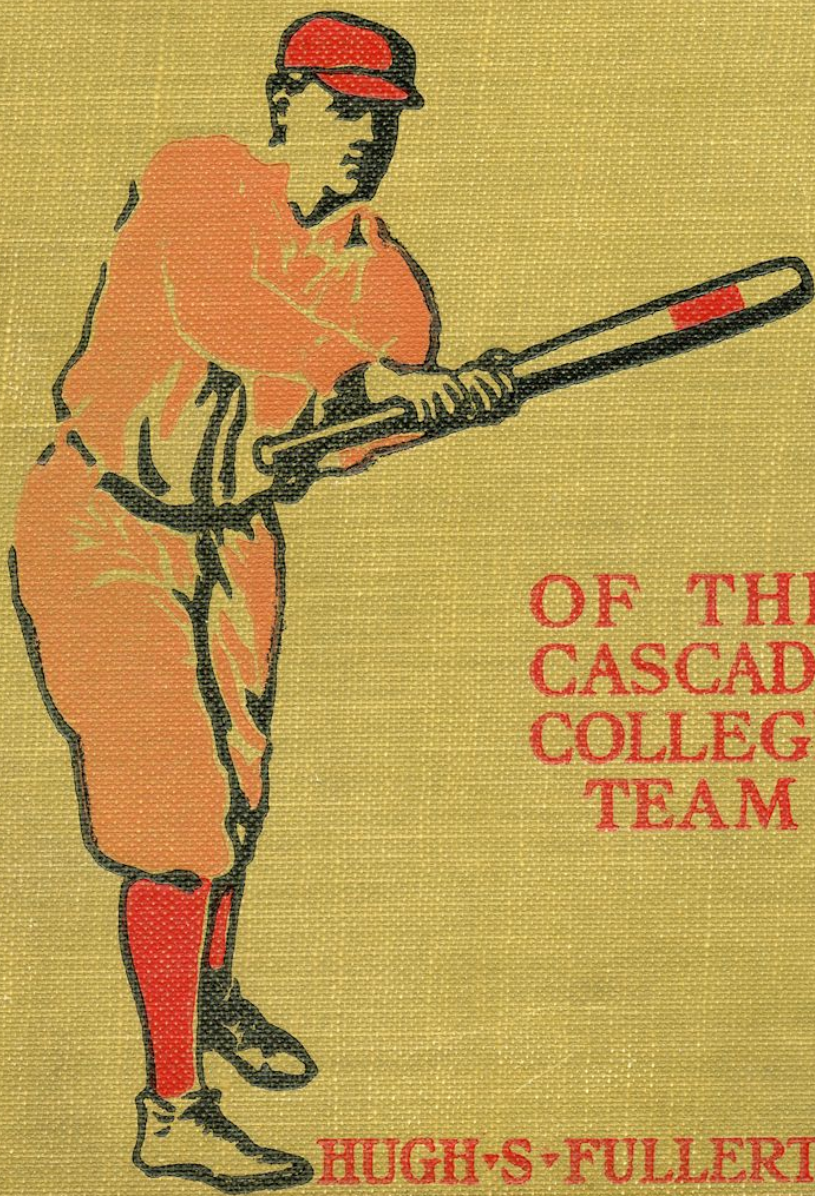


JIMMY KIRKLAND



OF THE
CASCADE
COLLEGE
TEAM

HUGH·S·FULLERTON

*** A Distributed Proofreaders Canada eBook ***

This eBook is made available at no cost and with very few restrictions. These restrictions apply only if (1) you make a change in the eBook (other than alteration for different display devices), or (2) you are making commercial use of the eBook. If either of these conditions applies, please contact a <https://www.fadedpage.com> administrator before proceeding. Thousands more FREE eBooks are available at <https://www.fadedpage.com>.

This work is in the Canadian public domain, but may be under copyright in some countries. If you live outside Canada, check your country's copyright laws. **IF THE BOOK IS UNDER COPYRIGHT IN YOUR COUNTRY, DO NOT DOWNLOAD OR REDISTRIBUTE THIS FILE.**

Title: Jimmy Kirkland of the Cascade College Team

Date of first publication: 1915

Author: Hugh Stuart Fullerton (1873-1945)

Date first posted: Aug. 14, 2020

Date last updated: Aug. 14, 2020

Faded Page eBook #20200820

This eBook was produced by: Mardi Desjardins & the online Distributed Proofreaders Canada team at <https://www.pgdpCanada.net>



“So You QUIT—QUIT COLD?”

JIMMY KIRKLAND
OF THE
CASCADE COLLEGE TEAM

BY
HUGH S. FULLERTON

ILLUSTRATED BY
CHARLES PAXSON GRAY

PHILADELPHIA
THE JOHN C. WINSTON COMPANY
PUBLISHERS

Copyright, 1915, by
THE JOHN C. WINSTON COMPANY.

PRINTED IN U. S. A.

To

AMOS ALONZO STAGG

Player, coach and teacher, who has made the ideal of purity and honesty in college sport a reality, this volume is respectfully inscribed.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE NEW MAN AT CASCADE	9
II. LARRY CLASHES WITH THE COACH	21
III. LARRY SEEKS REVENGE	33
IV. AN OLD FRIEND IS FOUND	46
V. KRAG READS LARRY A LESSON	58
VI. A FRIEND IN THE FOE'S CAMP	66
VII. A LESSON IN OBEDIENCE	74
VIII. A VICTORY OVER SELF	82
IX. THE PIG IN THE PARLOR	91
X. "PEEG" EXCITEMENT	99
XI. "PAW" LATTISER HAS A PLAN	109
XII. THE PLAN SUCCEEDS	119
XIII. THE "PEEG MYSTERY" CLEARED	128
XIV. THE PRODIGAL PIG RETURNS	137
XV. HELEN IN TROUBLE	145
XVI. A TREACHEROUS BLOW	156
XVII. THE GAME WITH GOLDEN	168
XVIII. LARRY GETS SOME FACTS	179
XIX. "PAW" LATTISER TO THE RESCUE	188
XX. THE CAPTAIN OF CASCADE	197
XXI. TEMPTATION	207
XXII. A GAME AND AN ALLY WON	217
XXIII. HELEN APPEALS FOR HELP	226
XXIV. THE QUARREL WITH THE MAJOR	236
XXV. THE FINAL GAME	247
XXVI. FACING THE WORLD	258

ILLUSTRATIONS

“SO YOU QUIT—QUIT COLD?”

[Frontispiece](#)

THE PIG WAS BORNE UP THE BACK STAIR

PAGE

[97](#)

“HOW CAN I BE A PROFESSIONAL?”

[158](#)

“OH LARRY, TAKE ME AWAY!”

[235](#)

JIMMY KIRKLAND OF THE CASCADE COLLEGE TEAM

CHAPTER I *The New Man at Cascade*

Boys, young men, men advanced in years but not in spirit, laughed, shouted greetings, pounded each other upon backs and gripped hands—all inspired with the joy of reunion. The shadows of the gray buildings of Cascade College were sharply outlined upon the lawns and walks in the brightness of California sunshine. Behind them the mountains sloped steeply down from the forest-crowned heights to spread over the shelf-like plateau which had been transformed from a wooded wilderness of giant trees to a semi-tropical garden.

Mask-faced Chinese youths in the severest of black clothing, a few in the rustling gorgeousness of their native silks; Nipponese, who wore the clothing of Americans as if they had crept into the garments without disturbing the work of the tailor; American boys from ranch and mountain, from desert and vineyard, in the loose freedom of Western clothing; boys from San Francisco, garbed a month ahead of Broadway style; clear-skinned, handsome Hawaiian youths; a group of dark-skinned East Indian lads; representatives of East and West drawn together by common pursuit of knowledge, pressed steadily toward the wide portals of Ridgeway Hall.

“Oh you Big Bill!”

“Hello, Old Scout! How are the Rangers?”

“Missed you at Honolulu, Dick.”

“Did the mine pan out?”

“Did you strike oil, Jimmy?”

“Wow, there’s Nikki. Hi, you Nikki, how’s Yeddo?”

Brown, yellow, black, red and white, they shouted the greetings and brought the word from all parts of the world, while they importuned each other for news of the long summer vacation. They spoke of Hawaii, the

Philippines, China, Japan, of mines in the mountains, ranches in the desert, oil in the foothills, of oranges, pears and apples, of lumbering, of Alaska, of sea voyages and hunting trips, of work and play.

The students of Cascade College were returning for the fall semester—each with a wonder tale to tell. To Eastern college men the scene would have seemed strange; for under the college spirit and the bubbling joy of the return there was a deeper note. They were boys again—schoolboys back from vacation—but during the two months they had played the parts of men and they had the air of having had a part in the big world outside the classroom.

Standing alone, and feeling lonely during all the merriment, James Lawrence Kirkland watched the reunion. Half a dozen times he had started as if to join the press of students to reach the registrar's office and conclude the ordeal of matriculation, but each time he had stopped as if fascinated by the sight of so many interesting boys. He found himself liking and disliking them and striving to pick out those who would be his friends and those who would be his enemies during the four years to come. He saw an alert, keen-eyed little Nipponese youth running to meet a giant of a boy in a broad Stetson hat.

“Mr. Sunderland,” cried the brown youth.

“Oh you Nikko,” yelled the giant, and lifted the lighter youth in his arms and danced with him.

This was Sunderland, the famous football player and hammer-thrower, and Jimmy Kirkland watched him with new interest. And as he gazed he saw upon the lapel of the coat of the little brown youth a service medal that told of a year with Oku's army in Manchuria.

Larry felt suddenly insignificant and unimportant among these fellows, scarcely older than he was, who had played a part of the world's great events. His confidence and assurance were evaporating, and he found himself lonely among them all. He turned quickly and, jostling through the glad throngs, he reached the registrar's office and was enrolled. The card which he filled in read:

JAMES LAWRENCE KIRKLAND. Residence, Shasta View Ranch,
Pearton, Oregon. Age, eighteen.

He breathed more easily and carried himself with a new respect as he descended the stairs. He was a full Freshman, with fewer conditions to make

up than he expected. His self-confidence returned, and he emerged upon the campus again, walking lightly.

He was an excellent type of athletic youth as he strolled slowly through the throngs, keeping a sharp lookout for some familiar face. In spite of his appearance of youth and his slenderness he possessed a magnificent pair of shoulders, and his blue eyes looked fearlessly into the eyes of those to whom he spoke. He carried himself jauntily, because of his lightness of foot, and his sandy, rebellious hair that bordered upon red, called attention to the well-formed head well set upon the wide shoulders.

Larry Kirkland was the ward of Major James Lawrence, owner of Shasta View, one of the wealthiest men on the Pacific coast. He and Larry's father had been chums for years, and when the boy was left an orphan, the Major had taken him, to make him his heir. Larry had organized the boys of the ranch into a baseball team which, under his guidance and by the advice of Bill Krag, a major league pitcher, had triumphed over all opponents. His experience as manager of the Shasta View team, and his athletic ability and experience in handling the boys who played with him, had made it easy for Larry to become the leading athlete of the preparatory school, near Portland. During his two years there he had been captain of the baseball and track teams and had played on the football team, and he had entered college with the expectation of being greeted as a valuable acquisition. The fact that no one among all the throng of students paid the slightest attention to him, caused him to feel resentful. His buoyant spirit asserted itself.

The scant respect with which the upper classmen showed to new men and to the Freshmen irritated him. He was accustomed to being looked up to for advice, to being a leader, and to dictating the course of action to his associates, and to find himself treated as a small boy was humiliating. He was standing upon a terrace, unnoticed save when some passing Sophomore gave him a careless glance. He was angry with himself for permitting the feeling of resentment to upset him when a shout caused him to turn.

“Larry Kirkland!”

Larry whirled to see a small, lithe, brown boy leaping toward him on the terrace, hands outstretched in greeting and a glad smile on his face.

“Katty!” he exclaimed in surprise. “You here? Where did you come from?”

He seized the hands of the Nipponese boy and shook them heartily.

“I was just wishing I could see some one I knew,” said Larry. “But this is beyond what I hoped for. How are you? Are you in college?”

“I am in the college,” replied Katsura proudly. “My uncle is in merchandising. When I left Shasta View I came to live with him. He sends me to the college that some day I may return to Nippon and serve our Emperor.”

“How are you pitching now?” asked Larry joyously.

“I have pitched but little since I left the ranch,” said Katsura. “Twice during the summer I pitched for our boys. I am stronger, and I think would be better with practice.”

“Well, we must practice then,” said Larry enthusiastically. “We must practice the old javelin throw. Can you still do it?”

“Yes,” said Katsura proudly. “I have tried it often. It is natural, the old motion of my fathers in throwing the spear, and it helps me add speed. How is the Shasta View team?”

“Fine,” cried Larry joyously. “We beat Pearton three times this summer, and we had three teams down from Portland and won two of the games from them.”

“Who is pitcher now?” inquired Katsura a little jealous of his successor.

“Watson. You didn’t know him. He came after you left us. He is about my age and he is faster than Benny Arnett was. But he never has learned to pitch a slow curve the way you could.”

“I have wanted to go back and pitch again.”

“We’ll have to try for the team here. If we both make it what an honor that will be for Shasta View! Are there any other boys here I know?”

“Only Harry Baldwin, from Rogue River ranch,” replied Katsura gravely. “To him I never speak. He has been here two years.”

“I guess he won’t be glad to see me,” laughed Larry. “I haven’t seen him for a year. His father and Uncle Jim hate each other more than ever. Do you remember the time we beat Rogue River ranch team?”

“Yes,” said Katsura, brightening at the recollection, then suddenly growing serious again. “He has not forgotten it either. He never loses an opportunity to attempt to insult or injure me. See, there he is now.”

Larry’s eyes turned in the direction indicated and he saw Harry Baldwin, son of Barney Baldwin, his guardian’s feudal foe. Harry was standing talking to a group of flashily dressed, “sporty-looking” youths. Presently the group moved slowly along the walk near which Larry Kirkland and Katsura were standing. Harry Baldwin was talking, when his eyes suddenly caught the gaze of Larry Kirkland. A sneer came to his face and as he turned his eyes away, he said to his companions:

“Not much material for the athletic teams this fall.”

“I thought it looked good,” argued one of his companions. “I laid some bets before leaving home that we would win everything.”

“It doesn’t promise much,” responded Baldwin. “Fellow up from Los Angeles who ought to be good in the sprints, and two from Fresno who seem good baseball material, not much else.”

“What has Baldwin to do with athletics, Katty?” asked Larry, who had overheard the remarks.

“He is the leader of the sporty crowd here,” replied Katsura. “He is a great friend of the coach, and pretends to run things. He plays on the baseball team and they say he will be captain in the spring.”

“Whew!” whistled Larry in surprise and consternation. “Then I won’t have much chance to make the team.”

“How about this new fellow, Kirkland, from up near you, Harry?” asked one of the flashily-dressed youths. “I heard he was a wonder, and that he had a fine team on his ranch.”

“He’s a fresh little pup,” responded Baldwin, raising his voice and flashing a look toward Larry. “Awful case of swelled head. He thinks he owns the earth, but he is not game. We played a game with them a couple of years ago and they beat us by accident, then refused to play us again. He thinks because he can play on a team his uncle owns he is going to run everything, but he’ll find himself mistaken.”

Larry turned red at the insult flung at him and took an impulsive step forward. Katsura, who had overheard, laid a hand upon his arm.

“Pretend we did not hear,” he said quietly. “He raised his voice to make us hear, and he’ll be hurt if he thinks we didn’t.”

“Well, I know how the land lays,” said Larry, recovering himself with an effort. “That is a frank enough declaration of war. But I’m going to make the team, whether he wants me to or not.”

CHAPTER II

Larry Clashes With the Coach

CANDIDATES FOR THE BASEBALL TEAM
REPORT AT THE ATHLETIC FIELD
AT THREE O'CLOCK TO-DAY.
BRING UNIFORMS.
HAXTON, *Coach*.

The announcement, plastered prominently upon the bulletin board in the main hallway of the administration building, attracted a swarm of youths who read in it the opportunity for winning fame upon the athletic field.

The returning students had waited impatiently through four days of rain and fog for the call for volunteers to defend the honor of the college on the diamond. Since the opening of the term the chief topics of conversation among the lower classmen had been as to the material from which the team was to be made. Only five of the veterans of the preceding spring were on hand, and the students demanded that a team be organized that could regain the laurels lost in the annual game with Golden University, the great rival school.

Larry Kirkland stood before the bulletin board. He was struggling between his desire to rush forward and announce himself a candidate and what he conceived to be his duty to his studies. He was behind with his classes, and carrying a heavy burden of conditions that were yet to be worked off. He had determined not to make any of the athletic teams until he was abreast the others in his studies. Three years of careless and unsystematic studying at the ranch under a tutor and in a fashionable but not thorough private school, had left him in arrears to his books. The discovery, made soon after he entered college, that he was behind other boys of his age, had aroused his pride, and during the autumn and winter, he had worked hard, and made rapid progress. In spite of this, however, there remained a burden of extra work to carry before he could leave the Freshman class, and he was debating whether or not he dared take the time for baseball. But spring was in the air; the California spring with its fogs and chills, broken by fevers of sunshine and summer. The trades were blowing, sweeping the hills

clean to let the brightness and sunshine develop the flowers and renew the greenness, then bringing the fog and chill from the sea to lay a gray blanket over all.

But where winter and spring meet eternally, it is always spring in the veins of the youth of the land. The baseball season was at hand, and the delayed call was out. Larry was longing to get into his uniform, which he had worn ever since Krag, the great Giant pitcher had presented it to him, and flaunt Shasta View in the face of the college youths. The thought that he would not be able to make the team never came to his mind. He felt confident that he could win his way, and the only problem was as to whether or not it would be the right thing to do. He was still hesitating when Katsura came leaping down the steps of the hall.

“Are you going to try for the team?” he inquired laughingly. “Of course you are.”

“No,” said Larry with sudden decision. “I’m afraid I won’t have the time this spring. I’m behind in math, and have two conditions to work off, and it will keep me grinding.”

“I hoped you would try,” said Katsura admiringly. “Shasta View ought to be represented.”

“Why don’t you try, Katty?” asked Larry. “You ought to be able to make it, with practice.”

“I have serious duties,” replied the brown boy gravely. “Besides I would fear to arouse the feeling against my race. It is strong here among some of the students.”

“Oh, I guess Haxton wouldn’t be that narrow, if you could pitch,” said Larry. “He wants to win.”

“I distrust Mr. Haxton,” said Katsura. “He always is with the sporty crowd. Those who have money are his friends.”

“That’s bad for the school,” replied Larry. “Let’s walk over and watch the practice, anyhow.”

The two boys found a vantage spot on the grass at the edge of the wide playing field and, reclining at ease, watched the efforts of the youths who were straining every muscle to prove their ability and right to play for the honor of the school. Both Katsura and Larry felt keenly the renunciation they had made, and each laughingly accused the other of purposely dragging him into temptation.

Boys of every height, of many ages, and many colors, creeds and races, attired in makeshift uniforms, were working desperately to attract the

attention of the coach or his advisors. Some wore white shirts, with the wreckage of old football or baseball trousers. Some wore trousers abbreviated by the simple operation of cutting off at the knees. Many wore socks, with great lengths of bare leg showing. Roommates possessing one uniform had divided the treasure, one taking the trousers and one the shirt. There were track suits, golf suits, white ducks, and one youth drew a laugh by appearing in an undershirt and a wide pair of Chinese trousers that flapped with every move. But all were in deadly earnest.

Haxton, the coach, strolled around among the perspiring, eager candidates, stopping frequently to watch the movement of some one. Occasionally he caused some youngster to thrill by inquiring his name and jotting it upon a pad of paper. He smiled at the awkwardness of some who possessed more zeal than skill. At times he talked with the veterans of the preceding season, directing them to watch certain of the boys who had shown symptoms of skill in catching or throwing.

Larry, remembering his own trials in selecting the teams at Shasta View ranch and at preparatory school, watched Haxton's methods with keen interest. He observed with a feeling of resentment that Harry Baldwin walked with the coach offering advice, and sometimes pointing to some youngster.

"Baldwin seems to be his right-hand man," remarked Larry.

"They are friends," said Katsura. "It is said that Baldwin goes with him around the cities, and spends large sums of money."

"The sports seem to control athletics here."

"There was much complaint last year," remarked Katsura gravely. "The rich and the sporty ran the teams—and we were beaten. Many blamed Haxton."

Haxton blew his whistle at that moment and ended further discussion. The candidates gathered around the big coach, and he quickly divided them into teams, pairing off pitchers and catchers, and telling them to work easily. The fielders whose names he had taken were placed in double lines for infield and outfield, and two of the veterans were set to batting balls for them to field.

The dozen or more pitchers and catchers had lined up near where Larry and Katsura were sitting and the boys watched with considerable amusement the efforts of some of the boys, and commenting upon the speed and ability of others. They laughed as they talked of their own first efforts.

"We probably would have looked greener than these fellows," said Larry. "Yet we thought we were good."

“I remember,” Katsura replied, smiling, “that when you told me to bat, my idea was to stand on the plate and face the ball.”

“We learned rapidly, though,” laughed Larry. “Mr. Krag’s letters of advice were worth a month of ordinary coaching.”

“Do you ever hear from Mr. Krag now?”

“No.” Larry’s face became troubled. “He never has written me since the day the Giants released him. He wrote that his arm had snapped while he was pitching and was useless. Then he stopped writing.”

“I wish I could have known him,” said the little brown boy. “To think of a famous pitcher taking an interest in us, way out here!”

“I’m afraid he is in ill luck,” said Larry. “He never saved money—he was too generous. The papers said he had little saved when the accident ended his career. I wrote and offered to help him, but he never replied.”

“Trying to make it curve?” Larry broke off his recital quickly and called to a tall, slender young fellow who was working hard, and who caught as if playing patty cake, patty cake, baker’s man.

“Yes, but somehow I can’t do it. I seem to have lost the knack. I’m sure I made it curve a few days ago.”

“Let me show you how,” Larry volunteered, springing to his feet and running forward, unable longer to resist the impulse to play. “Come on Katty. Catch a few minutes and we’ll show them how.”

He took the ball and explained to the tall youth the proper manner of gripping it for the different curves, and the method of releasing it from the hand.

“For the real curve—the fast breaking one that darts down and out—let it go this way,” he said, hooking his arm in a wide swing, that ended with a sudden snap of the wrist that sent the ball darting down and outward into Katsura’s hands.

“Now watch him,” he remarked, as Katsura lazily floated a slow twisting curve back at him.

“I can’t do much until my arm warms up,” said Larry. “Must start easy. I was foolish to throw that curve first, but couldn’t resist the temptation.”

For five minutes he explained and demonstrated, showing the tall youth little tricks and motions, until finally the slender boy sent a curve to Katsura.

Both Larry and Katsura were warmed, and as their muscles unlimbered they entered into the spirit of the sport, and instead of retiring to their seats on the grass, they continued throwing and catching with vast enthusiasm,

while the two candidates watched them with respectful admiration and accepted their advice.

“Oh you Katty,” cried Larry. “That curve certainly is better. You ought not waste it. That slow curve twists more, I believe.”

“I am stronger,” called Katsura, “and my hand grip is more powerful.”

“Get out of here!” rasped a voice sharply behind them.

The boys whirled quickly. Half the players overheard the sharp rebuke.

“What are you doing here?” demanded Coach Haxton angrily. “Neither of you reported as candidates.”

“I—I—We”—Larry hesitated, confused and angry. “We didn’t intend to try for the team. I was just trying to show this pitcher how to throw a curve, and I got interested and forgot I was intruding.”

“When I want any assistant coaches I’ll let you know,” snapped the coach angrily. “Either come out and try for the team, or keep off the grounds.”

“Very well,” said Larry, flushed, angry and yet, knowing himself in the wrong, unable to reply as he desired to do, “I will not trouble you again.”

“Hold on, don’t go off mad,” said the coach, relenting a little. “You look as if you could play. If you’re in college why don’t you come out and try?”

“I have conditions to make up,” replied Larry, soothed by the change in tone. “I’m sorry I intruded.”

“You owe it to the school to play if you can,” retorted the coach. “We need some fellows who know something. Where did you ever play?”

“We played together on a team up in Oregon,” responded Larry. “Katsura here was the pitcher”——

“Oh,” said the coach, his voice changing again as he looked at Larry sneeringly, “I’ve heard of you. You’re that fresh young fellow Baldwin was telling me about. We need players, but not yellow ones of your kind.”

He turned quickly, leaving Larry standing in helpless anger.

“Come,” said Katsura. “You see how it is.”

“It is a good thing we decided not to try for the team,” laughed Larry mirthlessly. “Baldwin evidently expected we would.”

CHAPTER III

Larry Seeks Revenge

Larry Kirkland, hot and rebellious from the rebuff inflicted upon him and Katsura by Coach Haxton, made matters worse during the next few days by discussing with several of his classmen the treatment accorded him. The hurt rankled. He had been accustomed to attempting, at least, to treat with fairness the boys who had played ball with him. He had tried, after he had cooled from his first anger, to look upon the matter from the viewpoint of the coach. He did not blame Haxton for ordering him from the field. The point he made was that Haxton himself had been inclined to pass over the infringement of rules, until he discovered who Larry was. Then he had showered insult upon him and that without cause.

Larry found that many of the undergraduates sympathized with him and several who had been witnesses of the rebuke, came to him with their own stories of Haxton's injustice. Had he been willing to let the matter drop there, perhaps all would have been well; but the sympathy of others served to increase Larry's bitterness. He enlarged unconsciously upon his wrong, and held forth that it was no use for him to attempt to enter athletics since the coach was under the influence of the wealthier fellows.

One afternoon Larry, with some of his Freshman sympathizers, was sitting under a tree on the campus, talking over the downfall of the baseball team, and the sporting department generally, when "Paw" Lattiser stopped, gazed over his glasses at the boys and calmly seated himself among them.

Lattiser was one of the notable figures of the school, a Senior and leader of the student body. He was a quiet, whimsical fellow, slow of speech, continually sucking away at an old pipe and strolling around the walks, studying as he walked and smoked. He was past thirty-five years of age, and according to the campus version, he had toiled in the lumber camps, worked as deck hand on a lumber schooner, and, when he finally had saved enough to carry him through college, had taken up his long-delayed education. He was two years getting out of Freshman class, but after that, by steady work and grinding, he held with his class, and had become one of the honor men. He was the advisor of the youngsters, the counselor of the Seniors, and was held in high esteem by the faculty. He looked over the top of his glasses at Larry, who suddenly became confused and stopped talking.

“Thought I heard you say something about the team, Kirkland,” said Lattiser. “Go on; I’m interested.”

“I was just saying,” replied Larry, somewhat taken aback by the manner of the big, loose-jointed student, “that it is no use for me to try for any team. Baldwin has told some yarn about me and has prejudiced them against me.”

“Imagination, plus enlarged ego,” commented Lattiser. “Baldwin says something, you make a fool of yourself and add evidence to his charge. You brood until you think everyone is against you. You kick because a small faction is unjust and accuse everyone.”

“Anyhow,” argued Larry, “he makes it impossible for me to get a chance. Baldwin seems to run athletics, and I’m not foolish enough to give him a chance to order me off the field.”

“You have the interests of the school at heart, I suppose?” inquired Lattiser quietly. “Or your own ambitions?”

“I didn’t intend to try for the team at all,” protested Larry, hurt by the insinuation.

“If you did not want to play,” retorted Lattiser, in his quiet drawl, “you wouldn’t care. If you had the interest of the school in mind, you would overlook any slight placed upon you, for the sake of the college.”

“I’m perfectly willing to sacrifice myself,” mumbled Larry, sulkily. “All I want is a chance.”

“You have a chance,” said Lattiser. “If you youngsters want to do something for this school, there is a big chance. You organize a class team, and develop players who can be ready to play for the college at any time.”

He arose, lighted his pipe, and smiled at their expressions.

“If conditions are as you say,” he said easily, “they cannot last—and you’ll be ready.”

“Let’s do it,” suggested Katsura. “Let’s organize a Freshman team, that will play good ball. In two years we can have our chance, anyhow.”

“Two years?” ejaculated Larry. “Why not get up a team, practice hard, and then challenge the Varsity and beat it?”

“Yes, yes,” cried several of the boys.

“No, that would be wrong,” remarked Katsura. “Even if we could, which I doubt, we are for the school, and ought not to belittle the team that represents it.”

“I think Katty is right,” remarked Larry thoughtfully. “That was what good old Paw was driving at.”

“Anyhow, let’s see the captain of the Freshman team and ask him if he wants us as recruits.”

“Who’ll we play?” objected one youth. “What’s the use of wasting our time practicing if we are not to have games.”

“We can play the other class teams and get a reputation for ourselves,” replied Larry. “Besides, it would be sport to take some of the pride out of those Sophs, especially Baldwin.”

“Remember what Mr. Lattiser said about forgetting yourself?” asked Katsura mischievously.

“By George, he’s right too,” responded Larry irritated. “I can’t seem to forget myself. Come on, let’s find Arries.”

The five boys found Arries, the Freshman captain sitting on a bench on the campus, digging away at mathematics.

“Hello,” he said, responding to their greetings. “Glad to meet you all. I’ve seen you around.”

“We came about the baseball team,” said Larry, after waiting for some of the others to act as spokesman. “We wanted to offer our services. How is the team?”

“Well,” replied Arries gravely, as he laid down his book, “we have a catcher, big Winans; and one of our infielders once stopped a ball. There is a tradition that one of the outfielders once caught a fly. They made me captain because I’m so near sighted I can’t see the ball until the catcher holds it up close to my eyes.”

The boys laughed at the captain’s fantastic description of his team.

“We wondered if you could use us,” said Larry. “Katsura is a good pitcher, good enough for the Varsity team. All of us have played more or less ball, and we want to play if you need us.”

“Need you?” exclaimed Arries, arising and shaking their hands. “Why we need everything excepting a catcher. Winans is the only one on the team who can catch the ferry. We played the Juniors and were lucky to escape alive. They licked us 26 to 2, and it would have been worse if darkness hadn’t interfered.”

“When do we play the Sophs?” inquired Hagstrom. “We ought to be practicing for that, oughtn’t we?”

“I believe the game is in two weeks,” said Arries. “Haven’t paid much attention to it since the late unpleasantness with the Juniors. Fact is, no one else has. It discouraged us.”

“But you are captain,” protested Larry. “Why don’t you call the team together and we’ll practice.”

“I intended to,” replied Arries carelessly. “Fact is, though, I got so far behind in studies I forgot, and then I lost the list of players. You fellows do as you please.”

“Aren’t you going to practice?” inquired Larry half indignantly.

“I? I should say not,” retorted the captain. “Too busy. Besides, we only play for fun, and it’s hard work to practice. Too hot.”

“If you will tell us who the catcher is we’ll find him,” suggested Katsura.

“He’s that big fellow from Bakersfield,” replied the captain rising. “Takes everything in earnest. I’ll have to go to class now. Thank you fellows for coming to my assistance.”

“No wonder they get beaten,” laughed Larry, as Arries strolled away. “Let’s hunt Winans. Katty and a catcher ought to beat all that kind of team without help.”

Winans, they found, was a large, slow-speaking, quick-moving youth. He looked slow, and the ease with which he moved made him appear lazy. The boys found him quite the opposite.

“I’m glad some one in this class wants to play real ball,” he said when they had stated their purpose. “Arries only asked the fellows he happened to know to join the team, and most of them forgot about it. I had to find a few to fill in the game we played, and that was a nightmare. If you fellows want to hustle, I’m with you.”

The following week was a busy one. Winans roomed in a house only a block from the one in which Larry Kirkland had taken up his abode, and two other Freshmen were in the same house. Instead of reporting for practice at the athletic field, the Freshmen decided they could get better results by taking simple practice in the big yard behind the boarding house. Each evening they played until it was too dark to see the ball. With Katsura pitching better and better, and three of the boys able to play fairly well, Larry, who by common consent had been made the leader, felt that for a class team, it would do well, especially as Winans rapidly learned to work well with the diminutive pitcher. It was hard to get nine Freshmen to practice, but usually Larry had six or seven each evening, and as the day of the contest approached he felt confident that his team would furnish a surprise for the Sophomores, who had three of the regular Varsity team. Also interest among the Freshmen increased as the date came near, and Winans sent a dozen volunteers, all of whom were tried out and told to be on hand.

The game was to be played on the athletic field, and after class meetings to stir up enthusiasm, both classes marched down upon the field, shouting defiance at each other, while the upper classmen gathered in the stands and bleachers, watching them with condescending smiles of amusement, and striving to stir the lower classmen up to the point of starting the annual rush.

Freshmen, however, were herded into the bleachers at one side of the field, the Sophomores into the other, and the opportunity for a rush was averted, or rather delayed.

The two teams arrayed in strange assortments of uniforms, improvised or borrowed for the occasion, practiced, and during the laughable practice of the Sophomores, Katsura walked to where Larry Kirkland was examining a bat.

“Baldwin is trying to make trouble,” he said in low tones. “Look.”

Larry looked in the direction indicated and saw Harry Baldwin in conversation with several Seniors who had assumed police and other duties. One of the Seniors, who had been chosen to umpire, nodded and walked toward the Freshman bench.

“Here, Fresh,” he called, beckoning to Larry. “And you,” he added, addressing Katsura, “what are you doing on this team?”

“We are members of the Freshman class,” they responded quickly.

“You two can’t play,” decided the Senior brusquely. “We can’t allow ringers in these games. Here,” he added, calling the Freshman captain, “you Arries, get these two ringers out and send in two others.”

“Who says we are ringers?” demanded Larry, advancing angrily upon the Senior. “We have as much right to play as any one.”

“I say so,” replied the Senior calmly. “You play too well. I’ve heard about you, and your professional training. Now scoot.”

Speechless with rage and mortification Larry advanced more threateningly. But Katsura quietly grasped his arm.

“It’s a lie,” he spluttered. “But if Baldwin runs this school I suppose I’ll have to stay out.”

“No more back talk, Freshie,” remarked the Senior. “Don’t speak that way to your superiors. Call me Sir.”

“Don’t let it fuss you, Kirkland,” said Arries mildly. “It isn’t important. It is all for fun.”

Larry, raging inwardly, turned and walked with Katsura from the field, while the Sophomores jeered. He was hot with the injustice of it and burning

for revenge. He took his seat with the Freshmen and strove to watch the slaughter of the Freshmen, but before long he slipped from the crowd, and hurried away, refusing to be comforted even by the calm philosophy of Katsura, who followed.

CHAPTER IV

An Old Friend is Found

The train bearing Larry Kirkland back to Shasta View ranch for the long summer vacation carried a heavy-hearted, discouraged youth, for whom even the pleasure of home-coming was dimmed. His college year had been a series of disappointments and rebuffs. He had gone to Cascade College filled with high hopes and dreams of winning a place among the men of the institution. The year had been one of rebukes, and loneliness, except for the friendship of a few. He, who had always been a leader and popular, found himself looked upon with suspicion, and rated as undesirable by many. His attempts, which were few, to add to his circle of friends, had been met with coldness. Every effort had been a failure, and some of them, he realized, had been serious mistakes, chiefly because they were misunderstood.

For all his woes he blamed Harry Baldwin who had exerted his influence against his boyhood rival in every direction. Larry realized that he had been beaten by Baldwin, and felt, bitterly, that he could not fight his neighbor with the same weapon. Instead of choosing his own circle of friends, ignoring Baldwin and living in a different set and circle, Larry, rebuffed, had withdrawn more and more, to himself, and avoided introductions, even to those who were with him in classes. Katsura, the diminutive Japanese boy, had remained his staunch and loyal supporter, and at times, a valuable advisor who had prevented him from making even more serious mistakes in his dealings with the other boys. He had Winans, the hearty, good-natured youth who had caught for the Freshman team, and Lattiser occasionally favored him by stopping to talk with him on the campus, always with a quiet word of advice. Larry did not understand, until during the final month of the spring term, that his friendship for Katsura was an additional cause for his unpopularity, or that, among a certain element of the student body, there existed a hatred for the Japanese. That discovery aroused his resentment.

It was with relief that he finished his examinations and caught the train for Shasta View. The train was panting out of the wide valley into a narrow gorge in the mountains and commencing its twisting, tortuous climb over the Cascades when he awoke. His first glimpse of Mount Shasta, towering high overhead, revived his spirits, which rose with the altitude as the train labored

upward through the twisting canon, past the gushing, geyser like springs of Shasta, over the Black summit, and went racing downward through the fir forests into the valley garden of the Rogue River.

He was standing in the vestibule, grip in hand, when the train stopped at Pearton, and, almost before the porter could throw open the doors he sprang to the platform. The depot wagon from the ranch was waiting and, recognizing the wagon and ponies, Larry ran toward it, expecting to see Major Lawrence. He saw the driver jump down, and glance along the long line of cars. There was something familiar to him in the slope of the huge shoulders and the easy grace of movement. Before Larry could recall where he had seen that form, the driver turned toward him. Larry dropped his suitcase and sprang forward.

“You—you, Mr. Krag? Where did you come from?” he cried.

Krag, the former pitcher of the Giants, one of the great players of baseball history, stretched out his huge hands and seized Larry.

“Hello, Jimmy boy,” he bellowed cheerfully. “I never would have known you. I was watching for a kid the size of the one I put on the train at Portland—and I find a man. Gee, boy, how you’ve grown!”

“I’d have known you anywhere,” exclaimed Larry eagerly shaking hands. “Tell me, how did you come to be waiting for me? Where did you drop from? I haven’t heard a word from you for more than a year—and find you here.”

“I’m working for Major Lawrence,” Krag responded. “I asked him to let me come down to meet you. I wanted to give you a surprise. You don’t know how lucky you are to have him your friend, boy,” he added seriously. “He’s the squarest, best fellow in the world.”

“I know that,” replied Larry, growing serious, “but how did you come to be here, and when did you come?”

“Nearly two months ago,” Krag said laughing. “I’m getting to be an old residenter on the ranch. You’d better behave yourself during vacation. I’m general overseer, and if you don’t behave, I’ll take you in hand.”

“Where did Uncle Jim find you?” asked Larry, still puzzled. “He never mentioned you in his letters.”

“I suppose he wanted to surprise you when you came home,” replied Krag. “He always thinks of things that might please some one.”

“Where have you been?” demanded Larry. “I wrote as soon as I heard the Giants had let you go. The manager wrote that you had dropped out without telling any of the fellows your plans, and had gone West. I wrote

twice more, and asked to have the letters forwarded, but never heard from you, excepting one paper said you were coaching a team. I wrote there, and it was not true.”

“I know,” said Krag earnestly. “I received one letter, and I was proud to know you still thought of me. Most of the others forgot me as soon as my arm went back on me. I’m beginning to think now that the luckiest day in my life was the one on which I found a lonely little boy on a railroad train and amused myself entertaining him.”

“I never can forget your kindness,” said Larry, “but how did you happen to quit the Giants?”

“It was my own fault,” said the big pitcher quietly. “Jump into the wagon, I’ll toss the trunk up behind and tell you while we are driving out to the ranch.”

A few moments later the wagon was rattling rapidly through the main street of Pearton, and Krag did not speak until he pulled the ponies to a more sedate gait ascending the hill.

“I was drawing a big salary,” he said, “one of the best; \$8,000 a season and a lot besides, easy money, forced upon me by admirers. I thought it would last forever. I never had known anything about business. Jumping from nothing a year to \$8,000 spoiled me. Money ran away from me, and I never saved anything. I seldom had a month’s pay saved up and usually had to draw advance money before the winter was over, to tide me through. I drew big pay for eight seasons, and made a good fellow of myself.

“My arm felt as good as ever, and I was pitching just as well, so I never worried about it, or tried to save. It seemed good for a dozen more years. I was pitching against a weak club, working easily and winning, I wasn’t even trying hard, but suddenly, as I tossed up a slow twister, a ligament in the arm snapped. They nursed me along the rest of the season, hoping the arm would come back. I knew it wouldn’t. It was done, and I couldn’t even go to the minors.

“The Giants offered me a contract the next spring. There wasn’t a chance for me to pitch and I couldn’t go take money under false pretenses. I might have had a job as first baseman on account of my batting.”

He waited for Larry to laugh, but Larry was so sympathetic, he had forgotten that Krag was joking at his own expense on account of his weak hitting.

“I was done as a ball player—with the best part of my life gone and only a few hundred dollars. That’s the trouble with this baseball business. A young fellow makes good money at first, but after six or eight or ten years,

he is through, and the years he might have used in getting a good start in some trade or profession are gone. I looked around for a job. The fellows who had been my closest associates commenced dodging for fear I'd ask them for something, so I decided to come West and go to work. I landed in Portland, almost broke and got a job working on the docks. I didn't want any of my old friends to find me, but one did. He was a reporter. He wrote that I was in Portland and might locate there if I found the proper opening. Major Lawrence saw the note, wrote, offered me a job, and here I am."

"That's like him," said Larry tenderly. "He never forgets. The day I came, I told him of your kindness to me, and he said he would like to meet you. He probably has been watching for mention of you ever since."

"He certainly is good," said Krag feelingly. "He must have sized me up as too strong or too lazy to do real work, and put me in charge of the packing houses. Then, when Arnett, his general overseer, quit a month ago, the Major gave me his position—in spite of the fact that I'm just starting to learn the ranch business."

"Gee, that's great!" exclaimed Larry enthusiastically. "You must live at the bungalow?"

"Yes, the Major insisted that I take a room there. He said he was so lonely with you gone that he couldn't find any one even to have a satisfactory quarrel with. He gets mad at me because I won't get mad at him, and we have some magnificent quarrels."

"He likes to have any one contradict him, so that he can pretend to get mad," laughed Larry. "The only thing that makes him really angry is for someone to agree with him all the time. He's the grandest, finest man in the world, and I never can repay him for his kindness to me."

"Nor I," said Krag seriously. "He saved me from becoming a day-laborer—or worse—and I thank you for your part in it."

"My part? I hadn't any part. Besides I think Uncle Jim guessed pretty shrewdly that you'd make the best kind of a man to run the ranch for him. All I'm afraid of is that you'll be too busy to teach me any baseball."

"By the way," said Krag quickly. "I've been so busy gossiping about myself, I forgot to ask if you made the team?"

The wagon, rolling along at a rapid gait, was nearing the crest of the last billow of ground, and ahead, over the tops of the orchards, they could see the gables of Shasta View. Towering high in the background rose the mountains, and at that moment the fog wreath was wind-torn from the brow of Shasta, revealing the cone in its steely whiteness.

“It seems home now,” said Larry, pointing away across the valley. “I never shall forget how it seemed the first morning I came, walking, homesick, scared and tired, carrying the uniform you gave me and wondering what kind of a reception I would get.”

“Stick to the subject,” said Krag quickly, observing that Larry was striving to turn the conversation into other channels. “Did you make the team?”

“I didn’t play any baseball,” said Larry reluctantly, “I didn’t even try for the team.”

“Why?” asked Krag in quick surprise.

“Please don’t ask now,” said Larry quietly. “I’ll tell you later. It is not pleasant, and just now I want to forget it.”

They were descending the last hill rapidly, and in a few minutes Krag touched the ponies with the whip and they whirled into the long avenue with a fine burst of speed. Before the ponies stopped at the front of the bungalow, Larry Kirkland had leaped from the wagon, sprang up the steps and threw both arms around Major Lawrence. The Major, puffing, scolding, growling, while tears of joy dimmed his eyes, patted his hand, and to hide his emotion, scolded Krag for loitering, declaring it had taken him an hour to drive from Pearton to the ranch.

CHAPTER V

Krag Reads Larry a Lesson

Major Lawrence arose from his seat by the fire, stretching himself, scolded.

“Pair of young wastrels,” he declared accusingly. “Wasting my time, making me sit here and listen to your yarns. You ought to be made to work overtime for it. Here the ranch accounts are a week behind; and Krag loafing and telling yarns, leaving it for an old man like me to do.”

“Sit down, Major,” said Krag easily. “I’ll finish them up after you and Larry go to bed.”

“You shan’t do it,” stormed the Major. “Sit up all night, then be too sleepy to get up and do your work. I’ll do them myself.”

He stormed away to his private office, sniffing angrily, and Larry Kirkland and Bill Krag laughed.

“He’d never be happy unless he scolded someone,” said Krag. “I think he is half mad because I didn’t do the accounts, so he could quarrel with me over them.”

“I had a notion to tell him he was too old to be working late,” laughed Larry. “He always calls himself old and gets mad when any one else does it.”

They were sitting before the big open fire in the living room, for the day had closed with a misty rain. Larry was expanding under the home influence and the Major’s kindness and love, thinly concealed under his pretense of anger. Chun, the Chinese youth who had succeeded to the entire charge of the household, had served a late supper at the fireside, and Krag had told stories. His tales of exciting games on many major league ball fields, of the old friends and foes, of desperate struggles, of narrow escapes and hard-luck defeats. The big pitcher suddenly broke off in his recital of events and lapsed into a thoughtful silence, while Larry took up the story of his own exploits on the Shasta View team and in the preparatory school. Major Lawrence occasionally chuckled over some tale of boyish outbreaks, but Krag maintained a silence, punctuated by the sucking of his pipe.

After Major Lawrence’s choleric exit from the scene, Krag smoked silently for some time. Then he roused himself suddenly and asked:

“Larry, why didn’t you play ball at Cascade?”

“I—I—well, the truth is they didn’t want me.”

He launched into a long explanation of his trials and troubles at Cascade College, of his feud with Harry Baldwin and of Baldwin’s influence over the coach and those in charge of the athletic teams at Cascade. As he talked the recollection of his wrongs stirred him to eloquence, and more and more he forgot Krag and voiced his inner injuries.

“So you quit—quit cold, showed the yellow?” inquired Krag quietly, as he removed his pipe from between his teeth and sat forward waiting for a reply.

Larry’s mouth opened as in surprise. He started to make a reply, broke off shortly and sat staring thoughtfully into the fire. Krag, smoking glanced toward him from the corner of his eye. He saw the boy hurt, and angry, and puffed away in silence waiting for the youth to speak, to defend himself or give some explanation.

“I’ve been afraid of it for a month,” said Krag quietly. “When I picked up the papers in town and did not see your name in the lists, I thought you had the sulks and were not trying for the team. I believed if you tried you could have made it.”

“What could a fellow do, under the circumstances?” asked Larry sulkily. “I couldn’t beg them to let me play.”

“I said to myself,” Krag continued, unheeding the remark, “I said, ‘he has the swelled head.’ I hoped it wasn’t true.”

“It wasn’t true,” said Larry flashing into anger. “You know I’m not that kind. I wasn’t trying to run the team, or anything of that sort.”

“No,” replied Krag, still unmoved. “You didn’t ask them to make you captain, you just walked out and condescended to show them a few things about the game. You didn’t put on a uniform and get out and work; you loafed around waiting for them to beg you to help out the team.”

“It isn’t true. You know it isn’t true,” stormed Larry, although he stirred uncomfortably, realizing that Krag was hitting nearer the truth than was comfortable.

“I know you don’t think it is true, Larry,” said the big pitcher kindly. “You don’t know. I believe you dislike that kind of a fellow almost as much as I do—and I’ve been with them for years. I ought to know the symptoms. I hoped you’d escape it, that’s what made me so anxious to see your name in the paper.” Larry maintained a sulky, aggrieved silence.

“The trouble with you, Larry,” said Krag after a long pause, during which he lighted his pipe afresh, “is plain, untrimmed, swelled head.”

“Yes it is,” he said sharply when Larry started to expostulate—“plain, unvarnished, swelled head. I’ve seen too many kids ruined by that disease not to know it—and too many to permit me to keep quiet and let you go wrong from it.

“You went to college thinking you were the big recruit to the baseball ranks. It was natural. You had been the whole thing here on the ranch, boss of everything and used to being obeyed. You were the best player in that little prep school, and bossed the whole works and showed them how the game should be played. Then when you went down to Cascade your feelings were hurt because you weren’t asked to run the team.”

Larry maintained an angry, sullen silence. He was boiling with resentment, outraged, scandalized and shocked at the brutal accusations hurled at him and heaped upon him by the man he had made an idol for years.

“You did feel a little hurt because no one paid much attention to you, didn’t you?”

No answer.

“You did want to play? You would have played in spite of studies, if they had shown the proper respect for your ability, wouldn’t you?”

No reply.

“You didn’t organize that Freshman team out of love for the Freshman team, but with an idea of beating a fellow you didn’t like. Isn’t that true?”

No response, except that Larry shoved his hands more deeply into his pockets and slid lower into his chair.

Krag smoked in silence for a time. Then he arose, knocked the dottle from his pipe, stretched himself and coming nearer, dropped a big hand onto the boy’s shoulder.

“If I didn’t like you so much I wouldn’t tell you these things, Larry,” he said quietly. “I wouldn’t know just how you felt, if I hadn’t felt that way myself when I started playing baseball. I don’t want you to make the mistakes I made, or suffer from them the way I did. You know that, don’t you?”

A long silence.

“If—if—if what you say is true,” said Larry hesitatingly, “what ought I do?”

“It is true, isn’t it?”

“There’s a lot of truth in it.”

“Then all you’ve got to do,” said Krag cheerily, “is to treat yourself the way you’d treat one of your players—Benny, the fellow you had the trouble with, for instance. Just go out there, work, and keep your mouth shut. Obey orders, and let others decide whether they are right or wrong.”

“But if Baldwin, and the coach?” Larry hesitated.

“Rot,” said Krag. “Larry—if you’re right, no wrong person can make you wrong. In a college it is the students that decide who is wrong and who is right, just as in a government it is the people. The bosses can run either a ball team or a government for a time—but not with the public watching them—and they watch baseball closer than they do governments in this country.”

CHAPTER VI

A Friend in the Foe's Camp

Larry Kirkland, filled with new resolutions and abounding with life and spirits after a vacation of work and play, was returning to college determined to recover his lost standing and to win his way.

He and "Gatling" Krag were waiting for the Shasta Flyer to roll down from the North and bear him over the mountains to Cascade College. They had talked of the summer, of the ball games at the ranch, the annual camping trip to Crater Lake Park, and of the hopes and plans for Larry's success at college.

"Don't come back without your C, Larry, boy," said the big ex-pitcher. "Remember, it is more the victory over yourself that counts than the mere making of the team."

"I'm going to try Bill," said the boy. "I want to thank you for showing me my mistakes. I guess I was a pretty swelled-headed kid."

"Was?" asked Krag, laughingly. "It's all right if it is in the past tense. A fellow has a right to think well of himself if he does not let it blind him."

At that moment an automobile dashed up to the station platform in a cloud of dust, and turning, they recognized the car as the new one from the Rogue River ranch. They had seen Harry Baldwin driving it at a reckless rate of speed over the roads at intervals during the summer, but Harry Baldwin was not among those who alighted. Two servants were busy removing luggage and checking it, while a slender, graceful girl, pouting and evidently in a bad humor, was standing by the machine, petulently replacing the wind-blown locks of fair hair that had escaped from beneath her motoring cap. The girl was obviously annoyed, and she tapped her foot impatiently upon the platform and gazed up and down as if expecting someone. Larry Kirkland gazed at her in frank admiration. He recognized in her the fair-haired, pretty child who had accompanied Barney Baldwin to Shasta View ranch three years before, to witness the game between the teams of Shasta View and Rogue River ranches. Larry recalled with a sense of hurt that she had applauded the Rogues.

"Chance to start a flirtation on the train, Larry," said Krag teasingly. "I guess our pretty little friend is going on the train with you. She seems in

distress. Why don't you rush to the rescue and make yourself solid with the fair maiden?"

"Oh, shut up," said Larry, reddening under the teasing. "I guess I wouldn't be very welcome as a champion. She is related to the Baldwins, cousin or something of Harry's, and she probably would snub me."

"I've noticed," laughed Krag, "that the female of the species is less hateful than the male in these family feuds. Maybe she could influence Harry to let you alone."

A few moments later the Flyer roared down the valley and Krag gripped the hand of his young friend.

"Good-bye, Larry," he said. "Don't quit. Fight it out—you'll win."

"Thanks," said Larry, "I'll win—if only over myself. Good-bye."

In spite of his plan, not to pay any attention to the pretty girl, he scarcely had placed his grip in his berth when the opportunity to meet her was forced upon him. She was struggling with several pieces of baggage, and the overloaded porter was helpless. The girl seemed ready to weep from annoyance, as she strove to pass down the aisle to her section.

"May I assist?" asked Larry, quickly observing her plight.

"Oh, thank you!" she exclaimed gratefully, as he seized upon her hand baggage and carried it for her. He arranged the baggage, saw her seated, and lifted his cap.

"Thank you, again," she said, smiling. "It was so annoying. Cousin Harry promised to go with me on this train, and he went away with some friends and failed to appear. I was left to make the trip alone."

"He is not appreciative of his opportunities," said Harry, struggling with his first compliment.

"Oh," she laughed, "Harry still regards me as a child. He never appreciated me—or anyone else, excepting himself."

"Are you going far?" inquired Larry, after an embarrassing pause.

"To St. Gertrude's. It is a girl's school near Cascade. I am to go there because Harry is in Cascade and he is supposed to watch over and protect me."

"Won't that be fine?" ejaculated Larry enthusiastically. "I'm in Cascade—perhaps we may see each other occasionally."

"You a Cascade man?" she asked. "Harry never mentioned any of the Pearton boys"——

"I beg pardon," said Larry flushing quickly. "I forgot to tell you who I am—— Your cousin and I are——well, we are not friends. I am Larry Kirkland."

"Larry Kirkland?" she said. "I never heard the name"——

"I'm Major Lawrence's ward"——

"Oh!" the girl exclaimed.

The tone was a commingling of surprise, consternation and half disappointment.

Larry reddened, and an embarrassing pause ensued.

"I see you have heard of me," he remarked lamely. "I saw you several years ago."

"Yes-s," the girl said hesitatingly. "I have heard Harry speak of you. I remember seeing you—at a baseball game, but you have grown so I did not recognize you."

"Your cousin and I have not been——well, friends," he remarked. "So I suppose you have not heard much good concerning me."

"Oh, as for that," she said smiling, "Harry and I are not friends either. He is a bear and he treats me as if I were still a child."

"I do not see why we should be enemies, just because our families are," remarked Larry, feeling as if he had turned traitor to Major Lawrence when he said it. "It is not our quarrel."

"No," she said doubtfully. "You do not seem a bit as Harry said you were. I expect he just told those horrid stories about you because he does not like you."

"I'm sorry he chooses me as an enemy," said Larry, remembering Krag's advice and striving not to permit his temper to be ruffled.

"Harry says he will not let you play on the teams at Cascade," she replied quickly. "He says the fellows do not like you and will not play if you do."

"I wasn't very popular last year," said Larry, laughing to conceal his embarrassment. "You see I didn't know them and thought they did not treat me well. I hope it will be better this year."

In a few moments their embarrassment passed, and the boy and girl chattered away merrily. Larry told of his boy life back in the East, of the death of his parents and Major Lawrence's kindness in taking him as his own son; of his trip West, and of his meeting with the Giants and Krag the pitcher. Helen Baldwin was sympathetic.

“I can understand,” she said. “My father and mother are poor and we are a large family, so it was hard for papa to give us all he would have liked to. Uncle Barney offered to take me and educate me, so I am much in the same situation that you are—only when Uncle Barney goes East, he takes me, and I visit with my parents, and next summer he is going to bring Bertha, my younger sister, to the ranch as company for me, as Harry and Bob and I do not play well together.”

By bedtime they were fast friends. The feud of the Lawrence and Baldwin families seemed buried so far as they were concerned. And the following morning, when they arrived, Larry Kirkland carried the girl’s baggage to the wagonette that was to take her to St. Gertrude’s and promised that he would call on Thursdays when the girls were allowed visitors.

As the wagonette turned up the avenue he seized his own neglected baggage and springing into a carriage, started for Cascade campus, filled with a new determination to win his C.

CHAPTER VII

A Lesson in Obedience

Cascade College baseball team was out for the fall practice. Only a few recruits, fellows who had been barred by their studies or by conditions during the regular season, were out with the veterans who, proudly wearing their C's were tossing balls around the long vacant field. The team had been a failure in its important games, and Coach Haxton, chafing under criticism of the upper classmen and the dearth of interest throughout the college, had decreed that the team must work during the fall until the football men occupied the stage, and he had threatened angrily to replace several of the veterans of the team with youngsters. Yet there had not been a call for recruits to strengthen the team.

It was not customary at Cascade to call baseball volunteers in the fall term, but to issue calls late in the winter term and at the opening of the spring. The games played in the fall were not of importance from a college standpoint. The "big" games against Golden University and St. Mary's—those that counted in the standing of the rival schools—were played in the spring. But during the fall and early winter—when the genial climate permitted playing, games were scheduled against the strong teams of the nearby cities, games which tested the ability of the players even more than did those of the championship season; as their opponents usually were the best of the independent amateurs.

It was onto this scene of half-hearted activity that Larry Kirkland came on the crisp, perfect afternoon, followed by Katsura, Winans and Big Trumbull, the heavy-hitting giant who had sided with Larry during his troubles of the preceding spring. The arrival of the quartette on the playing field created something of a sensation among the veterans, who stopped their listless practice and watched them wonderingly. Those close together exchanged puzzled questions as to the meaning of the sudden descent of the leaders of the opposition of the preceding term. Behind the quartette sauntered "Paw" Lattiser, an open book in one hand, a straw hat absent-mindedly held in his mouth. He was bareheaded as usual, and appeared to pay no attention either to the new recruits or to the regulars, who were practicing.

Coach Haxton was standing talking with some of the pitchers and catchers, instructing them as to the way he wanted signals given. He turned quickly as the quartette approached.

“Well?” he asked belligerently, “I suppose you fellows want us to stop practice and let you use the field?”

“No,” said Larry, acting as spokesman. “We came down to offer ourselves for the team, if you need us or can use us.”

Haxton was taken aback by the conciliatory tone of the youth he had considered the ring-leader of the opposition.

“Oh, you’d like to get on the team, eh?” he said harshly. “I suppose you’d like to be captain—or perhaps to coach it?”

A wave of angry resentment at the tone and the words arose within Larry and he struggled to control his growing anger.

“No, sir,” he said. “I’ll try to make the team, if I’m good enough. You see, we did not come out to report last year and you ordered us off the field because we didn’t. Now we report and are ready to try with the others for positions.”

Harry Baldwin, who had been tossing a ball around, came near enough to overhear the conversation. Haxton hesitated.

“Well,” he said, “if you fellows want to take your chances and will obey”——

“We do,” replied Winans; “maybe we weren’t in the right last term. We figure that we owe it to the college to do all we can to help”——

“I guess the college can run without your help,” said Baldwin. “You didn’t appear very anxious to help it last spring.”

“We have just admitted that we believe we were wrong, Baldwin,” said Larry. “It seems to me we are offering whatever we have—and Mr. Haxton is judge of what is best for the team and the school.”

“You seem to think you can win a place on this team as easily as you can one with those niggers and Japs at the ranch,” sneered Baldwin. “You’ll find the decent fellows here will not stand for it—or for you.”

“Hold on, Baldwin, hold on,” remarked Paw Lattiser mildly. “Seems to me, from what I’ve heard, someone else is trying to run things.”

“What have you to do with this, Lattiser?” snapped Haxton, who resented the patronizing calmness of the veteran. “I’m running this team.”

“Well,” replied Lattiser quaintly, “I admit that—although from the last two years’ showing you have little enough to boast about. The point is this: I

gave these youngsters some advice last fall; told them they were here to work for the honor of the school and not for their own reputations. I overheard them planning to come and offer their services, so I thought I'd stroll down and see if they were right when they claimed, last year, that they were not wanted."

"We want players who can play—and are willing to do right," said Haxton. "We've had enough swelled-headed players who think they can run the team."

"You're the judge of their ability," remarked Lattiser. "But it seems to me you're judging the ability of these four youngsters in rather an off-hand manner, since you've never even seen them play. There is a feeling among the students now that the teams are not being chosen with a view to the best results—and if this idea spreads it will not help Cascade as an athletic school—or any other way."

"Any student is at liberty to try for the team," assented Haxton sulkily.

"You're not going to let them"—Baldwin stopped in the midst of his angry question. He, as well as Haxton, recognized the power of Paw Lattiser over the students, and he checked himself through fear of arousing the placid veteran to action.

"They are at liberty to TRY," responded Haxton, emphatically. "Come on, you fellows, get to work. We've been wasting a lot of time arguing over nothing. You new men get out there in the outfield and chase flies. We'll soon discover whether or not you can play ball."

Lattiser stood with a twisted grin on his face. Larry, who had flushed with a rebellious start at the order to chase flies saw the veteran watching him, smiled his thanks and turning raced to catch Katsura, who already was sprinting for the outfield. Lattiser stood for an instant, then strolled away, opening his neglected book.

"The Cascade team is looking up," he remarked whimsically to himself. "I thought that youngster was going to refuse to go. He is all right—he and that little brown boy."

"We're in just as bad a fix as ever, Katty," remarked Larry as they trotted back, perspiring after pursuing a long hit to the center field fence. "Haxton will not give us a fair chance—but we must keep at it, and keep trying."

"One of our philosophers says," replied the little Nipponese, "that he who is in power never is in power long who rules unfairly."

"Gee," laughed Larry, "maybe our philosophers say the same thing; but it is hard for me to swallow."

That evening he wrote a long letter to Krag, detailing the events of the day. He awaited anxiously for four days for the answer, wondering how the big ex-pitcher would look upon his moves and his submission to what he considered unjust treatment.

“You’ve scored in the first inning,” read Krag’s letter. “Just keep plugging away and they can’t keep you down. Don’t criticise any of the other fellows, or offer advice unless it is asked. You are lucky to have three fellows with you. Work with them and let Haxton go his own gait. The guy who isn’t square as a boss soon cooks his own goose.”

“You see,” remarked Katsura laughing as Larry read to him what Krag had written, “you have your philosophers. Mr. Krag says the same thing—in a different way.”

CHAPTER VIII

A Victory Over Self

The fall and winter brought little change in the situation, and when the holiday time came, Larry Kirkland found himself barred as completely from the Cascade team as he had been during his Freshman rebellion.

Day after day during the fall, while the team was playing and in training, he reported at the field, toiled at chasing the balls batted to outfielders by the regulars, and during the breathing spells worked with Katsura, Trumbull and Winans. At the first he secretly hoped that coach Haxton would see the injustice of the stand he had taken and permit them to participate in the practice, at least sufficiently to ascertain whether or not they were good enough to play the game. But after the first day, Haxton paid little or no attention to them, save to issue brief orders for them to go to the outfield and catch flies. If one of them dared advance to the infield and occupy a place temporarily vacant, he was sent back with a sharp rebuff. In the hours outside of practice, the ostracised quartette gathered on the lot near their "barracks" and indulged in real practice.

After three weeks of that kind of treatment, Larry found himself in a mood to rebel openly, to tell Haxton and Baldwin what he thought of them and to quit. Only the weekly letter from Krag, praising him for his pluck in sticking to it under trying circumstances, kept him from the move that would have been fatal. He managed to maintain a cheerful demeanor while practicing with the regulars, but occasionally, while with his own chums, he broke out in protests.

"Confound it, fellows," he remarked one evening, as they rested after an hour of catching and fielding practice on their improvised field, "I don't want them to think I'm a quitter, or that they can run over us this way. It is getting on Haxton's nerves to have us come out and pretend that we like being errand boys. He knows we see the weaknesses of his team, and he knows that he is making a big mistake in treating us this way."

"One of our philosophers says," remarked Katsura, "that the more evil one does to a foe, the more one hates him."

"But that isn't the worst of it," continued Larry, "I have a guilty feeling all the time that I am doing Cascade a lot of harm myself; that I ought to quit."

“How do you figure that out?” inquired Winans.

“Haxton and Baldwin do not dislike any of you. They hate me and I have dragged all of you into it because you are my friends. If I’d quit going to the field, he’d soon give you fellows a chance”——

“It’s the principle of the thing, Larry,” said Trumbull. “Now, as for myself, I don’t care a bit whether I play on the team or not. In fact, I’d rather just be lazy and loaf around than get out there and hustle for a place on the team. But I can’t do it. I want to see Cascade get the right system in athletics. If we stick together we’ll soon have the sentiment of the better bunch of fellows with us and with the sentiment of the students behind us”——

“That is the big danger,” interrupted Winans. “If we win by taking control ourselves, we antagonize all the other crowd. There are some decent fellows with them; because they do not understand what the situation is, and they have their friends. Even if the secret societies did get them onto the team, they’re good players. It will not do athletics any good if we merely drive out one faction and put another in control.”

At that juncture Paw Lattiser came around the building, stopped, gazed at them solemnly over the rims of his heavy glasses and remarked:

“Hello, youngsters, plotting again?”

“We were just talking over the athletic situation,” replied Winans, “especially the baseball team.”

“I thought it was about time for me to look up you kids,” said the veteran, seating himself. “I haven’t had time to watch you. What is it, more trouble?”

“Same old trouble,” replied Trumbull ruefully. “We’re all trying for the team, and all we get to do is to chase flies in the outfield.”

“Have you been doing that faithfully?” asked Lattiser earnestly.

“Every afternoon,” replied Winans. “Haxton scolds if we pitch or catch, and I’ve forgotten how a bat feels in my hands. He shoos us out if we get too near the infield”——

“It looks as if he didn’t want you,” remarked Lattiser, thoughtfully rubbing his chin. “I thought maybe he would be more of a man. The thing for him to do was either to work you hard, then say you would not do for the team, or else to play fair. He does not seem to have the nerve to do one, or the moral courage to do the other.”

“Yes, but what are we to do about it?” asked Larry quickly.

“My boy, keep on working hard, don’t talk back, don’t give him any opportunity to order you off the field. Meantime, you four are learning just as much baseball and a lot more discipline than you would learn if you were on the team. Leave the rest to Pop. I’ll figure out some way to straighten things out.”

“He’s a queer bird,” laughed Trumbull as Lattiser strolled on, feeling his way with his feet, his eyes fastened upon the pages of his book.

“He is older—and therefore wiser,” said Katsura. “His eyes twinkled when he spoke of finding a way. I think he already has a plan.”

But in spite of Lattiser’s promise to find a way the fall and winter passed without a change in the situation, and the Christmas holidays drew nearer and nearer. Baseball practice had given way to the football squads, and the interest of the students turned to the other games. Practice was abandoned, and training suspended until after the holidays. In spite of this suspended animation on the part of the team, Katsura, Winans and Trumbull worked faithfully at their practice. Only a few days during the winter were severe enough to prevent playing, and they found their work improving steadily. Winans had become a remarkably effective catcher, and when working with Katsura, he seemed to increase the effectiveness of the little brown boy’s pitching. Larry discovered to his surprise that Katsura could prevent him from hitting the ball hard and that he had discovered his “weakness,” which was a sharp curve ball, which “broke” quickly at the front of the plate. Winans, who, in a quiet way, was a tease, delighted in signaling for this ball whenever Katsura pitched two strikes to Larry, and he roared with laughter when it “fooled” the batter. Katsura had mastered the “javelin curve,” and the motion, peculiar as it was, made the ball the more deceptive.

“What’s the use of working so hard?” panted Trumbull one evening. “We haven’t a real chance—and none of the regulars is in training at all.”

“That’s just the idea,” replied Winans. “I’m not bubbling over with delight at the idea of working hard an hour a day—but we are fighting for a chance to make good, and we’d be nice lobsters if we fell down when we got the chance.”

So the practice work continued steadily through the winter term. Twice a month, on evenings when callers were permitted, Larry Kirkland rode to St. Gertrude’s and called upon Helen Baldwin. The girl seemed delighted to receive him, and chattered bewitchingly during the hour he was permitted to remain with her in the parlors. By silent consent they had banished the topic of the enmity between the families. Several times Helen asked him what

Harry was doing, and complained that he seldom came to see her, and that she was lonely.

Both were planning their Christmas vacations, and Larry was disappointed when she received word that her uncle would stop for her and take her East for the holidays. Krag had written, planning a deer-hunting trip into the mountains, and at the prospect of the hunt, Larry rushed through the remaining weeks of the term, and with a much lighter heart boarded the train for Shasta View. He felt that he had conquered himself and gained a great victory, even though he had failed to make the team.

CHAPTER IX

The Pig in the Parlor

The trouble with us," remarked Winans, kicking his long legs in the air and hurling his book across the room, "is the lack of initiative. We're dying of dry rot. No one starts anything, and the others fail to finish what he don't start."

"What's the woe?" inquired Kirkland, lounging over his books in a deep chair under the lamp. "You've been aching for some deviltry for days. Why don't you start something?"

"I've been virtuous so long I can't stand it any longer," said Winans. "Here we are drilling at baseball, trying for the track team, boning on studies like a lot of slaves, and no fun going on at all. If any of you fellows had any nerve we'd set fire to the main building or tie Prexy in a tennis net and toss him into the lake."

"Why don't you blow up the old dormitory or put poison in the food at the mess hall?" inquired Larry wearily. "That seems to be your conception of undergraduate humor."

"Well," replied Winans slowly, "before I came up from home the governor spent two or three days telling me how he and his crowd put a wagon load of hay on top of the north dorm on Hallowe'en, how they hitched one professor's cow to a buggy and drove her through the campus, and a few other delicate pranks. He spent hours bragging about all the devilment he pulled off while he was here at Cascade, and warning me against doing the same."

"Very proper advice," remarked Kirkland, who had been buried in his mathematics. "The old gentleman seems to have a very high sense of a student's duty to his alma mater."

"Yep," replied Winans carelessly. "I have a sneaking suspicion that if I go home this term without blowing up a laboratory or assaulting a professor the revered Pater will think I am wasting the advantages of higher education and will be vastly disappointed in me."

"Let's pull off something that will wake up the whole school," suggested little Butler. "Something new and unheard of."

“What are you nefarious schemers plotting?” asked Kirkland, again climbing down from the heights of pure mathematics to the level of his comrades. “I just caught the drift of your remarks. Who do you want to maltreat?”

“Bartelme,” suggested Butler. “Not that I have any dislike for Bart, but we’ve got to have a victim and he’s so confoundedly dignified we ought to reduce him to the ranks. He’s so important since the Seniors appointed him to have charge of the barracks, he makes Prexy look cheap. Let’s do something to good old Bart.”

“What do you suggest?” inquired Winans, still busy trying to kick the headboard of the bed while stretched flat on his back.

“Let’s dope up his bed with cactus splinters,” suggested Butler hopefully.

“Crude and not original,” declared Winans. “My son, if you are going to do anything to render your name famous in this school, you’ll have to think of something more original than that. It is related in ancient history that when Methusalem was a Freshman the Sophomores put cactus needles in his bed. Suggest something else.”

“Let’s steal Herr Schermer’s pig,” suggested Butler.

“My son,” said Winans, sitting up in bed, “you show signs of human intelligence. That would be something to do.”

The quartette of students laughed heartily. Herr Schermer’s pig was one of the campus marvels. Professor Schermer, whose immense head, heavy-lensed glasses and strong Teutonic accents made him one of the notables of the faculty, was professor of biology, and his pig had, during the preceding year, been one of the campus institutions. Gaunt, with ribs showing like the bars of a xylophone, the poor beast had trotted ’round and ’round the small pen beside the biological laboratory squealing dismally, save during the periods each day when the “Herr Professor” Schermer tolled it inside the laboratory and there performed strange and wonderful experiments, accompanied by the distressed squeals of the unfortunate porcine victim, which attracted the attention of the entire campus. It was understood that the “Herr Professor” was conducting these experiments in an effort to test his discovery of a serum to cure hog cholera, and the doleful grunts of the pig the sleek satisfaction of the “Herr Professor” after each session in the laboratory promised success.

The idea of stealing the “Herr Professor’s” beloved pig was enough to startle into action the plotters gathered in the rooms of Winans and Kirkland for the ostensible purpose of study.

“Let’s pignap it to-night,” suggested Winans. “Haul it away and hide it.”

“Hold on a minute,” said Kirkland. “Butler wanted revenge on Bartelme. Why not steal the ‘Herr Professor’s’ pig, lug it into the dorm and put it in Bartelme’s bed.”

“Hooray,” yelled Winans. “Great little idea. Come on fellows. We’ll stir this mossy old school up as it never was stirred before.”

The four rocked to and fro with sheer delight as they elaborated the idea. The thought of the dignified, serious professor mourning his lost and loved pig, and of the sedate and over-dignified student monitor discovering said pig in his bed, was too much for their youthful sense of humor.

Ten minutes later the plotters, reinforced by Trumbull, whose powerful strength was needed to accomplish their purpose, were reconnoitering carefully the surroundings of the biological laboratory, and a scuffle, a few indignant squeals and a chorus of muffled laughter followed. The pig, accustomed as he was to the indignities to which he had been subjected, probably merely wondered mildly what further use science might have for him when a heavy blanket was thrown over his head and, lifted in the arms of the giant athlete, he was bundled over the fence of the pen. His legs quickly were bound, a noose was pulled tightly around his nose to smother the indignant squeals and the snickering brigade bore him in triumph toward the dormitory.



THE PIG WAS BORNE UP THE BACK STAIRS

Few students were awake, and the belated ones were poring over their studies under night lights. The reconnoitering party reported that Bartelme's room was vacant, and that Bartelme was away for the evening, engaged in tutoring some backward Junior in his studies.

With much scuffling and smothered laughter the pig was borne up the back stairs and into the room of the student who was in charge of the youths quartered in that dormitory. An impromptu nightcap was fashioned and tied about the porcine head, one of Bartelme's nightgowns was adjusted and, with feet securely bound, the "Herr Professor's" valuable pig was left to his repose between the immaculate sheets of the bed.

The culprits, chuckling and whispering orders to each other to maintain silence, beat a retreat from the dormitory, and once outside, they gathered under the shade of a pepper tree and doubled with laughter over the success of their prank, drawing amusing pictures of what would happen when the dignified Bartelme discovered his roommate.

CHAPTER X

“Peeg” Excitement

The success of Larry Kirkland and his friends in “stirring up” Cascade was beyond their wildest imaginings. Before noon of the following day the school was in a turmoil. The “Herr Professor’s” pig had disappeared and theft was charged.

It was little Butler who came running to whisper the announcement of this new development in the prank. It was known that when Bartelme reached his room the pig was gone. It had disappeared sometime between the moment the plotters had tucked it under the covers and forty-five minutes later, when Bartelme returned and made complaint that some students had invaded his room, mussed his bed clothing and stolen his nightgown. No one seemed to know what had become of the animal, nor did anyone connect the theft of the pig with Bartelme’s loss. It was inconceivable that the pig, tied and trussed as it was, could have escaped from the bed, opened the door, fled down three flights of stairs and reached freedom and surcease from operations by the professor. Besides, the boys remembered they had closed the bedroom door and also the door leading to the stairway.

The new phase of the situation made the prank appear more serious; but it was the attitude of the dignified “Herr Professor” that caused most uneasiness. He was inconsolable and, as Winans remarked, “his Dutch was up above the boiling point.” He had discovered his loss early in the morning, and had stormed into the offices of the president demanding vengeance. Unconsciously he added to the uproar by declaring loudly that “Dere vud be peeg excitement” when he caught the culprits.

The “peeg excitement” grew and increased, especially after chapel exercises, in which President Jamieson spoke seriously of the offense, detailed the earnest, unselfish work of Professor Schermer in the interests of science, of long hours of study in his bacteriological laboratory; how, by the use of the humble pig, he believed himself near the solution of the cause and prevention of a disease that was one of the worst scourges under which the farmers struggle.

The seriousness of the joke became more and more evident, and the “fun” rapidly was oozing from it. After chapel exercises the guilty quartette

strolled across the campus talking.

“The thing that worries me,” said Winans, “is that the pig is gone. Of course, we thought it would be returned and we’d have the laugh on that serious old fossil Bartelme. I wonder who took that pig and what they did with it?”

“I’ve talked to several of the fellows who live in that end of the dorm,” admitted Butler. “Some of them heard us go up with the pig and come down again, but didn’t pay any attention. Rumsey said he was going for water later and, while passing down the hall, he heard two or three fellows carrying something down the back stairs, but before he reached the head of the staircase they closed the back door.”

“How many of them?” inquired Trumbull seriously.

“He couldn’t tell. He didn’t see them, and was judging from the noise only.”

“Well, one thing is certain,” remarked Larry. “Two or more fellows in this school know we took the pig and put it in the bed. Why did they want to spoil our joke? If they wanted to return the pig, why didn’t they put it back in the ‘Herr Professor’s’ pen?”

“And why don’t they tell on us now?” queried Butler anxiously.

“It wasn’t anyone connected with the faculty,” concluded Winans. “If it had been, we’d have been on the carpet in chapel and probably been fired or suspended. What the dickens I can’t understand is that they would keep quiet.”

“Maybe they took the pig to put in someone else’s bed, and it will show up all right when they see how serious this thing is.”

But the pig did not return. The guilty ones waited anxiously for two days, worried and expectant, hoping that the missing “peeg” would be returned and the situation relieved.

If was rumored that city detectives were engaged on the case and that a spy had been placed in the dormitories to discover the identity of the culprits. The faculty was extremely busy with its investigation, and was threatening dire punishment. To make it worse, the newspapers had scented the facts and were blazoning the story of the “peeg excitement” at Cascade in lurid yarns, which held the “Herr Professor” up to ridicule and passed lightly over the loss to science. The burlesque on the missing germs became a joke for paragraphers and “funny men,” and each jest was a blow to the sensitive nature of the brusque, rotund, little scientist who had devoted the best years of his life to the study of cholera in hogs.

It was the fourth day after the theft of the “Herr Professor’s” inoculated pig that Larry Kirkland determined upon action. It had appeared as if the affair of the pig was being forgotten, but to Larry, as he studied and analyzed the situation, it became more and more serious.

As usual the chums had gathered in Larry’s quarters in the boarding house to study or romp when he raised the question.

“Fellows,” he remarked seriously, “I’ve made up my mind to go to Professor Schermer in the morning and confess that I stole his pig.”

“What for?” demanded Trumbull. “They are busy forgetting that infernal shoat, and in another week it will pass into the unwritten history of Cascade. Future generations of Freshmen will adore us and perhaps imitate us as heroes who stole the pig. Our names will go down with those of the heroes who got away with something and were not caught. Only the boob is caught; the hero is the one who gets away with it.”

“I know,” replied Larry; “but this is different. My conscience hurts me every time I think of it. If we only could get the pig back”——

“Let’s chip in and buy that old grouch a new pig,” urged Trumbull. “He’s made as much fuss over that pig as if it was a gold mine we stole.”

“Why didn’t you get up in chapel and declare we stole the pig, Larry?” taunted Winans. “If your conscience hurts you so much, why not tell them about who put the sauer kraut in Professor Ehmke’s ink well?”

“You fellows don’t understand,” protested Larry. “I won’t give any of you away. I think we ought to go and tell Professor Schermer we stole the pig and ask him if there is anything we can do to repay.”

“You’ll get us all fired from college,” protested Butler. “What’s the use? They’ll never find out who did it.”

“I’ve waited for them to find out,” said Larry. “I wasn’t going to confess while they might think it through fear of being caught.”

“Fellows,” said Trumbull, “I’ve been thinking that way myself. Let’s go over and have it out with the ‘Herr Professor.’”

“Oh, I say,” protested Larry; “I didn’t want to drag you into it. I’ll own up and see what can be done.”

“Nothing like that,” announced Winans. “We’re all in the same boat. What do you think, Butler?”

“Me? Why I’d just as lieve confess as to do it over again,” laughed the little fellow ruefully. “My conscience is clear. I didn’t carry the pig, and I’m so small the ‘Herr Professor’ probably will attack you big ones first.”

Rather dismally the small party set out across the campus and hesitatingly approached the residence of Professor Schermer. Winans, summoning all his courage, advanced and rang the bell, and the hesitating and confused culprits were ushered into the presence of the grave, courteous student, who regarded them over the tops of his glasses.

“Young shentlemans, to vot do I owe der honor off your presences?” he inquired gravely.

They shuffled, waited, each for the other, and glanced back and forth between each other for moral support.

“It’s this way, professor,” said Larry, screwing up his courage. “We swiped your pig and”——

“Vass? You stole mine pig?” he exclaimed, frowning. “For vy?”

He bristled with indignant anger and glared at them.

Quickly, now that the first plunge was taken, Larry related the circumstances, described the theft of the pig, of placing it in the bed and leaving it. Slowly a smile broke upon the face of the professor and, growing, it expanded into a laugh, and he sat rocking back and forth.

“You iss fery pad poys,” he said, removing his glasses to wipe the tears from his eyes. “Pad poys, but you iss honest. Where iss mine pig?”

Again Larry explained desperately, the professor nodding gravely.

“We wanted to tell you, professor,” he said, “how sorry we are. We’d do anything to help get the pig back, but we don’t know who took it or where it is.”

“Berhaps it vill return,” said the professor calmly. “You are fery pad poys, but you are goot pad boys to tell me. Aber I shall not speak of it again, and you, I know, vill help me find mine pig.”

They shook hands with him seriously and backed from the study.

“Isn’t he an old trump?” said Winans enthusiastically. “He won’t even report it. I for one will break my neck to help him recover his fool pig.”

CHAPTER XI

“Paw” Lattiser Has a Plan

Students were trooping back to Cascade after the Christmas holidays. Larry Kirkland, disappointed at having failed to see Helen Baldwin on the train, found himself fretting with eagerness to reach the campus. He understood, now, the feelings of the upper classmen toward the newcomers. He was part of it all now and he found himself shouting greetings, slapping his friends on the back and thrilling with the renewal of a comradeship that is dearer, perhaps, than any other in a man's life. He felt the reverent awe of the old, gray buildings. At last he understood what is meant by “college spirit,” the unselfish patriotism to Alma Mater that all good college men must feel. He was part of it and he began to understand part of the debt he owed the institution for what it was giving him.

The winter sun was shining warm, and the tang of the trades was in the air. It was mid-January, but already the boys were talking of the baseball team, and of the chances of a strong club to represent the college. The first two weeks of the term passed rapidly. Cold and fog had succeeded the sunshine, but early in February the deferred call for candidates for the track and baseball teams was posted on the big bulletin board, to set the aspirants off in fresh excitement.

The boys gathered around the bulletin board were discussing, with much earnestness, the chances of making the team, when Paw Lattiser, sauntered closer, stood peering over his glasses for a moment and read the announcement.

“Hello, Paw,” called one Junior, proud of his right to address the veteran familiarly. “You going to try for the team this year?”

“Well,” said the veteran, “I may try to help out a bit. Here, lend me a lead pencil.”

A dozen youngsters rushed to hand him a pencil, and, holding a sheet of paper against the wall, Lattiser boldly lettered a fresh bulletin, which he tacked upon the board.

The swarm of younger boys pressed close and read:

ATTENTION!

All those interested in having a winning baseball team at Cascade this year, attend meeting in Gym Hall, Friday evening, 7.30.

P. N. LATTISER.

The posting of Paw Lattiser's bulletin created a furore in the ranks of the undergraduates. No one knew what the meaning of the bulletin was and in response to all questions Lattiser smiled his peculiar smile and sauntered along, pretending to be engrossed in his studies. The crowd still was grouped around the board, discussing Lattiser's bulletin, when Coach Haxton, with Harry Baldwin, and several of the leaders of the "sporty" crowd came past and stopped to read the bulletin.

"What's this?" asked Haxton angrily. "Who has been calling a baseball meeting?"

"Lattiser posted the notice," chirped one Freshman. "He wouldn't say what it was for."

"That old foggy is always butting in," remarked Harry Baldwin. "I suppose he thinks he knows how to run things better than Mr. Haxton does."

"Hold on, Baldwin," retorted Dalmores, the outfielder. "Lattiser is a pretty solid old square head. Whatever he is doing he has a reason for it—and don't forget that he's a pretty big man in this school—both with the students and the faculty."

"He's an old trouble-maker," snapped Harry. "I think he's a spy for the faculty"——

"You do?"

The question was asked quietly, and Harry Baldwin, confused and red, whirled to drop his eyes before the steady gaze bent upon him by Paw Lattiser, who stood, looking over the top of his spectacles. "Well, young man, if I were telling the faculty any tales I might relate interesting ones about you. However, about that bulletin: I have an idea that may help the team, and I want to put it to the students. I may be wrong, but Mr. Haxton can tell us. Hope all of you come."

He turned away without another word, leaving Harry uncomfortable and fuming.

"I didn't know the old fellow was interested in baseball," said Haxton. "Anyhow, if he has any suggestions we ought to hear them. It is one certain thing that we need something."

The meeting Friday evening was well attended. The news that Paw Lattiser had taken to baseball and was going to propose a remedy for the team attracted students from curiosity as well as from interest and many of the upper classmen who knew and respected the odd veteran came to listen to his proposed cure for the athletic ills of the college.

The small assembly hall used for athletic meetings was crowded when Lattiser appeared. He walked into the room, still reading, and continued engrossed in his subject until a laugh aroused him. He blinked as if striving to recall his whereabouts, then grinned and advanced to the small platform, where he stood, cracking his big knuckles, his book held tightly under one arm, while waiting for the laugh to subside.

“Boning on political science,” he said, smiling. “Sat down under the arc lamp outside to study and almost forgot the meeting. Very interesting subject—political science.”

He stood smiling while the students roared at his apologetic explanation.

“Fellows,” he said finally, “I don’t know much about baseball. Haxton attends to that part of it. But I hear a lot of criticism among the students. Maybe it’s only because we’ve been losing, but many of you seem to think we ought to get winning teams. I haven’t heard any of you say Haxton did not get the best work out of the men; you seem to think that the team doesn’t get the best men.”

He paused and there was a murmur of assent.

“I figure it this way,” he went on. “We haven’t any right to criticise unless we are willing to help. No use pointing out a flaw and not trying to discover the remedy. I believe every one here wants old Cascade to win”——

He paused until the applause subsided and then added:

“But someone is wrong. Half of us are criticising, and the other half resent the criticism. Most of us think we could do better than Haxton is doing”——

An outburst of laughter greeted the sally and showed that Lattiser had struck home with his whimsical thrust.

“The thing I propose is just this: You fellows who think you can play better, run a team better, and win more games than Haxton and the Varsity team can, are entitled to a chance, and you are complaining that you don’t get it”——

Lattiser was talking earnestly. He had dropped the half-humorous tone he had been using, and it was plain that he was flicking some of the students

to the raw. Larry Kirkland, who was sitting with Katsura, had an uneasy sense of guilt, and wondered how much of the talk was meant for him.

“What I propose is just this,” continued Lattiser. “Let Haxton pick his regular team—fourteen men—the best he can select. Then let the others make up a team and play his choice. If Haxton, as some of you charge, is playing favorites, his team will get a beating. If he selects the best men no one has a kick coming.”

Haxton, angry and trembling, arose.

“Whoever says”——he commenced, then gained control of himself. “That’s a good plan, Lattiser. This school has been troubled by a lot of fellows who sit around and knock instead of coming out and helping build up the team. I accept the challenge on behalf of the Varsity team—and with the understanding that after we’ve beaten them they stop abusing the players and help the team.”

Three cheers for Lattiser, and three for Haxton were followed by three cheers for the Varsity team. It was Larry Kirkland who leaped upon his chair and proposed the cheers for the Varsity team—and suddenly little Billy Towne, the clown of the Junior class, restored good humor and ended the meeting with a laugh by proposing three cheers for the knockers.

An hour later, as Larry Kirkland and Winans were settling to their studies, Paw Lattiser entered their quarters.

“Hello, fellows,” he said cheerfully. “Hard at it?”

“Mr. Lattiser,” said Larry, “I thought you were hitting at me in your talk. Really, I’m not that way.”

“When you get older,” remarked Lattiser, “you’ll see that the best way to handle a crowd of hot heads is to jolly both sides. That meeting was a big bluff. You’re sitting here, planning to lead the Outcast team and beat the Varsity right now, I’ll wager a dollar.”

“I—I—well, I did think of it,” confessed Larry lamely.

“You won’t be on the second team, my boy,” said Lattiser calmly. “I know Haxton. He has realized all along he was wrong. He’ll choose you, and the little Jap and Winans for his team, and the second team will not have a chance. I purposely gave him the opportunity. Whether he wants you or not he’ll pick you now just to show he is fair—which he is not. The fact that he isn’t fair will make him do it.”

“He’s a wise old fowl,” remarked Winans. “He has Haxton figured out just as I have.”

“The trouble will not be with Haxton,” said Larry. “It will be with Baldwin. He’ll not let me on the team if he can keep me off it.”

CHAPTER XII

The Plan Succeeds

Lattiser's prediction proved true. On the first day of practice, after Haxton had spent two hours studying the candidates, he boldly posted a notice on the bulletin board, naming the fourteen players he had selected as members of the Varsity squad. Eight were veterans of the team of the preceding season; one was Jacobs, a youth who had tried for the team and who had been carried as a substitute; one was Wares, a new man who came highly recommended from a preparatory school, and the others were the rebels—Larry Kirkland, Trumbull, Winans and Katsura.

Even Larry was surprised to find that all four of them had been selected; and he was relieved, for secretly he had feared that Haxton, who was known to hold prejudice against the Japanese, would surrender on all other points and bar Katsura.

The announcement of the team make-up broke the opposition to Haxton and his methods. As Lattiser had shrewdly guessed, Haxton had selected, as regulars, the very men upon whom the "knockers" based their charges of unfairness, and left them nothing upon which to base their charges. There was an enthusiastic movement among the lower classmen, who thought they could play well, to organize a team to play the regulars, but they were defeated in a farcical game and, true to their promise, they ceased criticising and became loyal adherents of the Varsity. Sentiment in the school had been unified, and the college spirit of Cascade revived. Only one sore spot remained—and that was the enmity between Larry Kirkland and Harry Baldwin.

"If only we played different positions," Larry lamented to Winans. "It seems as if I always have to fight that fellow. One or the other of us has to be third baseman of this team."

"He has declared he wouldn't play on a team with you," remarked Winans. "I guess he'll have to make good."

Another surprise resulted, however. Haxton was too shrewd a judge of players not to see that he had found an excellent infielder in Kirkland, and much as he disliked the youth, who had been a stumbling block in his path, he could not afford to overlook such material, especially as Larry's fielding and base-running in practice games had attracted the admiring attention of

some of the upper classmen who knew the game. He hesitated to offend Baldwin, yet, as the practice games proceeded, it became evident to all on the field that Larry was much the better at third base, and the superior to Baldwin in all-around playing. On the eve of the game with St. Mary's, the first of the important games with rival teams of rival institutions, Haxton announced the line-up of the team, placing Baldwin at third, Kirkland at short, and, even more surprising, sending Winans in as catcher and placing Torney, the regular Varsity catcher, a veteran of three seasons, at first base. The move undoubtedly strengthened the team as a whole, but Larry Kirkland knew Haxton had compromised with his own judgment in keeping Baldwin on third, and that he either should have been sent to third himself or placed on the bench. He was disappointed that Trumbull had not been chosen, but the enthusiasm of the big outfielder over the choice of two of his friends as regulars was so honest that it was recompense.

The game with St. Mary's proved a desperate one. For seven innings the two teams, evenly matched, battled for supremacy, with the score tied, each team having scored once. Larry saw several opportunities wasted, but, remembering the advice of Krag, he maintained silence, and made no comments upon the failure of his fellows to take advantage of openings. He realized for the first time that he knew more of the generalship of the game than did Haxton, who plainly was limited in his knowledge of baseball strategy. Krag's lectures, and his own experience with the Shasta View team, had taught him a great deal about the inside game that was unknown to the college boys.

With the score 1 to 1 in the first half of the eighth, the first batter for St. Mary's drove a long two-base hit out to left field. Larry expected the next batter to sacrifice, and had crept forward a few paces to be in readiness in case the ball should be bunted toward him, when the batter slashed fiercely at the ball and drove it on the ground between Baldwin and Larry. It was Baldwin's ball, although the chance was difficult, and as Baldwin was caught standing flat-footed, Larry leaped sideways and made a desperate effort to head off the hit. He reached the ball back at the edge of the grass, outside the base lines, and in such a position that to recover, turn and throw to first base in time was an impossibility. Like a flash he thought of another play and without looking he scooped the ball and threw it underhand to third base. The runner coming from second had hesitated as Larry tore across the base line in pursuit of the ball, and he was all of fifteen feet from the bag when Larry threw. The play was unexpected and brilliantly executed. If Baldwin caught the ball and touched the runner it meant that St. Mary's hopes were dashed and that Cascade was saved temporarily from a

dangerous position. But Baldwin did not catch the ball. Larry's warning shout aroused him just in time to enable him to dodge, the ball flashed past his head, went to the grand stand and while the St. Mary's adherents screamed their applause, one runner scored and another reached second base. Before the inning ended he, too, crossed the plate and the score was 3 to 1 in favor of the visitors.

Larry, hot and exasperated, returned to the bench. He was determined not to speak of the misplay that had resulted so disastrously, but when he reached the bench he found Haxton and Baldwin in a heated argument.

"Why don't you keep your eyes open?" Haxton demanded. "If you had been keeping your eye on the ball it wouldn't have happened."

"That ——— simply tried to show me up," snarled Baldwin. "He knew the play was to first, and he threw to third because he saw I wasn't watching."

"It was the only way he could have played it," retorted Haxton, exasperated. "Don't try to shift the blame. You were asleep and now you're trying to lay it on someone else."

"I won't play on a team with a mucker like that," cried Baldwin, furious with anger. "He's been trying to get my job ever since he came here and I won't stand it."

"All right—all right," responded the now furious manager. "McAtee, you play short next inning and we'll put Kirkland on third."

Baldwin, stunned by the unexpected acceptance of his challenge, started to whine.

"Oh, say, Dick," he pleaded, "I was mad—I didn't mean it. Don't put me out of the game—my girl is in the stand."

"You must have been watching her instead of the ball," snapped Haxton, too furious to relent.

Baldwin sprang to his feet, as if to strike the manager, and at that instant little Katsura, with a catlike move, seized his arm, gave it a quick twist, and Baldwin, half sobbing with pain, sank down, whimpering and holding his arm.

Suddenly he turned upon Larry Kirkland, cursing and half sobbing.

"You did this," he said. "It's all your fault. You've been trying to make trouble for me ever since you came here—but I'll get even with you—I'll"——

Larry had leaped to his feet, but Winans dragged him back, and Baldwin, still swearing and threatening, left the field.

During all the scene Larry Kirkland had not spoken a word. Indeed, Baldwin's frantic outburst had been so unexpected that none of the players had recovered from their astonishment sufficiently to join the dispute. Larry turned to the coach.

"I'm sorry this happened, Mr. Haxton," he said. "I tried to make the play"——

"I know it," snapped Haxton. "Cartright, you get up there and try to get those two runs back." He glanced along the bench a moment. "Trumbull," he snapped, "you'll hit for Arksall. We've got to get those runs back."

But although they rallied and strove desperately to overcome the disadvantage, they were beaten, 3 to 2.

CHAPTER XIII

The "Peeg Mystery" Cleared

The time for the final selection of the Cascade team approached, with a score of youths working with might and main to win or hold places as regular players. The conduct of Haxton toward Larry Kirkland and his friends had not changed materially, although after the rebellion of Harry Baldwin he was fairer toward Larry and his friends. It was evident too that the opinion of the students who came regularly to watch the practice games was having its influence upon the coach, and that he was watching more attentively the playing, especially of Winans, the big, easy-moving, strong-throwing catcher, and of Kirkland, whose work at third base and at shortstop in the occasions in which he had been given the opportunity to play. Paw Lattiser's active interest in Kirkland was having its influence among the Seniors, and Clark, one of the student directors of athletics, appeared to favor Kirkland or, at least, to treat him with condescending friendliness.

In several clashes in which the first team, chosen by Coach Haxton, had been pitted against the "scrubs," Kirkland had shone brilliantly as compared with Harry Baldwin, who seemed to have an idea that the position was a sinecure after regaining his standing with Haxton. Baldwin and several of the sporty crowd that followed his lead lost few opportunities to belittle Kirkland, and several times they had flagrantly attempted to insult little Katsura. Only the calm philosophy of the little brown fellow and his ignoring of the rebuffs prevented open resentment of their conduct by Kirkland and Winans, who valued the friendship of Katsura.

Larry Kirkland returned to his rooms one evening after a call at St. Gertrude's, quiet and troubled.

"Why all these glooms?" inquired Winans, who, as usual, was sitting up hoping to start an argument before going to sleep. "Has the lovely maiden treated you ill to-night?"

"I'm worried over something," confessed Larry. "It was just a little remark I heard. I didn't pay any attention to it at the time, but walking home I remembered it and I wish I had inquired more closely."

"What was it?"

“Well—the friend I went to see happens to be related to Har—to one of the fellows here in school. She remarked that this fellow had told her I was sure to be fired from college. I thought it was merely some of his talk, as he has made similar remarks before, but on the way home I wondered whether it had anything to do with the pig case.”

“Oh, that’s dead, buried and forgotten. I haven’t heard it even mentioned lately, and the faculty probably gave it up in disgust when the ‘Herr Professor’ dropped it.”

“You forget,” said Larry earnestly, “that at least two persons knew we stole the pig. Why did they keep quiet? Maybe they will inform the faculty now. If this fellow I speak of knows we stole the pig, the faculty will hear of it soon enough.”

“Oh, forget it,” advised Winans. “I’ve figured out that the fellows who took the pig out of Bartelme’s bed are afraid to say a word because they are as deep in the mud as we are in the mire.”

“I know that,” urged Larry. “That’s why I’m thinking about this. If we can find out who they are, maybe we could find the ‘Herr Professor’s’ pig for him.”

“Chances are, piggy, germs and all, has gone to pig heaven long before this,” yawned Winans. “I’m sleepy, and I refuse to worry about that pig any further. I’ve grown so sick of pig that I won’t touch my ham and eggs.”

Larry’s troubled evening was not without cause. Two days later he returned from class and found Winans and Trumbull awaiting him in gloomy forboding. Each had received notice to appear before the Faculty Committee at three o’clock that afternoon without fail. Another note of the same import was awaiting addressed to Larry, and a hasty scouring of the campus revealed little Butler in the throes of despair over an order of similar nature. The discovery that all of those implicated in the “peeg” plot had been summoned made it a certainty that the faculty at last had received information as to the identity of the culprits. Butler seemed much relieved.

“Gee,” he ejaculated, “I’m glad it’s that. I was afraid it was some confounded flunk in math. I’d rather be called up for first degree murder than to flunk in math. I think father would forgive me more quickly.”

“I’m certain father will be proud of me now,” said Winans.

The luncheon period was spent in idle speculation as to the manner in which the faculty had received its information. Larry, although his suspicions pointed strongly to Harry Baldwin, and who felt assured that Baldwin at least knew the faculty would be informed, decided to withhold his accusation until after the ordeal in the president’s office.

The quartette, a little awed, filed into the offices of the president promptly at the assigned hour. The president, cracking his knuckles, as was his wont, sat in state, flanked on the right by Professor Jervis, dean of the mathematical department and the terror of many generations of Cascade youths, ready and eager to enforce any penalty up to capital punishment upon any accused or suspected student, and on the left by Professor Weyrich, head of the college of chemistry, the jovial, twinkling-eyed, fat friend and defender of all boys, who loved them most when they had fractured college law worse than usual.

As the quartette entered, President Jamieson gazed at them over the rims of his spectacles, cracked his knuckles until they sounded like corn popping, and said:

“Ahem—young gentlemen, good afternoon.”

“Good afternoon,” they replied faintly.

“Ahem,” continued the president, eyeing them one after the other pompously. Professor Jarvis scowled threateningly, and Larry Kirkland, shifting his glance from the forbidding and the accusing countenances, looked at the solemn-faced head of the chemical department just in time to observe a quick, but unmistakable wink from the eye furthest from the others of the faculty.

“Ahem,” repeated the president. “Ahem,—Winans, Kirkland, Trumbull and Butler; all here I see. Very satisfactory. Very satisfactory.”

“Yes, sir,” they agreed in chorus.

“I suppose,” the president hesitated and cracked his knuckles again. “I conclude, at least, that you young gentlemen are aware of the charge about to be considered? You need not reply. I can see you at least fear we have discovered you; but, to be just, I will merely add that if any one of you is in ignorance, which is possible, but hardly probable, the charge is that you are the four miscreants who committed the crime of theft in stealing one pig, the property of Cascade College, for use in scientific investigations, then in the custody of Professor Schermer.”

He bent a judicial, yet accusing, look upon them.

“Well, well, what have you to say?” demanded Professor Jervis sharply. “What defense have you to offer—if any?”

“I think,” interjected Professor Weyrich, “that the facts of the case have not been fairly stated. The pig was not, as I understand it, the property of Cascade College, since Professor Schermer paid for it from his own salary,

and Jervis, I believe it was at your suggestion that the Faculty Finance Committee refused to pay for the pig.”

“The matter of ownership is inconsequential,” declared the president. “No matter whether Professor Schermer paid for the pig or not, it was a valuable asset to the scientific department of Cascade and therefore really the property of the institution. What have you young gentlemen to say?”

The quartette shuffled uneasily, waiting for one to advance as spokesman. Winans nudged Larry Kirkland, who stepped a pace forward and, looking straight at Professor Jervis, replied:

“We stole the pig.”

His antagonistic nature was stirred by the attitude of Professor Jervis, and he set his lips tightly, determined not to say another word. At that moment Professor Schermer entered.

CHAPTER XIV

The Prodigal Pig Returns

Professor Schermer bowed gravely to the Faculty Committee and remarked to Professor Weyrich:

“Ach, Schon, I vass for you seeing”——

Suddenly he caught sight of, or recognized, the four culprits and, turning to them, he bowed again, his grave face taking on a worried expression.

“Ah,” he exclaimed, “mine gute friends, the gute pad poys. I vass in hopes you would be gute poys before this.”

“Those,” exclaimed Professor Jervis, “are the young scoundrels who stole your pig, Schermer. We discovered their guilt and they have confessed.”

“Mine gute Provessor Jervis,” said Professor Schermer; “dot I alretty know long ago. They haf to me come to confess, unt they iss not sgoundrels, but gute pad poys.”

“They confessed to you that they stole the pig and you said nothing to the faculty of it?” exclaimed the worthy president in dismay. “Dear me, dear me, this is a state of affairs!”

“It seems to me it was a pretty fair thing to do,” declared Weyrich.

“It was this way, Professor,” declared Larry Kirkland, addressing Professor Weyrich and turning from Jervis, who was frowning angrily. “We took the pig as a lark. We carried it into the third floor of the dormitory and put it in Bartelme’s bed. We thought he would find it there and we’d have a joke on him. When we discovered how serious the matter was, we thought it was the fair thing to confess to Professor Schermer that we took the pig and offer restitution. He was very kind and offered to drop the entire matter.”

“Then if Schermer got his pig back why did he not tell us?” asked Professor Jervis angrily.

“I haf not der peeg,” said the little professor, nodding his great head sadly.

“What became of the ah—er—porcine victim of this escapade?” inquired Professor Weyrich, his eyes twinkling with enjoyment he could not entirely conceal.

“That is why I spoke just now,” volunteered Larry boldly. “We left the pig in Bartelme’s bed, tied hand and foot. Someone else took it before Bartelme got there. Two or three fellows were heard to carry something down the back stairs after we left. We have been trying to find who they were, so as to recover the pig for Professor Schermer, but until to-day we never have had a clue.”

“Ah—young man, you have a clue now?” inquired the worthy president. “What is it?”

“If you will tell me who informed the faculty that we stole the pig, I’ll tell you who took him from Bartelme’s room,” asserted Larry. “Then we’ll have a chance to recover it.”

“Unfortunately,” said the president sadly, “we cannot do that. The note naming you as the culprits was not signed.”

After some discussion the youths were requested to retire while the Faculty Committee discussed the question of punishment. Fifteen minutes later they were summoned to return. Professor Jervis, hot and angry, was just retiring.

“Anyhow,” he exclaimed angrily, “I’ll not be a party to it. I’ll not be a party to letting every young scoundrel who flaunts defiance in the face of the faculty go scot free.”

Jervis’ angry departure gave the youths a strong hint that they were to be permitted to escape punishment, and fifteen minutes later, after listening to a scathing reprimand, they emerged upon the campus with the weight lifted.

“Come on, fellows,” said Larry Kirkland; “let’s get back that pig. Professor Schermer is one of the squarest little men in the world and we ought to do anything to repay him.”

“But where is it?” inquired Trumbull.

“Come over to the rooms. I have a scheme and if you fellows will go through with it we’ll get that pig back.”

It was nine o’clock that evening when four young men advanced cautiously toward one of the fraternity houses just outside the college grounds. They were well prepared. By notes, telephone messages and other devices all the regular occupants of that house had been drawn to far parts of the town or the college colony. The one remaining was Harry Baldwin, who was lolling disconsolately upon a couch, pretending to study and smoking cigarettes when the door to his study opened, four fellows stepped inside and shot the bolt.

“Hello!” exclaimed Baldwin, starting up. “You came”——

“Baldwin,” said Big Trumbull, who had been nominated to do the talking, “we’ve come to find out what you did with Professor Schermer’s pig.”

“You stole him—you ought to know,” retorted Baldwin, betraying himself in his surprise.

“Then you *are* the one who wrote a note to the faculty?” demanded Trumbull. “That’s one thing we wanted to be sure of. Now, what did you do with the pig?”

“I didn’t take the—pig. I won’t tell you anything,” declared Baldwin defiantly.

“Sit on him, fellows,” ordered Trumbull.

The sitting-upon process, accomplished by four athletic youths was extremely efficacious. In three minutes Baldwin, helpless and ready to cry from rage, weakened.

“Let loose and I’ll tell you,” he said, surrendering.

“Two of you climb off,” ordered Trumbull. “Now, Baldwin, where did you take that pig?”

“We took him in an automobile,” replied Baldwin sullenly.

“Why?”

“Well, we saw you fellows put it in Bartelme’s room and we thought it would get you in bad if the pig never came back.”

“Who were we?” demanded Trumbull.

“Don’t answer that, Baldwin,” said Winans as Baldwin opened his mouth to reply. “Don’t make him any worse of a tattletale than he is.”

“All right,” assented Trumbull. “Now, Baldwin, what became of that pig?”

“We hauled it out to that road house, about seven miles out, and gave it to the fellow who keeps the garage there.”

“All right, Baldwin—and if you’ve lied to us we’ll be back.”

“I’ll get even with you fellows for this,” stormed Baldwin as the quartette released him and started to retreat from the fraternity house. “I’ll see that the faculty knows all about this business.”

“Lock the door again, Win,” ordered Trumbull threateningly. “Now, Baldwin, that won’t do. The faculty knows we took the pig. It has tried us and found us innocent of wrongdoing. It wants to find the ones who really stole the pig.”

“You fellows aren’t going to tell”——

“Oh, shut up,” exclaimed Trumbull in disgust. “No—you keep your mouth shut and if we get that pig back we’ll keep quiet.”

Three hours later the rejoicing quartette, with a trussed pig emitting muffled squeals in the tonneau of the automobile, returned and, after a breathless skirmish to avoid the night watchman, they reached the pen behind the biological laboratory and the precious pig was left grunting indignantly.

Early ones among the students the following day found Professor Schermer busy in his laboratory, speaking endearing words in broken German to the pig, which, trussed upside down on the table, was squealing its indignation as the scientist gloated over the discovery that his precious germs not only were intact, but that the cultures had developed amazingly during piggy’s period of freedom.

CHAPTER XV

Helen in Trouble

Cascade was winning. After the defeat at the hands of the strong team from St. Mary's, the re-arranged club settled to its task and, improving with every game, it became one of the strong contenders for honors in the college circuit. In the second encounter, St. Mary's had been overthrown and Larry Kirkland, who was playing brilliantly at third base, was the deciding factor in the victory.

For a week after the scene on the bench during the game with St. Mary's, Harry Baldwin had failed to make any move, beyond striving to conciliate Coach Haxton and regain his standing with the other players. He reported for practice the day after the game, and although not received warmly by either the coach or the other players, he had worked faithfully, avoiding any reference to the trouble; and he had privately apologized to Haxton for his loss of temper and breach of discipline.

Not a hint had been dropped as to the means by which the pig had been recovered. Baldwin at first seemed to avoid the quartette who had forced him to confess, but by degrees he returned to his attitude of scornful superiority toward them and truckling with Haxton.

Larry Kirkland, who was watching in silence, commenced to hope that the disciplining had taught Harry Baldwin a valuable lesson and several times, during practice, he purposely had called to Baldwin to practice at third and had voluntarily gone to hit "fungoes" to the fielders, permitting his rival to practice in the position. His generous behavior toward Baldwin had won him much sympathy from the veterans, and it seemed that Baldwin himself had decided to bury the hatchet and work in harmony with his foe.

Larry was happy and was working harder than ever for the interests of the team. Although Haxton had not seen fit to give Katsura an opportunity to pitch, he had allowed him to pitch to the regular players during practice and it was evident that he was watching with much interest the effective use of the slow curve by the little brown youth who appeared to have so little speed and yet continued to puzzle the best batters on the team.

Larry, Katsura, Winans and Trumbull had continued their practice work after dinner each evening, and frequently, while resting from their exertions, they discussed plays and how they should be made. Larry explained to them

some of Krag's theories of baseball, and they found much pleasure in debating over plays made by the professional teams reading the accounts of games in the newspapers and arguing as to how the plays should have been made. Dalmores, the quiet, thoughtful, big fellow, who had played two years on the team, joined them and became one of the evening practice class.

They were sitting on the grass one Thursday evening, after a lively practice session, discussing the chances of victory in the game with Golden University, which was the most important game of the year.

"We've got to make a lot of improvement in the next ten days," said Dalmores. "They hit Arksall hard last year, when he seemed to be pitching just as well as ever. They have five of last year's men on the team—and they say the new men are better than the ones they lost."

"We have a chance if Arksall is good," said Winans. "For me, I'd rather have Katty here pitching against them. Arksall has a habit of weakening when they get a few hits, and that is just the time Katty begins to pitch."

"Hey—what are you running away for?"

Trumbull shouted the question at Larry Kirkland, who, arrayed in his best garments, was trying to slip out of the house and around the corner unobserved.

"Going fussing again?" called Winans. "Shame on you—and the big game with Golden only ten days off."

"You fellows are only jealous," called Larry, hurrying away. "I'll be home early."

"I thought something was up when he rushed away as soon as we quit practicing," said Winans, kicking his feet into the air. "I wonder what the attraction up at St. Gertrude's is? This is calling evening, isn't it?"

"Girl from up his way," volunteered Trumbull. "I saw him hiding a photograph when I went into his room the other day and he blushed until I was afraid he'd set the curtains afire."

Meantime the "attraction," Helen Baldwin, was waiting nervously in the reception room at St. Gertrude's Seminary for Larry Kirkland. She had telephoned to him earlier in the day, asking him to be sure to keep his promise and call, and he was hastening to respond to the request.

During the term he had found himself more and more interested in the pretty cousin of his enemy and her friendship had become so important a part of his life that he found himself thinking of her frequently during the week and longing for the arrival of Thursday evening. That the girl found pleasure in his calls he was certain. Twice she had told him how lonely and

homesick she was and had hinted that by representing himself as her cousin he could call more than once a week. The suggestion, made in half jest, half earnest, had worried him, and when he protested that such a thing would be dishonorable, she had laughed it off and said she was joking.

The telephone message that had been left for him, set him a-flutter with excitement and he had hurried away as quickly as possible from his comrades.

He found the girl cuddled into the corner of a big divan, her fair hair piled with studied carelessness upon her small head and her high-colored, rounded face was marred by a petulant, pouting expression.

“I was so afraid you wouldn’t come,” she said. “The person who took my message did not seem able to understand anything.”

“I came as soon as possible,” he replied, seating himself near her as she drew aside her skirt to make room for him. “They said you wished to see me and that it was important.”

“Oh, Larry,” she said, frowning prettily and using his name for the first time in their acquaintance, “I am so worried. Harry was here to-day to bring me some money from Uncle Barney. He found out that you have been calling on me and he was furious.”

“I do not see what he has to do with it,” replied Larry, stiffening in an instant.

“He said terrible things about you,” she continued. “I was so worried for fear you boys had been having trouble again. Why cannot you be friends?”

“I’m afraid we never can be friends,” said Larry. “But I thought we had ceased being enemies. We have been getting along very well lately.”

“Harry says you undermined him and got his place on the team,” said the girl. “He said you were a sneak, and that you took advantage of him.”

“He wouldn’t dare say that to me—or to any of the fellows who know what happened,” retorted Larry, angered by the accusations. “I have tried to treat him fairly.”

“But you are playing in his place, aren’t you?”

The tone, more than the question, was accusing, and Larry found himself confused and placed on the defensive.

“Yes,” he replied, unwilling to tell the circumstances.

“Then he is right—in a way,” she said. “If it were not for you he’d still be playing?”

“I suppose so,” he responded. “The manager made the change—we had nothing to do but obey him.”

“Harry said you took unfair advantage of him,” she said easily. “I told him I did not believe it.”

“Thank you,” he said. “The truth is he lost his temper in a game and threatened to quit, so the manager took him at his word—and put me in his place.”

“I’m sorry you boys cannot play your foolish games without quarreling. Why don’t you let him play? It seems to me it is babyish to be fighting over a little thing like that.”

“I couldn’t let him play if I wanted to,” he answered. “Girls don’t understand things.”

“Harry says he is going to play in the game against Golden,” she answered innocently. “He said he must play because he has invited several of his girl friends to come and see him—and he would be so ashamed if he did not get to play.”

“Did he say how he was going to get back onto the team?” Larry was becoming suspicious. He realized that the girl did not understand that she was betraying secrets, and felt guilty in drawing admissions from her.

“Oh—he has several plans,” she replied innocently. “I told him I would ask you not to play”——

“But you do not understand,” he interrupted. “Mr. Haxton says who will play, and we have nothing to do with it. If he thinks Harry ought to play he will.”

“Harry is mad at Mr. Haxton, too,” she ran on. “He asked Mr. Haxton to put him on and Mr. Haxton refused—because he doesn’t like Harry any more, although he owes Harry lots and lots of money. I thought maybe, if Mr. Lawrence wrote you to come home you could go—and then Harry could play.”

Larry laughed quickly. He knew the girl did not have the least conception of what it meant to him, or to Harry Baldwin to play in the greatest game of the year, and he forgave her because of her ignorance.

“But Mr. Lawrence is not at the ranch,” he answered. “He is leaving to-day to be gone a month.”

He had cause to remember, later, that remark, although at the time it seemed unimportant.

“Well,” she said resignedly, “I’m sure I don’t care. Harry seemed so anxious to play I thought I’d help him. It doesn’t seem important to me.”

“I am sorry he is so disappointed,” said Larry forgivingly. “I know how it would be.”

“Oh, he hasn’t given up hope yet,” the girl replied carelessly. “He has another plan if Mr. Haxton won’t let him play.”

“I wonder what it can be?” mused Larry, secretly tolerant of the girl’s ignorance.

He was to learn later.

CHAPTER XVI

A Treacherous Blow

Two days before the game with Golden University the blow fell. Larry Kirkland, playing the best ball he ever had played and inspired with confidence and the hope of winning his C, was at the athletic field early, busily engaged in catching with Katsura.

“You want to be ready, Katty,” he cautioned. “Arksall is likely to weaken at any time and if he does you are our only hope. I believe Haxton knows it. He has been studying you every day. He asked Torney about you and the big fellow said you had him all puzzled, because it looked as if the batters would kill every ball you pitched, and they couldn’t hit it at all.”

“I’ll be ready,” smiled Katsura. “I have studied the Golden batters. Last year I watched them and when they played St. Mary’s this year I sat in the stands. I saw many things that I would have done very differently.”

“Kirkland!”

The call came from a group of older men gathered near the front of the stands, who for some time had appeared to be in earnest conversation.

“Coming,” called Larry cheerfully as he trotted along the front of the stands to the lower boxes and leaped the barrier at a bound. He had recognized Professor Terbush, the representative of the faculty, and Clark, the student representative. They were with Haxton and Paw Lattiser, and several seniors, and seemed to be excited over something.

“Mr. Kirkland,” said Professor Terbush quickly. “This is rather serious and I hope you will answer our questions honestly and frankly. I warn you any attempt at deceit will be discovered.”

“Oh, I say, Professor,” drawled Lattiser, “that sounds as if you had found Kirkland guilty already.”

“I admit the circumstances look bad for him,” said the professor, frowning at the challenge. “I still hope the young man may be able to prove that he is innocent.”

“Innocent of what?” gasped Larry, too taken aback to understand fully what was meant. “What am I charged with?”

“We have here,” said Professor Terbush, waving a letter in one hand, “a letter from the athletic committee of Golden University protesting against

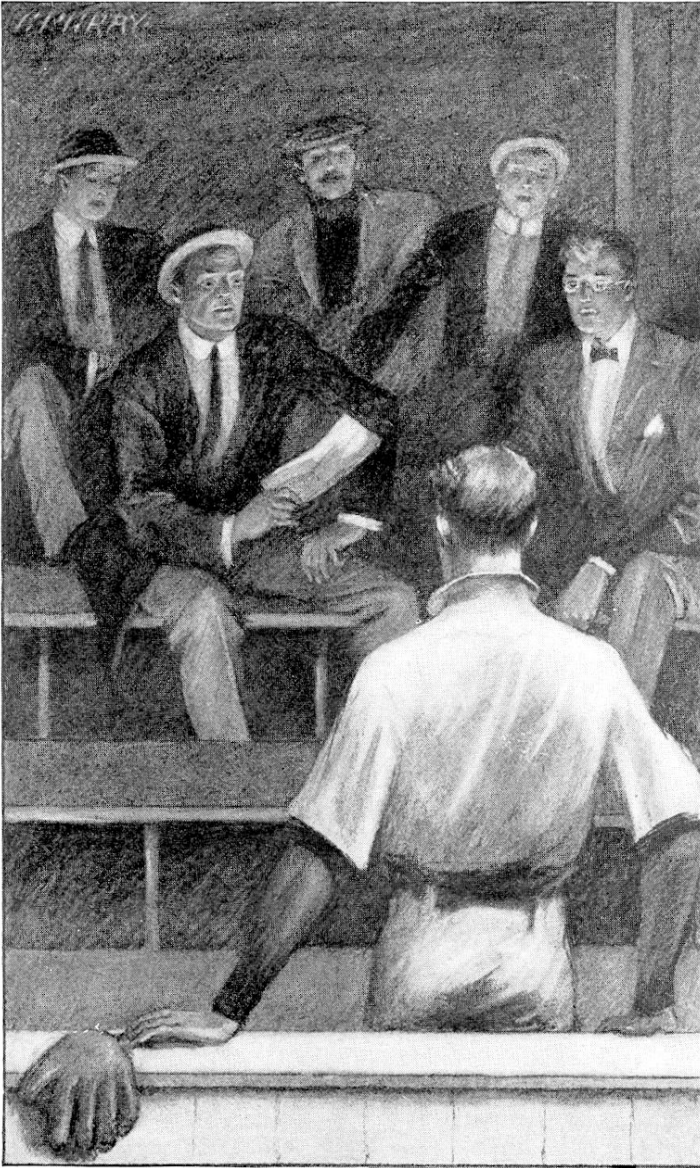
you as a member of the Cascade team.” The professor frowned heavily, his voice pregnant with accusation.

“On what grounds?” stormed Larry hotly. “Why shouldn’t I play on Cascade?”

“The charge is professionalism,” replied the instructor. “We have investigated and we are commencing to fear that the charge made against you is based upon facts.”

“Professionalism?” Larry first was puzzled, then flamed with anger. “How can I be a professional? I don’t understand.”

“The letter charges that you once played on a professional baseball team. Is that true?”



“HOW CAN I BE A PROFESSIONAL?”

“No.”

“Sure?”

“Certainly I am sure. I never was with any such team.”

“Weren’t you once with the Giants, at Portland?”

“No—y-e-s, I was for one day.”

“Ah,” said Professor Terbush, turning to the others with an “I told you so” air, “I thought as much.”

“Hold on a moment, Mr. Terbush,” said Lattiser. “This isn’t any of my cross-examination, but it seems the witness needs a lawyer. Tell us the circumstances, Kirkland.”

Larry, who had been confused and guilty-looking under the accusing looks and tone of the faculty member, flashed a grateful smile at Lattiser, as he suddenly recalled having told the veteran of his experience with the Giants.

“It was when I was nearly fifteen years old,” he said. “I met them—or one of them—on a train coming West. They took me out to the ball park with them and I sat on the bench with them during the game and that night I came on home. I never have seen the team since.”

“That hardly makes a professional of him, Professor,” laughed Lattiser.

“Ahem—I suppose not,” agreed Professor Terbush, “providing the young man is able to sustain his statements with proof. However, that is but part of the indictment against him.”

He paused, cleared his throat and waved the accusing letter impressively. “It also is charged that he has employed a professional from that team to coach him.”

“That is false,” cried Larry, who seeing that he had the sympathy of one or two of the committee and the active support of Lattiser was commencing to recover from the confusion into which the unexpected attack had thrown him.

“Young man,” said Professor Terbush severely, “I have no doubt that the Golden University committee has good grounds for presenting these charges. It is unbecoming in you to accuse them of lack of verity.”

“Oh, I say, Professor,” drawled Lattiser, “there’s a chance they are mistaken, isn’t there? Give Kirkland a chance.”

“Do you mean to insinuate that I am dealing unfairly?” demanded the professor, outraged.

“Not at all, not at all,” agreed Lattiser. “I merely wanted him to have his constitutional rights—which he seems entitled to even in a college.”

“I shall be only too glad if the young man is able to disprove charges, which, if sustained, would bring lasting disgrace upon the fair name of our school,” said Professor Terbush, entirely overlooking the hidden sarcasm of Lattiser’s concluding sentence.

“I can explain,” said Larry. “Mr. Krag was my friend. When he retired from baseball he was employed by my guardian as foreman on the ranch. He never has been paid to coach me—and, in fact, never has done much coaching excepting to tell me where I was wrong and to offer advice.”

“You admit he has coached you?”

“I suppose it amounts to that. He has tried to help me learn the game.”

“The final charge is even more serious,” said Professor Terbush, adjusting his glasses and looking at the letter as if reading. “It charges that your guardian, Mr. James Lawrence, maintains a paid ball club on the ranch, that you are its captain, and that, for winning a certain game, to wit, a game against a team representing Pearton, Mr. James Lawrence paid you the sum of \$1,000, and agreed that, if you succeeded in winning a place on the Cascade team he would give you a like present in addition to paying the expenses of your education.”

“It’s a lie!” cried Larry, goaded by the injustice of the accusations as well as by the tone of the faculty representative.

“Young man—young man,” cried Professor Terbush in an outraged tone, “do not further prejudice the committee against yourself by such violent language toward your superiors.”

“By the way, Professor,” said Lattiser calmly, “you speak of his superiors. Who are they? Who signs that letter? Who makes these accusations?”

“The letter is from the athletic board of Golden University. The charges have been made to them and they have requested that we investigate and, if we find the charges true, to bar Kirkland from participating in athletic events, which, of course, it is our duty to do.”

“Yes, but who makes the charges?” persisted Lattiser. “It seems to me it is one man’s word against another—and we ought to know who the other is.”

“We are not interested in the person making the charges,” replied Professor Terbush. “What interests us is whether or not they are true.”

“I know who makes the charges,” Larry exploded angrily. “It is no one connected with Golden University—it is a person in this college.”

“Be careful what you say, Kirkland,” said Haxton quickly. “That’s a pretty serious charge.”

“I know it,” said Larry. “But there are some things in that letter only one person knows”——

“That is beside the question,” decided Professor Terbush quickly. “We must ascertain the truth or falsity of the charges. Are you able to prove your assertions.”

“Wait a minute,” interrupted Lattiser. “It seems to me that in law a man is innocent until proved guilty, and that the burden of the proof is on the accuser.”

“Not in this case,” said Professor Terbush severely. “Our honor and the honor of the school is at stake. We must not evade our duty on technicalities.”

“I can prove it,” declared Larry quickly. “Major Lawrence can disprove every charge made against me.”

“Very good, very good,” said Professor Terbush. “I recall Major Lawrence. It seems to me he once made this institution a munificent donation. A worthy man—we will write him.”

“But,” protested Larry in dismay, “if you write him I cannot play in the game. He is not at home; he has gone East—and perhaps will be traveling for a month or more.”

“That is unfortunate,” said the professor seriously. “I sincerely wish he were here to disprove the accusations. Under the circumstance there seems nothing to do but submit to the suggestion of the committee. We cannot afford to take chances of placing a lasting blight upon our honor as a college.”

“Seems to me,” said Lattiser dryly, “you can afford to place a lasting blight upon Kirkland’s honor and integrity without much effort.”

“Mr. Lattiser,” protested the faculty member, “your construction of our motives is almost insulting. We but do our duty.

“Gentlemen,” he continued, turning to the other members of the athletic committee who had remained silent, “what is your judgment?”

“I think we ought to give Kirkland a square deal,” said James, who represented the under classmen. “He hasn’t been proved guilty. What do you think, Mr. Haxton?”

“Well,” said Haxton, “I’ve thought all along he played a little too well and knew too much to be an amateur.”

“You believe him guilty?”

“I don’t know anything about it—it looks funny.”

“I think we should suspend Mr. Kirkland from playing,” announced Professor Terbush, “and suspend judgment in his case until he is ready to

produce his alleged proof.”

“Then I don’t play against Golden?” asked Larry beseechingly.

“We cannot afford to risk the honor of our noble institution,” replied Professor Terbush. “We hope you will be able to prove your innocence, and present the proof you say you can get.”

Larry, almost stunned by the judgment, walked unsteadily out of the stand and down onto the playing field. Katsura, who had been watching from afar, ran to meet him.

“What’s the matter, Larry?” inquired the little brown boy anxiously.

“They’ve thrown me off the team, Katty,” he wailed. “They won’t let me play with Golden.”

“Baldwin?” asked Katsura, stiffening quickly.

“It must have been. No one else could or would have done it,” said Larry, walking unsteadily toward the club rooms.

CHAPTER XVII

The Game With Golden

A flutter of golden banners, ribbons, flags and flowers grew to a wave of gold as the team of Golden University raced out from a gateway between the stands and scattered rapidly to their positions on the playing field. The adherents of Golden, banked on the big stands to the third-base side of the oval, arose and sent volley after volley of cheers across the field to where the students and admirers of Cascade sat. A return broadside of applause greeted the opening attack of the greatest baseball battle of the year as the men and girls of Cascade welcomed the visitors.

Five minutes later a tumult suddenly broke loose on the Cascade side of the field. A ripple of applause, starting at one end of the stands grew and spread, until suddenly five thousand of the lovers of Cascade arose, and screamed their welcome to their team. Then, volley for volley, the rival schools fired their cheers across the field at each other, challenging to battle. The waves of blue on one side marked the sea of blue banners, and the sunshine slanting upon the golden banners sent the challenge back in heliographic flutters.

The long, rippling yell of Golden answered the booming, resonant war cry of Cascade as the teams practiced. Down in front of each section cheer masters, animated jumping-jacks, armed with flags and megaphones, spurred the throat-weary ones to louder efforts, while the teams, tense and silent, practiced with set lips.

In the throng just back of first base Larry Kirkland, miserable and dejected, was sitting alone brooding over the injustice of his lot and striving to hide the hot anger that was consuming him. During all the applause and the cheering he had remained silent; nor had he joined in the Cascade yell that greeted the diamond warriors when they ran onto the field.

Kirkland had fresh reason for anger and resentment.

In the first bitterness of his disappointment he had made desperate efforts to reach Major Lawrence by telegraph, to disprove the accusations of professionalism and to secure reinstatement before the game was played. In this he had been aided most actively by Paw Lattiser, who had come to his rescue with advice and who had attempted to cheer him in his disappointment. But Major Lawrence had gone East on a long-deferred

business trip and could not be located and, as a crowning blow, he had taken Krag with him, so that after telegraphing several times to Pearton, and sending messages to be forwarded, it became evident that it would be impossible to reach Major Lawrence and secure his evidence in time to compel the reinstatement of Larry Kirkland prior to the game with Golden, and the effort had been abandoned reluctantly. Although Larry did not know it, Paw Lattiser had carried the case before the faculty, and urged strongly that justice be done, but the faculty had declined to interfere in the matter or dictate to the Athletic Board of Control.

This disappointment was a bitter blow to Larry Kirkland. He had staked his hopes upon the game with Golden, and further, to be barred from that contest meant the loss, for a year at least, of the coveted C—the honor mark of Cascade and the Cross of Honor for college athletes. So bitter had been his disappointment that he had refused to attend the game, in spite of the urging of Katsura and of the others who had remained loyal to him in his troubles. To his surprise, Larry discovered that he had more friends in Cascade than he ever had imagined. Several of the Seniors, who scarcely had spoken to him before, had come to him to express their sympathy and their indignation and to pledge him their assistance and two or three of the team who belonged, by former alliance, to the Haxton-Baldwin crowd, had assured him that they believed him innocent and that in their opinion it was a contemptible trick to protest him at the last minute.

Larry had won further admiration by maintaining strict silence in regard to his suspicions. To Katsura and Winans he had expressed his belief that Harry Baldwin was behind the accusations, and Katsura gravely had advised him not to mention his belief or make any charges until he had the proof.

It was because of this that Larry, sitting in the stands, was raging inwardly. At the last moment, as he heard the noise of the excited students pressing toward the grounds, he had abandoned his idea of remaining at the house and studying, and had hurriedly joined the throng. After all, he argued, it was selfish to place his own interests above those of the college. He would cheer as loyally, and “root” as hard for Cascade as if he were playing.

It was while he walked toward the athletic field that he heard a thing that revived all his anger and disappointment. Just ahead of him three young fellows, bearing Golden flags, were hastening along, and talking in rather loud tones.

“I don’t care,” said one of them, “Wallace had no right to bring those charges. He has done the same thing he accuses this Cascade man of

doing”——

Wallace! Larry suddenly realized that the trio of Golden youths were talking about him. The name Wallace aroused a memory. He could not think for a moment in what connection he had heard the name. Then one of the youths ahead said:

“Pshaw! They all do it. I’ll wager half the fellows on both teams have taken money for playing.”

“It wasn’t so much his protesting this Kirkland,” responded the other, “as the way he did it. Wallace said he found out a week ago that Kirkland’s uncle was going away, and that he didn’t make the charges until he was sure the old man couldn’t deny them. It seems this uncle, or guardian, or whatever he is, is very rich and Wally was afraid he might come down and deny it all.”

“All I have to say,” said the third, “is that it wasn’t square. He either ought to play or ought not—and it wasn’t right to make the charges knowing he couldn’t prove or disprove them.”

As they passed out of hearing Larry Kirkland stood still, wondering and pondering over the situation. He recalled Wallace vividly. He was the tall pitcher who had been imported by Harry Baldwin to pitch for Rogue River ranch team against Shasta View on the memorable occasion which had served to embitter the feud of the Baldwin and Lawrence families. But how had Wallace known that Major Lawrence was going East? Larry cudged his brain for a solution of that mystery as he walked more slowly toward the field.

Suddenly an idea sprang into his mind that drove his selfish thoughts from him. Instead of going to his seat in the stand immediately he hastened to the club house and advanced toward Coach Haxton.

“Why, hello, Kirkland,” said Haxton a little awkwardly. “Sorry you’re not with us”——

“Thank you,” replied Larry chillingly. “But I dropped in to tell you something, if you do not object to taking advice.”

“Glad to get it,” said the coach in more friendly tones. “We may need it with the team broken up this way.”

“It’s this,” said Larry quickly, “I know this fellow Wallace who is pitching for Golden. Batted against him once. He has a lot of speed and a fast curve, but he is liable to be wild. Besides, if your players wait and make him pitch hard he’ll tire himself out before the end. He hasn’t the strength to keep up his speed and he gets wilder when he tires.”

“Thank you,” said Haxton. “I’ll remember it.”

“When he gets fussed up,” said Larry, “bunt toward him and he will fall all over himself. I think you can beat him that way.”

“I say,” said Haxton with genuine friendliness, “it’s awfully decent of you to try to help after—after—well, after what has happened.”

Larry had gone to his seat torn by conflicting emotions. He regretted giving the advice, yet felt that he had done his duty. He found it hard to hope that Cascade would win. But, before the second inning was played, he had forgotten his own troubles and was cheering as loyally as any over the plays. The third, fourth and fifth innings passed and still neither team had been able to score. Golden’s batters were hitting freely, but unluckily, and the splendid defensive work of Cascade was holding them in check. It was evident that Haxton was following Larry’s advice. The batters were waiting and forcing Wallace to pitch many balls to each of them and it was evident to Larry that the strain was telling upon him. In the sixth inning a base on balls and a sacrifice put Rodney on second base and Harry Baldwin, hitting the first ball pitched to him, drove home the first run and Cascade went wild. But in the seventh, Arksall wavered, grew wild, and in trying to get the ball over the plate was freely batted, and four Golden runners crossed the plate.

In this dilemma Haxton turned to Katsura. The little brown fellow smiled, trotted out, pitched a few practice balls, and stepping to the slab began floating his tantalizing slow twisters across the plate, and the rally ended quickly. Larry applauded wildly as Katsura, still smiling coolly, trotted back to the bench. He was not discouraged, for he believed that Katsura, with his skill and cunning, would stop Golden from scoring and he hoped that Cascade could score freely when Wallace, worn down by the strain, weakened. He weakened in the eighth inning, grew wild, and Cascade quickly tied the score. Two runners were on the bases when Harry Baldwin, disobeying orders, struck out, and Larry felt a pang of fierce joy at the discomfiture of his rival.

The ninth came with the crowd working itself to a high pitch of excitement and the score tied. The first Golden batter retired, and the next hit a slow, easy bouncer to the shortstop, who, hastening unnecessarily, threw the ball against the stands, allowing the runner to reach third. The situation was dangerous. Haxton called the shortstop and second baseman closer to the plate and played to cut off the runner. Katsura, pitching as coolly as in practice, refused to permit the batter to hit a good ball, and as a result gave him a base on balls, increasing the chances of a double play.

The next batter drove a bouncer straight at Harry Baldwin. The crowd checked its cheer. Baldwin scooped the ball perfectly. He could throw to the plate and shut off the runner there, or he could throw to second and try for the double play that would end the inning. He paused an instant, steadied himself and threw to first base. The moment he threw he started trotting off the field, and, aroused suddenly by the roar of surprise and anger from the Cascade followers, he stopped as if bewildered. He had forgotten how many batters were out—and had permitted the runner to score from third without an effort to stop him. A moment later a fly ended the inning. Cascade rallied desperately in their ninth, but failed to score. Larry Kirkland, dejected, yet inwardly glad that it was Baldwin who had lost the game, joined the rush toward the exits. Baldwin's blunder had cost Cascade the game and the championship.

CHAPTER XVIII

Larry Gets Some Facts

Bill Krag refused to regard Larry's disappointment over being debarred from the Cascade College team as a professional as a serious matter.

He listened to Larry's long tale of his wrongs with a smiling face, and when the story was done he threw back his great head and roared with laughter. Larry, who had just arrived from college for the long vacation, was hurt and sought refuge in sullen silence.

"Buck up, Larry boy," he counseled. "I know it's tough, but ten years from now you'll sit down and wonder why you thought it amounted to anything."

"I expected you, at least, to sympathize with me," pouted Larry.

"Say," laughed Krag, "if it's sympathy you're looking for you'll find it a scarce article. As a matter of fact, I'm glad it happened."

Larry stiffened angrily and bit his lip.

"I'll tell you why," said Krag more seriously. "It's what you need. You're getting better experience at college than most boys do. The experience is better than the honors you could win playing ball. You'd forget the honors in three or four years, and you'll never forget this experience. You're learning in school what you'll get up against as soon as you get out"——

"But it isn't square," protested Larry.

"If you're going to kick on everything that isn't square in this world you'll go through life kicking," retorted Krag, grinning. "The thing to do is to get proof that you're not a professional, then go back and show them you are all right by taking your medicine and still remaining loyal."

But Major Lawrence, on his return home, did not view the matter from Krag's viewpoint. He flared into hot rage at the injustice of the attack upon his ward, and declared he would withdraw all his donations from Cascade, and teach that faculty a lesson. When he heard that Harry Baldwin was suspected of furnishing the Golden University committee, through Wallace, with the information, he grew purple in the face, and stormed around the bungalow, declaring war on the entire tribe of Baldwins. His outburst against Barney Baldwin and his son made Larry Kirkland squirm uneasily, for he had an engagement to call upon Helen Baldwin at Rogue River ranch that

evening and he had hesitated to mention that fact to Major Lawrence, fearing an outburst.

Larry felt that it was his duty to speak to Major Lawrence of his intention, but the fierce denunciation of the Baldwins by the major had caused him to delay the announcement and when, after dinner, he had completed his toilet, while Krag rolled upon the bed and made facetious remarks and guesses as to the identity of his inamorata, the major had driven away to a distant part of the ranch, Larry, taking a light runabout wagon drove straight toward Rogue River ranch, secretly relieved at having escaped the ordeal.

He had expected, and rather dreaded, meeting Harry Baldwin or his father, but after the brown boy had taken charge of his horse, he was greeted by Helen Baldwin, who invited him to sit with her on the wide veranda of the rather pretentious house.

"I invited you to come this evening," she laughed, "because Uncle Barney and Cousin Harry have gone to Portland and I feared it might be embarrassing to you to meet them."

"That was thoughtful," he replied, smiling. "I'm afraid I might not be considered a welcome guest."

"I was thinking of myself, too," she laughed. "Harry would be furious if he knew you were calling on me. He seems to think he is my guardian."

They chatted for a time of school, of the events of commencement week, and finally the conversation turned to athletics.

"I was so disappointed at not seeing you play with Cascade," she said brightly. "I was there with a crowd of the academy girls. I told them I had a friend on the team, and we all wore Cascade colors, excepting Sue. She knows a man who plays on Golden, so she wore his colors. We looked all over the field for you. Why didn't you play?"

"I am off the team," he remarked, striving to avoid the subject. "I was sitting in the stands. I saw you, but you were way across the field and there was such a jam I could not reach you to speak to you."

"I don't understand," she persisted. "Harry said you would not play, but you said you would. Did you let him play because I asked you to do it?"

"No," he said. "I intended to play, but they would not let me."

"Harry was right then?" she exclaimed. "He said they wouldn't"——

"When did he say that?"

"Oh, some time before the game. You know I told you he had invited a girl to see him play, and he said he had to play because she was coming."

“Did he say how he would keep me from playing?” Larry’s tone was strained, as he strove to control his rising anger.

“No—yes—I didn’t understand, but he said something about some rule, only he was afraid Mr. Lawrence would come down and deny what he said.”

“Did you happen to tell him that Mr. Lawrence was going away?” he inquired, striving to make the question sound innocent.

“Why, yes—I believe I did tell him. Yes—I remember now. He said that was good, and that the old crank could not make any more trouble.”

Larry flushed at hearing Major Lawrence called an old crank, but concealed his indignation. He had not as yet secured all the information he wanted.

“By the way,” he remarked presently, “is Harry still friendly with Wallace, the Golden pitcher?”

“Oh, yes, they are great friends. I thought it was mean of Mr. Wallace not to let Harry hit the ball, didn’t you? I was so excited. Harry was mad at Mr. Wallace after the game, and he growled at all of us during dinner. He was mad at Mr. Haxton, too.”

“I thought he and Haxton were great friends,” remarked Larry, who was getting more information than he expected.

“They were, but Mr. Haxton was just hateful to Harry, Harry says. He loaned Mr. Haxton a lot of money—and then Mr. Haxton turned against him.”

“Thank you,” said Larry quietly. “Let’s change the subject and talk of pleasanter things.”

Half an hour later, as he drove away from the lights of the Baldwin ranch house, he was so deeply engrossed in patching together the circumstances of his expulsion from the team with the things the girl, in her ignorance of the game, had revealed, that he roused himself just in time to jerk the horse to one side of the road as a big touring car flashed past. In that flash he recognized Harry Baldwin at the wheel. He smiled bitterly.

“I just escaped in time,” he muttered to himself. “If I had met him”——

He whistled softly to himself as he hastened the gait of the horse and turned toward Shasta View.

“Hello, Larry, where have you been?” shouted Major Lawrence from the shadows of the piazza as Larry tossed the reins to the waiting Chinese boy and leaped from the runabout.

"I've been over to Baldwin's ranch," Larry replied quickly, determined to have it over with.

"I thought you would," replied the Major, chuckling.

Larry, who had expected an outburst of wrath, was taken aback.

"Did you see the cub?" asked Major Lawrence.

"He wasn't at home," replied Larry. "He nearly ran me down on the road as I came home."

"See Barney Baldwin?"

"No; he and Harry have been in Portland."

"Then you didn't get any satisfaction from them?"

"No, Uncle Jim. I didn't go to see them in the first place. But I found out enough—more than enough."

He quickly related what he had learned from Helen Baldwin, how Harry Baldwin had timed his attack and planned to strike when proof could not be obtained; how he had used Wallace in preferring the charges, and how, by loaning money to Haxton, he had placed the coach in a position where he was compelled to aid in the scheme, or at least could not oppose Baldwin.

"I'll see about this," stormed the Major. "I'll clean out the whole kit and caboodle of them. That whelp Baldwin cannot run things to suit himself."

He trailed off into a spasm of denunciation of the Baldwins. Larry realized that, in his anger, Major Lawrence had entirely overlooked the significant fact that Larry had gone to the Baldwins to call upon Helen and he felt guilty, as he had deceived his friend and benefactor.

CHAPTER XIX

“Paw” Lattiser to the Rescue

The meeting of the Board of Athletic Control of Cascade College had been uneventful. The two faculty members, the two student representatives, and Coach Haxton, comprising the board, had transacted the routine business, discussed informally the plans for the baseball campaign, and were preparing to adjourn when a request was received from “Paw” Lattiser that he be permitted to present a matter of importance to the board when unfinished business was reached. After a brief consultation the board invited Lattiser to appear and state his business.

The veteran student, peering owl-like above the rims of his glasses, entered, his inevitable book under one arm and a bundle of impressive-looking papers under the other. He bowed awkwardly to each of the professors, advanced to the center of the room and stood there as if embarrassed.

“What’s the case, Paw?” inquired Shelley, one of the “sporty” crowd, who was regarded as the representative of the fraternities on the Athletic Board. “Hustle up—I’ve got some boning to do.”

“Gentlemen,” said Lattiser quietly, “I have here, under my arm, the papers in the case of James Lawrence Kirkland, who, as you will recall, was suspended and barred from participating in athletic sports on the ground that he is a professional.”

“Oh, that was settled last spring,” said Shelley lightly. “Professor Terbush decided Kirkland didn’t belong.”

“Mr. Shelley is correct,” remarked Professor Terbush pompously. “As I recall it, the young man was found to have played ball for money.”

“Your recollection is a bit at fault,” retorted Lattiser. “You probably will recall that you said you would be glad to reopen the case, and expressed a hope that Kirkland could produce proof of what he said. Here is the proof.”

He passed a sheaf of folded documents to Professor Terbush, who received them, and held them while hesitating.

“What’s it all about, Lattiser?” asked Shelley. “I haven’t got time to spend all night here reading documents.”

“I have there,” replied Lattiser, “the affidavit of Mr. James Lawrence Kirkland, denying each and all of the charges made against him by—or rather through—(he stopped and glanced over the top of his glasses at the circle about him)—the athletic authorities of Golden University. I have the affidavit of his guardian, Mr. James Lawrence, denying utterly each and every charge. I have the affidavit of Mr. William Krag, denying having had any part in the matter, as charged.”

“Ahem—m,” said Professor Terbush. “You are sure, are you, Lattiser, that this is not a scheme to whitewash the young man?”

“That is what I am trying to avoid,” replied Lattiser easily. “We do not want any whitewashing—nor do we want any fortune dictating the Cascade.”

The others nodded approval.

“Professor Terbush appears to consider Kirkland guilty,” Lattiser continued. “Naturally he fears that Mr. James Lawrence, being rich, will strive to overcome all objections by using money, or the power his money gives him. Isn’t that the situation?”

“Exactly,” said Professor Terbush, nodding. “No fortune I hope, is large enough to dominate this institution.”

“I’m glad you take that view,” said Lattiser, grinning. “If you gentlemen have studied those affidavits, I have more to offer.”

He fumbled through the papers under his arm a moment and brought forth another folded sheet.

“I was convinced last spring,” he remarked, as he unfolded the paper, “that injustice had been done. I decided to take an interest in the case. Knowing that Wallace was quitting Golden University, I sought him, and secured from him this confession.”

“What’s this all about?” demanded Haxton, who had maintained silence. “You seem to have proved Kirkland innocent—let him try for the team if he wants to.”

“The confession of Wallace,” continued Lattiser, refusing to notice the interruption, “bears upon the case. Wallace has written and signed this statement. Briefly, he admits that more than a week before the game between Golden and Cascade, he received a letter from a member of the Cascade team containing the charges against Kirkland, asserting they were true. The letter further stated that although the charges were true, Kirkland’s guardian was extremely wealthy and would use his wealth and power to

keep Kirkland on the team. It therefore suggested that the protest be filed at the last minute.”

“Is it possible?” inquired Professor Terbush, horrified. “Can such things be?”

“They not only can, but be,” replied Lattiser, grinning; “but that is not the worst—I have proof that Mr. Haxton, a member of this board, and athletic director and coach, knew of the plan to protest Kirkland”——

“I was told he was a professional—I believed he had no right”—— Haxton, flushing scarlet, had half arisen——“I still believe he got money for playing.”

The members of the board gasped.

“I have learned also,” said Lattiser, suddenly arousing and shaking his finger at the confused coach, “that you at first threatened to expose the entire thing; but that when told you needn’t pay the \$300, you had borrowed, if you kept still—you kept still.”

“It’s a lie!” shouted Haxton. “Baldwin lies if he”——

He stopped, realizing that Baldwin’s name had not been mentioned, and that he had betrayed himself.

“The money had nothing to do with it,” he shouted angrily. “I thought Kirkland had no right on the team”——

“Gentlemen,” said Professor Terbush severely, “gentlemen—let us not indulge in personalities, but continue the business. As chairman of the board, I now call for a vote on the acceptance of Mr. Haxton’s resignation.”

“But I haven’t resigned”—— Haxton turned, amazed and confounded by the sudden change of front by the professor.

“All in favor of accepting Mr. Haxton’s resignation say aye,” persisted the professor.

“Aye,” said Moulton.

“Aye,” quickly echoed Clark.

“No,” shouted Haxton.

“No,” screamed Shelley, who had been striving to get an opportunity to protest. “I object to this sort of thing—you have no right.”

Rap, rap, rap went Professor Terbush’s gavel.

“The gentleman is out of order,” he ruled. “The chair votes aye. The ayes have it. Mr. Haxton, having resigned and his resignation being accepted, automatically ceases to be a member of this board. Mr. Haxton will please retire. Is there any further business?”

Professor Terbush had risen to the occasion and his rulings seemed to take the breath away from Haxton and his ally. Haxton, protesting and angry, seized his hat and departed; and a few moments later adjournment was taken.

Half an hour afterward Larry Kirkland and Winans were engaged in the highly intellectual sport of striving to put Big Trumbull under his bed. The sounds of their terrific struggle had brought youths in all stages of semi-dress, racing from their rooms to witness the long-delayed battle, which had been threatened if Trumbull persisted in practicing on his piccolo during study hours. Paw Lattiser's entrance was unnoticed and he stood grinning silently until Trumbull, exhausted, surrendered and was pushed, a limp and helpless mass, under his own bed; while Winans and Kirkland danced a war dance of victory.

"Hello, Paw, what's the good word?" demanded Winans, still breathing heavily.

"Big news," said the veteran. "Kirkland is reinstated and exonerated from the charges of professionalism by the Athletic Board."

"Whoop, hurray," yelled Winans, leaping to shake Larry's hand.

"Wake up, you boob and thank Paw for restoring your good name."

Larry, stunned by the unexpected news, stammered his thanks. "That's only part of it," said Lattiser, who was enjoying the sensation he was creating, although maintaining his careless drawl. "Haxton has resigned as coach"——

"Whoopee-e-e," yelled Winans, leaping onto a table. "Three cheers for Paw Lattiser."

The cheers were given with a spirit that aroused the matron and startled the students.

"Come on, all of you," yelled Winans. "I'm going to drag Paw down to Bob's and buy all the best seats in the house, while he tells us about it."

"Hold on, you fellows," came a muffled voice from under the bed. "Half a dozen of you drag me out of here, so I can join the celebration."

CHAPTER XX

The Captain of Cascade

The resignation of Coach Haxton created a condition of athletic chaos at Cascade College. Some hint of what had transpired at the meeting of the Athletic Board had spread through the student body, and although it was garbled and colored by repetition, Larry Kirkland suddenly found himself a campus idol. The certain knowledge that he had been unjustly accused, added to the discontent among the undergraduates over the defeat at the hands of Golden University, and the startling rumors as to how Haxton had wrecked the team by favoritism, all combined to center the sympathy of the students around Larry—and those others who, according to rumor, had been unfairly treated.

There were rumors that the Athletic Board was planning a startling change in the coaching system of the school and that, because of Haxton's failure, it was decided to return to the system of student management. The meeting of the board was awaited with great interest. During the first few weeks after the Christmas holidays no move was made by the board. The basket-ball team played its scheduled games under the direction of its captain, but, although the weather was favorable, no call came for the candidates for the baseball team. It was known that the faculty, aroused by the Haxton incident, was in consultation with the athletic leaders, and striving to evolve a system of handling all sports.

One bright morning, when the early trade-winds were sweeping away the fogs and the sun was shining temptingly, Professor Terbush summoned the members of the Athletic Board to his classrooms, and, an hour later, Clark, who for two years had been one of the student members of the board, emerged and posted a notice upon the bulletin board.

Larry Kirkland, with Winans, was strolling toward the hall, when a shout attracted their attention and, an instant later a cheering mob of Freshmen and Sophomores bore down upon them, and forming a ring, gave three cheers.

“What's this all about?” demanded Larry, breathless as the fellows pulled and dragged at him, all striving to shake his hand at once. “Let up. What's happened?”

Still cheering, they dragged him toward the bulletin board and he blinked, as he read:

NOTICE

Candidates for the baseball squad will report to Captain Kirkland at the baseball field, 3 P. M. to-morrow.

E. G. CLARK,
Acting Manager.

Larry stood staring at the poster, as if unable to grasp its meaning.

“Speech, speech,” yelled a diminutive Freshman.

“Speech,” howled the delighted students, enjoying his embarrassment. Larry, his face redder than his hair, struggled, protested and kicked, but was carried bodily to the steps, and placed upon the stone coping.

“Fellows,” he stammered, twisting with embarrassment, “I’m all embarrassed”——

“Who would have guessed it?” yelled little Turner, raising a laugh.

“Fellows,” Larry repeated, “I’m flabbergasted. This is all news to me. I can’t realize that I’m appointed captain. Maybe it’s a joke”——

“No, no!” cried several. “The committee decided upon a student manager and student control.”

“All I can say,” concluded Larry lamely, “is, I’ll do my best—to help old Cascade win, and I want you all to help me.”

An outburst of applause greeted his stumbling speech, and a moment later, seeing an opening, Larry dodged into the doorway and fled through the building, across the campus and did not stop until he reached his rooms. There he remained, cutting two recitations, while trying to realize the turn fate had taken, and striving to plan how he would form his team. He recalled his early experiences with the Shasta View club, and decided that, in selecting his men, he would follow the same methods.

Larry was busily engaged writing a long letter to Krag, explaining the situation and asking advice, when the door opened and Clark, escorted by Winans and Katsura, who had come to offer their congratulations, entered.

“Hello, captain,” called Clark, offering his hand.

“Hello, manager,” replied Larry. “I want to thank you fellows—I have been afraid it is a mistake”——

“Better thank Lattiser,” laughed Clark. “He talked the professor into it. Old Terbush came through like a trump. Said we owed it to you for what the committee did. We’ll never get rid of you now. He is as strong for you as he was against you.”

“He’s honest in his beliefs, anyhow,” said Larry, “I’d never dare face him when I was guilty. He made me feel guilty when I was innocent.”

“What are we going to do about the club?” asked Clark. “I never played the game enough to know it, but you may count on me to back you up.”

Larry explained carefully his plan for the formation of the team, and the idea met the approval of the new manager.

“You have the ground work of a team, anyhow,” he said. “I suppose you will select men to fill in the positions?”

“No,” replied Larry. “My idea is to forget that any one ever played on the team—and award every position to the fellow who plays the best ball.”

“You’ll have some of the fraternity men and some Seniors in your hair,” warned Clark. “However, what we want is a team—I’ll back you up and you may count on Lattiser and Terbush.”

The interest in baseball revived quickly when Larry’s plan for choosing a team became known among the students. Instead of the usual two dozen candidates, the field swarmed with players of all conditions, each hopeful of getting a position.

“Candidates for catcher,” Larry called, after the throng had been batting and throwing for half an hour.

“Torney is our catcher,” remarked Jacobs, the second baseman casually, as if imparting information.

“I know,” replied Larry, “but no one is a member of the team this fall until he wins his place. Candidates for catcher!”

Eight candidates stepped out.

“Pitchers!” called Larry.

“Oh, I say Kirkland,” said Jacobs anxiously, “the fellows who won their places last year are entitled to stay.”

“Not unless they’re better than the others,” replied Larry briefly. “We want a ball club, not a friendly, social organization.”

His quick squelching of the spirit of rebellion among the veterans appealed to the candidates. Fifteen who claimed to be pitchers were separated from the others and set to work throwing to the catchers. Rapidly the entire squad was divided into groups according to what positions they thought they could play. Not one volunteer offered himself for third base.

“Looks as if I have a cinch,” laughed Larry. “Don’t be afraid to try, you third basemen; if you’re better than I am you’ll get the job.”

Little McAtee, a splendid fielder and speedy, laughed.

“All right, Cap,” he said. “I’ll tackle you, but I think you can beat me.”

“I don’t want any one to think he hasn’t a chance until I tell him,” said Larry. “I won’t try to pick a team for three days, and then it will be a tentative one. Of course we’ve got to reduce the squad quickly, so those remaining may practice. But I want to keep twenty-five regulars this fall.”

“Well, that was a good start,” remarked Clark, as they walked across the campus after two hours of hard work.

“How do you think the fellows like the idea?” inquired Larry anxiously.

The responsibility of the position had commenced to worry him, and he feared that his innovations would not be received in good part by the students.

“The majority of the fellows who were watching agree with you,” said Clark. “I think most of the players believe it is the right way—but, I imagine you’re going to have trouble with some of the old players—and the fraternity crowd will be furious. Baldwin is trying to stir them up—says he isn’t getting a square deal.”

“I didn’t see Baldwin out to-day,” remarked Larry thoughtfully.

“Would you give him a chance to make the team?” asked Clark, stopping in surprise.

“Of course, if I thought him good enough.”

“Well—you beat me,” laughed Clark. “After what he has tried to do to you to give him a chance.”

“He’s a pretty fair player, if he attends to business,” remarked Larry. “I don’t want my personal grievances to hurt the team.”

There were two letters awaiting him when he reached his room. One was from Krag saying:

“Now is the time to be careful. It is harder, sometimes, to stand prosperity than it is to stand abuse.”

The other was a long, scrawly note from Helen Baldwin.

“I have heard of your good luck in being made captain,” she wrote. “Let me congratulate you. I do wish you would give Harry a chance.”

Larry whistled softly to himself as he read it, striving to guess how Helen Baldwin had heard the news so quickly.

CHAPTER XXI

Temptation

The next week was one of worry and apprehension for Larry Kirkland. He had feared, most of all, that he would arouse the enmity of some of the candidates when he reduced the size of the squad, but to his surprise he found this task easy. In the first three days more than half of the candidates voluntarily retired, discovering for themselves that they were not expert enough to hope to replace the others. Larry was compelled to issue an order that all candidates who desired to retire from the squad consult with him before quitting, for he feared losing some promising material because the players might grow discouraged, or think themselves poorer players than they really were. By the end of the first week, the squad was reduced to eighteen players, and after careful study, Larry chose his first team. The team was made up of Trumbull, cf; Winans, catcher; Katsura and Arksall, pitchers; Torney, 1b; Jacobs, 2b; Wares, ss; Allen rf; Dalmores, cf.

Larry had appealed to Krag for assistance in choosing his men and for the first time the big ex-pitcher had refused, declaring that from that time on Larry must exercise his own judgment, but warning him against "playing favorites."

Of the team chosen, only Jacobs had elected to take a stand against Larry's theories. He did not actively oppose the captain in anything, but constantly obeyed orders with a half-sneering smile, or a side remark directed to some other player, that told, more plainly than words, his idea that Larry's plan of playing ball was wrong. The attitude of Jacobs, more than anything else, served to harass and annoy the young captain. He hesitated to force an open rupture, yet realized that the behavior of Jacobs was having a bad effect upon the team in general. He ignored the contemptuous looks and laughs for several days.

"I've got to do something about Jacobs," he said to Clark. "He is against everything I do, and he is not getting into the spirit of the team."

"That fraternity crowd is not back of him," said Clark. "I've noticed that they seem well pleased at your selection of players. They've got half the squad. The old sporty crowd seems to be backing him up. If I were you, I'd read the riot act to him, and, if he don't want to play, tie a can to him."

The crisis came that same afternoon. Larry had been working with the pitchers at one side of the field, and the regular team was supposed to be at fielding practice on the diamond. Larry, running back to take his turn at bat, saw Jacobs loafing near the bench, in earnest conversation with Harry Baldwin.

“Oh, Jacobs, why aren’t you on the job?” he called.

“I’m talking to a friend,” replied Jacobs sneeringly and not moving to resume practice.

Larry, boiling inwardly, stood still an instant, striving to master his anger. Then he walked toward the pair.

“Baldwin,” he said quickly, “if you will not help the team please do not interrupt the practice.”

“You can’t order me off this field,” retorted Baldwin angrily. “I came here to talk business to Jacobs.”

“His business right now is playing ball,” said Larry steadily. “You have no right here unless you come in uniform as a candidate for the team. I learned that lesson myself—and I believe you were one of the teachers.”

He smiled bitterly at the recollection of the time Haxton had ordered him off the field.

“A fine chance I’d have to make the team with you captain,” sneered Baldwin.

“Just the same chance any one else would have, if you are the best player in the position,” retorted Larry. “The idea is to make a ball club—not to promote friendship.”

“I can play as well as any one here can,” retorted Harry, sullenly defiant.

“Then get out and prove it,” retorted Larry quickly. “Jake, we’ve wasted a lot of time. Get out there at second and we’ll try working that double play.”

He played abstractedly and missed several chances to make plays during the three-inning practice game with which they wound up the daily practice.

“I’ve done the right thing, I’m sure,” he muttered to himself as he dressed. “But it looks as if I had merely made more trouble for myself.”

It was his evening to call at St. Gertrude’s, and the trouble he had feared commenced to materialize more rapidly than he expected. He found Helen Baldwin nervous and excited. Her fair face was flushed and the dark rings around her pretty eyes indicated that she had been weeping.

“Oh, Larry,” she exclaimed, “I have been so upset. I wanted to see you. I’ve had such a dreadful time.”

“Haven’t they been treating you well here?” asked Larry, remembering the complaints the girl had uttered of the treatment she said was accorded her by some of the teachers.

“It isn’t Miss Hazlett this time,” she said. “It’s Cousin Harry. Oh, he is simply dreadful. Every time he comes here he scolds me just terribly because you are my friend. He was here to-day, and he told me if I allowed you to call any more he’d write Uncle Barney, and tell him, oh, dreadful tales about me.”

“That is funny,” reflected Larry. “Harry came to the grounds this afternoon and I invited him to join the team. I hoped we might at least quit quarrelling.”

“Did you do that? Oh, I’m so glad you did! Maybe he will not write Uncle Barney.”

“What did he threaten to tell? I’m sure he could not tell anything that would do any harm.”

“Oh you do not know! Harry is horrible! He threatened to write that I have been breaking bounds and going riding with you and other fellows, and he knows how Uncle Barney dislikes Mr. Lawrence, so he just wants to make trouble.”

“Why,” Larry exclaimed indignantly, “I never have seen you outside of this room—he surely wouldn’t write such a lie as that.”

The girl pretended to weep, dabbing at her eyes. She concealed the fact that she, with two of the girls had broken the rules and gone automobile riding with three of the town boys, and that Miss Hazlett had discovered the fact. She cunningly led Larry to believe that Harry Baldwin’s entire tirade of threats had been caused by her friendship for him.

“I’m so glad you and Harry are going to make up and that he can play on that old team,” she said, smiling as she dried her eyes with a bit of lace. “He seems to think that is more important than anything. Maybe he won’t tell those awful tales about me if you let him play. I wanted to ask you to deny them if he wrote Uncle Barney.”

“Of course I’ll deny them,” he answered stoutly. “It’s a muckerish trick to talk that way about a girl. As for playing on the team; he isn’t on it yet. He’ll have to win his place.”

“He said you wouldn’t give him a fair chance,” she replied. “He is just as furious with you as he is with me.”

An hour later Larry Kirkland bade her good-night. His mind was strangely excited as he walked slowly through the drives on the lawn and set forth for the long walk back to his rooms on the campus at Cascade. He was fighting a battle with himself.

He could make a place for Harry Baldwin on the team and, at one stroke he could end the constant warfare with that element of the students that had opposed him from the first. He could put an end to Harry Baldwin's opposition to everything he did or tried to do. Better, he told himself, he could protect Helen Baldwin from the malice of her cousin and earn her closer friendship—a friendship which was coming to mean more and more to him every day.

It would not be hard. Baldwin was a fair ball player. The team needed a stronger shortstop, and Baldwin, he thought, could be trained to play that position well. No one would object, excepting perhaps little Wares—Wares was a poor batter, although clever and fast in defense. It might be a good move.

Larry was approaching the campus, still fighting the battle in his own mind. As he entered the wide avenue, bordered with eucalyptus trees, he looked far up the arcade of gentle swaying trees to the gray tower on the main building, now lighted by the rising moon. He stood a moment awed by the solemn quietness. As he gazed toward the mass of gray buildings he again felt the spirit of the college stir within him. No, if Baldwin played on the team, he would earn his place. The good of the school; the honor of Cascade in baseball had been entrusted to him, and he would not compromise it to gain—even Helen Baldwin.

Having made the decision, Larry Kirkland walked rapidly through the darkened campus, paused an instant to yell a greeting at Mike, the Professor of Lawnology, who attended to the lawns and watched for predatory students, and so to his rooms. He had won his hardest battle.

CHAPTER XXII

A Game and an Ally Won

On the evening before the game with St. Mary's, the first of the "big" games of the college year, the baseball squad of Cascade College, numbering nineteen men, with Manager Clark presiding, met to discuss plans for the battle.

The preliminary games had been played, and the Cascade team was playing more steadily and brilliantly than ever before. Captain Kirkland had shifted the lineup several times, in order to try out the men and there was much discussion among the students as to how the team would line up for the initial struggle of the year against an important club. The meeting had proceeded quietly for some time when Clark called upon Captain Kirkland to outline the battle plans.

"Fellows," said Larry, "I have thought this out the best I can and I hope that no one will take it to heart if not selected for this game. I think it best that Arksall start the game for us, with Katsura ready to relieve him if he needs it. That will give us more hitting strength. I have placed Wares at short, and myself at third"—He paused and a murmur arose from the place where several of the veterans of the team were sitting.

"The rest will play in their regular positions excepting Jacobs"—

The murmur from the veterans arose to exclamations of surprise. Harry Baldwin and Jacobs were off the team.

"I knew we wouldn't get a fair deal," said Baldwin, so that every one in the room could hear. Larry quickly accepted the challenge.

"I left Baldwin and Jacobs off the team," he said slowly, "because, for the last week, they have been breaking training rules and have not shown the proper spirit either on or off the field. Besides, I believe the men chosen for their places are better ball players than they are. I am willing to leave it to a vote of the club and abide by their decision if any one is dissatisfied."

Larry flung the challenge at the little group of malcontents.

"Don't do it," urged Clark hotly. "You're the judge."

"I'd rather have the club vote," persisted Larry, "if I am wrong, the sooner we find it out the less harm there is done."

There were murmurs of protest, muttered consultations and the vote was taken. Clark opened the slips of paper and read them off. The result of the vote stood 16 to 4 in favor of Kirkland's decision.

"The majority seems to think I'm right," said Larry. "Anyhow, we'll try it this time."

"You can't take a C man off the team that way," protested Jacobs. "I earned my place and if I don't play to-morrow I won't play at all."

"Very well," said Larry firmly. "We cannot compel you to play—but I imagine the opinion of the students will be against you if you quit that way."

The meeting ended quietly, but the open dissension in the ranks had its effect. After the meeting, the players broke up into small groups and scattered, discussing the situation. The news of the trouble in the club spread like wildfire over the campus and interest in the game was redoubled. Lattiser, who, while holding aloof, always was ambling into the scene when trouble threatened, was among the first to rally to the support of Kirkland's methods. During the morning he strolled over the campus, rallying the Seniors, and half an hour before the game started he led a marching force of Seniors, in cap and gowns, to the park and, before they took their seats, he signaled, and the Seniors, standing, gave vent to three long cheers for Kirkland.

The moral support of the Seniors overawed the malcontents. Harry Baldwin and Jacobs, who had been loitering around as if undecided as to what they were going to do, suddenly changed front, donned their uniforms and took their places in the preliminary practice.

The game started as if to be a walkover for St. Mary's. The big batters of the academy fell upon Arksall's fast curve and fast ball in the first inning and drove out two hits before he had settled to his task.

"Slow up, slow up," urged Larry feverishly. "Lob the ball to them."

But Arksall was too "rattled" by the unexpected onslaught to heed the advice and, pitching blindly, he hurled the ball high over Winans' head and let the runners advance to second and third bases. An instant later Hoskins, the big St. Mary's first baseman, drove a line single to right center. Trumbull fielded the ball perfectly, and threw fast toward the plate. The throw was vain, as both runners would score on the hit, but Kirkland, cutting in, caught the ball in the middle of the diamond, snapped it to McAtee, and Hoskins was caught going to second.

"That clears the bags," yelled Larry. "Steady now, fellows—stop 'em."

The play restored Arksall's nerves to some extent, and he pitched more carefully, and, although St. Mary's made two more hits in the inning they failed to score again.

"Only two runs on four solid hits, boys," yelled Larry. "Now get at them and get those runs back."

Meisler, of St. Mary's, a speedy left-handed pitcher, however, refused to permit them to hit, and the game rushed along, with the score 2 to 0, through the fourth. Arksall had steadied and was pitching well, while the team behind him was playing brilliantly. Twice little McAtee had proved the wisdom of Larry's choice of second basemen by brilliant stops that shut off runs.

"We've got to get started, fellows," said Larry as he came to the bench at the end of St. Mary's fifth inning. "I'm first up. I'm going to try bunting. Then, Torney, you hit the first ball and, McAtee, you wait and make him pitch. Wares, if you get up, hit the first ball. We'll try to get him guessing as to what we are going to do."

Larry faced Meisler and swung viciously at the first ball pitched, missing it purposely, and the crowd, especially the St. Mary's adherents, roared with laughter.

Meisler grinned and pitched a fast ball, and Larry bunting perfectly toward third base, raced across first before the surprised pitcher or third baseman could move toward the ball. The plan was beginning to work. Torney, who was a clever actor, shortened his grip on the bat, crouched and pretended he intended to bunt, but hit the first ball pitched hard, and drove it so fast past McNamara's head that the St. Mary's third baseman could only dodge, and Larry reached third and Torney second, and the Cascade adherents went wild. Wares, obeying orders, strove for a base on balls, but flied out and Larry scored after the catch. McAtee bunted safely and a fly ball sent Torney across the plate with the tying run.

The sixth found the teams battling on even terms, but in the first half of the seventh an error, quickly followed by a hit and two long flies, gave St. Mary's two more runs and seemed to decide the game.

The last of the eighth found Cascade still struggling in the rut.

"We upset them last time by bunting," said Larry. "Arksall, you're leading off, try it. They'll not expect it from you."

The big pitcher, awkward and notoriously a poor hitter and a slow runner, had struck out twice, and among the critics of the game in the stands there was a murmur when he was permitted to bat again, a murmur of

disapproval that changed to one of laughing applause when he bunted toward third and went lumbering across first ahead of the ball.

“You run for him, Katsura,” ordered Larry. “I’m going to hit the second ball he pitches toward right field, if possible. I’ll pretend to bunt the first.”

His plan worked perfectly. Maloney, drawn out of position to field the bunt, saw the ball bound past him and before it could be recovered, Katsura was on third and Larry on first. Torney was too anxious, and his high fly seemed to end the rally.

Larry turned quickly to Trumbull, who was coaching.

“Send Jacobs up to hit for McAtee,” he ordered. “We’ve got to win it here.”

Jacobs, who had been fretting on the bench, sprang to the bats and rushed to the plate. The first ball that Meisler pitched was a foot above his head, but he hit it with terrific force, and sent it rolling to the cinder path far beyond the outfielders. Before it could be retrieved, all three runners had crossed the plate and Cascade led 5 to 4.

There Katsura held them, and Cascade rejoiced in victory dragged from defeat.

In the club house, as the excited victors dressed and discussed the events of the afternoon, Jacobs approached Larry Kirkland:

“Thank you,” he said simply. “I was wrong. My dad came over to see the game—and it would have hurt him if I had not played.”

Larry grasped the extended hand heartily. One, at least, of the opposition was converted.

CHAPTER XXIII

Helen Appeals for Help

The troubles that had beset Larry Kirkland since first he entered Cascade College appeared to be departing. The generous action of Jacobs, the deposed second baseman, in turning to Larry's support and advocating his cause among the "sporty" students who had opposed him, appeared to clear the way to complete understanding. Only Harry Baldwin remained antagonistic and, since he had lost the support of many of his friends through his own behavior, his opposition carried little weight.

Larry was in an excellent humor as he dressed to call at St. Gertrude's on the Thursday evening following the final game with St. Mary's. The team was winning. St. Mary's, Silver University and Pacific College teams had fallen before the victorious Cascade club, and only the strong team of the Golden University remained to be conquered to insure the championship.

It was small wonder that Larry Kirkland was jubilant. He had received a letter from Krag, congratulating him and warning him of the danger of overconfidence, and he had just succeeded, after a struggle that aroused the entire dormitory, in pinning Winans' shoulders to the carpet. That wrestling match had been brooding all term and was renewed each time Larry prepared to call on Helen Baldwin.

Winans, defeated and all mussed up, was stretched upon the partially wrecked bed, jeering at his conqueror.

"I was doing it for your good," he declared. "I was trying to save you from the wiles of a designing woman. Now you can go to your fate, but don't blame me."

"If you're just jealous I'll introduce you some day," said Larry, refusing to be teased.

"It's my fault," moaned Winans in mock grief, "to let one so young, so tender, so beautiful, stray into the clutches of a heartless woman."

"Shut up, or I'll throw you, hog-tie you and lock you in the closet," threatened Larry, still trying to comb down a shock of rebellious red hair.

"Come on," bantered Winans. "You can't throw me again. You took unfair advantage last time"——

“Aw, you know I can’t wrestle with these clothes on,” protested Larry. “Wait until I get my ball things on.”

“Come on, I dare you,” taunted Winans. “I ought to tackle you and muss up your pretty hair anyhow.”

Larry refused to discuss the case, being absorbed in knotting a new and gorgeous tie.

“That’s no way to treat a pal,” pleaded Winans, changing his tone. “The idea of running off after a crinoline when you might stay here and have a nice comfortable game of chess with your old chum.”

Larry grinned and refused to be drawn into argument.

“I’ll have to get a divorce,” wailed Winans. “I’ll report that you have deserted me—and go room with Paw Lattiser. He’s more company, anyhow.”

But Larry remained obdurate and hastened away toward St. Gertrude’s, whistling as he went. The whole world seemed good to him then. He was early and so decided to walk over the hills to the girls’ school. Students in cap and gown or in flannels, strolling through the eucalyptus arcades, shouted greetings as he passed.

With no thought of the crisis in his life that awaited him he walked briskly toward St. Gertrude’s, thinking of the girl he was going to meet. Helen Baldwin had come to mean much to him and her friendship was dear. He had idealized her and woven boyish dreams about her, although he never had considered seriously any plan for the future. She was the first girl he ever had known as a friend and the attitude of appealing helplessness she assumed toward him excited his imagination. The fact, too, that she constantly claimed to have been neglected or ill-treated by the Baldwins aroused his sympathy. He did not stop to think that his dislike for the Baldwins blinded him, nor did he imagine that, perhaps, the girl was using his prejudice against the Baldwins for her own ends.

He entered the reception room at St. Gertrude’s, and as the maid closed the door, Helen Baldwin rose from her chair. He stepped forward gladly, both hands outstretched.

“Helen!” he exclaimed.

His tone changed suddenly.

“Helen,” he repeated, this time anxiously, “what has happened? What have they been doing?”

“Larry! Larry!” she sobbed, clinging to him. “Take me away from this place, take me away from them all!”

The tears and her pathetic appeal aroused in him the man's sense of protectorship. Instinctively his arm slipped around her waist and he strove to comfort her.

"Tell me about it, Helen," he urged tenderly. "What is it? Has Harry been annoying you again?"

"Oh, it is all of them," she wailed. "They treat me terribly! I cannot stand it. You must take me away."

"What have they been doing?" he demanded, trembling with indignation. "Tell me."

The boy had become a man, defender of woman, in a few moments, and he spoke with a sternness in his voice that never had been there before.

"Tell me," he repeated. "I will not let them harm you."

The girl ceased sobbing, but still clung to him.

"Harry wrote Uncle Barney the most terrible tales," she said, drying her eyes with suspicious suddenness that he did not observe. "He told him about your coming here and Uncle Barney came this morning. He was furious and he said if I dared let you call on me again, or take me driving, he would pack my things and bundle me off home."

The girl cunningly concealed the fact that her teachers also had reported to Barney Baldwin that she had been breaking rules and riding in automobiles with young men, that she had pretended to be riding with her cousin and when caught had declared that Harry had taken her riding and introduced her to the young man who brought her back to the school.

"It's a shame," declared the boy hotly. "They must be brutes to accuse you of such things when they know we never have been out of the school grounds together."

"It's because they hate you, Larry," she persisted. "I told Uncle Barney you were my friend, and that I would not give you up"——

"You told them that?" The boy seemed bewildered.

"Yes, yes, Larry," she repeated. "I told them I never would give you up. Now you must take me away—somewhere. You must marry me and we will go away and never see these hateful people again."

Larry stepped back in surprise.

"Marry?" he exclaimed in a bewildered tone.

In all his acquaintance with Helen Baldwin the thought of marriage had not occurred to him. If it had it had been as a dream in the hazy future. Some

day, of course, he would marry, but he never had thought of Helen Baldwin as his wife, nor of any girl.

“Yes,” she sobbed, “you must take me away.”

“But, Helen,” he protested, “we cannot do that.”

“We must,” she urged, half hysterically. “We can elope, go into the city and be married”——

“And what then?” he asked, his calmer common sense coming to the rescue. “Neither of us has anything—I cannot support a wife.”

“I’ve thought it all out,” she went on hurriedly. “We will be married. Then we will go and Major Lawrence will forgive us and I need never endure the hateful treatment I get here.”

“No,” said the boy slowly. “We cannot do that. I cannot treat Major Lawrence that way. I will ask his permission”——

“You must not do that,” she interrupted quickly. “He would separate us and we’d never see each other again.”

She buried her face in her handkerchief and sobbed hysterically.

“But I must ask him,” the boy protested, striving to comfort her awkwardly. “I’ll telegraph him that I am coming home, and when he understands it he will not refuse.”

“He will. I know he will,” sobbed the girl. “He hates all the Baldwins and he’ll hate me. He’ll never consent.”

“But he must,” protested the boy. “I’ll tell him how horridly they have treated you—and he’ll take you, and when we are older”——

“Oh, you’re all against me,” she stormed. “I relied so on you and you’ve failed me. You don’t love me.”

Again she wept. The boy, his face drawn with anxiety and pain, knelt beside her.

“I do,” he protested. “But, Helen, can’t you see”——

The bell that marked the end of the calling period rang. They knew that in a minute or two Miss Tiddings would enter the room, and Larry sprang to his feet quickly.



“OH LARRY, TAKE ME AWAY!”

“You must dry your eyes,” he whispered. “They must not know. I will telegraph Mr. Lawrence to-morrow.”

The girl dabbled at her eyes, and a moment later, when Miss Tiddings entered the room and sniffed politely, she saw no traces of the tempest.

“I’ll wire,” whispered Larry as he held her hands. “Bear it a little longer.”

“He’ll never consent,” she whispered. “Oh Larry, take me away. I cannot endure it much longer.”

Larry Kirkland left St. Gertrude’s, his brain surging with new emotions. He scarcely heard Winans’ raillery as he went to bed and for a long time remained awake, striving to lay some plans for the future.

CHAPTER XXIV

The Quarrel With the Major

Major James Lawrence was at breakfast with Bill Krag, on the wide porch at Shasta View bungalow, when a telegram was handed to him by Chun, the Chinese youth who had assumed charge of the housekeeping.

The Major, who had been arguing with Krag, ripped open the envelope, frowned, reread the message, frowned more heavily and commenced to storm:

“Young rascal!” he shouted. “I suppose he has had more trouble at school. All foolishness to send a boy to college, waste of time—and he does nothing but get into trouble”——

“But, Major,” argued Krag, who was breaking his egg, “you took the opposite end of the argument the other evening. You insisted that a boy without a college education was like a boat without a pilot.”

“What do you mean by throwing up my mistakes to me?” demanded the Major. “I only took that side of the argument because you took the other. Confound it, can’t a man argue in his own house?”

“He sure can,” grinned Krag, who enjoyed the Major’s tyrannical outbursts. “What’s the matter with Larry now?”

“He don’t say, confound him!” spluttered the Major. “Says he must see me on an important matter and is coming home. Confound him, why don’t he be more explicit?”

“Girl, I suppose,” suggested Krag, shrugging his shoulders. “It’s about time for him to have his first love affair.”

“Woof,” said the Major indignantly. “Girl? That child in love? Why, confound him, if he dares mention such a thing I’ll cowhide him within an inch of his life.”

“I suppose you didn’t have a girl when you were about his age, Major?” inquired Krag. “He’s past eighteen now—nearly nineteen.”

“I never had time for that girl foolishness,” snorted the Major. “Why, when I was his age”——

“Not even one?” persisted Krag teasingly.

“Oh, well”—— The Major paused a moment and grew thoughtful—— “Eighteen, eh,” he said, “when I was eighteen?”

He drummed for a moment with his fingers on the table and looked far away toward Shasta.

“She was the only one, Krag,” he said softly with a far-away look in his eyes. “I left home then. She kissed me good-bye—Bloop,” he exploded, “the idea of him in love! Why, if he dares mention such a thing”——

“Maybe it isn’t a girl at all,” remarked Krag, his mouth full of toast. “Maybe it’s some baseball trouble. So he’s coming home? Why don’t you go to Cascade instead? The team plays Golden University Saturday.”

“I haven’t time to be cavorting around all over the continent to see this baseball foolishness,” snorted the Major. “I’m a busy man, Krag.”

“Oh, well,” said Krag. “I just thought it would save him the trip up here, and, besides, you have some business down there and could stay and see the game.”

“Foolishness!” snorted the Major angrily. “I’ll wire him not to come. He’s got to stick to his business just as I stick to mine.”

He stamped across the veranda to his office, to write the telegram, and Krag laughed until his great body shook when he heard Chun repeat the message over the telephone to the telegraph operator in Pearton.

The message that the Major sent was:

“Don’t come home. Will be there to-morrow and stay over to see the game Saturday.”

Major Lawrence, preparing to storm and upbraid his ward, reached Cascade on the morning of the deciding game of the baseball season. At the first glance of the haggard face and drawn expression of the boy, his kind, old heart relented. He felt a great surge of tenderness come over him as he looked into Larry’s troubled eyes.

“It’s all right, boy,” he said tenderly. “It’ll be all right. Don’t worry.”

“I had to tell you about it, sir,” said Larry in a strained voice. “I was coming down to see you because it is something I couldn’t write.”

“Don’t tell me about it now,” ordered the Major. “Not a word until we have had breakfast. You’re right to tell your old uncle about it. I’m sure it’s nothing we cannot fix up. Wait until we get to the rooms, and we’ll talk it over.”

“Thank you,” said Larry. “I’ve been dreading telling you. I didn’t sleep much last night, worrying about it.”

“Not sleep?” stormed the Major, working himself into a mock rage to cover his own agitation. “Not sleep and on the eve of the game? Why, confound you, boy, I came down here to see you win that game.”

“We’ll win, I think,” said Larry, smiling wanly at the familiar sight of the Major’s anger. “The team is playing good ball—and Katsura will pitch.”

The subject, thus changed to baseball, was not resumed. At breakfast, Major Lawrence met Winans and Trumbull, and after they had learned his peculiar temperament and had drawn him into several hot arguments, they bore him off under the pretense of letting Paw Lattiser decide a point. It was luncheon time before they returned, the Major triumphantly declaring Lattiser the only sensible person in the entire school. It was not until he was preparing to start to the game that Larry had the opportunity to speak to the Major alone.

“Uncle Jim,” he said, “I want to talk with you.”

“Don’t bother me with your nonsense now,” stormed the Major. “I’m going to the game with Lattiser—sensible fellow, Lattiser, not one of these flighty-headed college idiots like Winans and that monkey Jessup he introduced me to. Wait until to-night and we’ll talk things over.”

The Major was decorated for the occasion, and his cane and coat lapel bore huge Cascade ribbons.

“I’ve learned the Cascade yell, Larry,” he went on. “Listen to me and I’ll make you win.”

“But it’s something that must be settled. I must know before the game,” the boy persisted.

“All right—fire away,” said the Major resignedly. “I suppose its money.”

“Yes—and no,” replied Larry. “Its a girl.”

“Girl?” roared the Major, leaping from his chair and stalking up and down the floor. “Girl? Confound it, I’ll girl you! Krag said it was a girl and I told him if it was I’d soon knock that sort of foolishness out of your head. The idea—girl? Why, you young scoundrel, you’ve just shed your pinafores and talking of girl! Next thing I hear you’ll be wanting to marry her.”

“I do want to marry her, Uncle Jim,” said the boy earnestly. “Right away.”

“What?”

This time the Major's astonishment was not pretended. He stopped and stared at Larry as if striving to comprehend.

"Marry?" he cried. "You marry? What have you to offer a wife? What means of support have you? Nothing. You're dependent on me, sir, and if you talk marriage in the next five years, I'll cut you off without a penny, without a penny, understand? Don't talk to me of marriage."

He had worked himself into a real passion, and resumed his storming up and down the room.

"But you don't understand, Uncle Jim," pleaded the boy. "She is in trouble; her family is not treating her well; I am the only one to whom she can turn for help."

Somehow, in spite of his earnestness, the reason seemed inadequate and the necessity not so real as it had seemed when he was listening to Helen Baldwin's sobs.

"Not treating her right?" demanded the Major. "Well, I'll attend to that; I'll see to that. I'll fix it with the family and then, after you are old enough to marry and still love her—who is she?"

The Major broke off his promises suddenly and shot the question at Larry.

"Helen Baldwin," replied Larry, in a low tone.

He was prepared for an outburst, but for nothing such as the one that broke. For an instant Major Lawrence stood glaring at him.

"Baldwin?" he screamed. "You want to marry a Baldwin? Marry one of the tribe that robbed me and robbed your father, broke your father's health and killed him. YOU marry one of that breed of rats? Never!"

"But, Uncle Jim, she is not one of them. She is different. They are cruel to her and accuse her"——

"Don't talk to me of a Baldwin," raged Major Lawrence. "I'd rather see you in your grave. Never dare mention her name to me again."

Larry, bristling with what he thought was injustice, stood his ground before the wrath of his guardian. He was about to speak when Winans, from the hallway, shouted:

"Hustle up, Larry. Time to start."

"That is your final decision, sir?" asked Larry, his voice trembling as he strove to control himself.

"My final decision," stormed the Major. "Yes, if you ever dare speak to me of her, or of marrying, I'll cut you off without a penny. She only wants

my money, anyhow. She's like all the rest of the Baldwin's. She's been trying to trap you and get a hold on my money."

"I won't listen even to your slandering her," said Larry rapidly. "I can work. I can support her without your help. I'll marry her and prove to you that what you say about her is false."

He turned quickly and started for the door.

"Hey, aren't you ever coming?" shouted Winans.

"Coming," cried Larry, striving to conceal his emotion.

He turned his face quickly as he opened the door. The Major, looking apoplectic had sunk into a chair and did not meet his gaze. For ten minutes Major Lawrence remained motionless. Then suddenly he slapped his leg.

"By George," he ejaculated, "I believe that little game cock would do it. I've got to get busy and see that girl."

He arose quickly, and bustled out to meet Lattiser.

CHAPTER XXV

The Final Game

A frantic outburst of applause, followed by the ripping, crashing Cascade yell aroused Larry Kirkland from the half daze in which he had moved since his fiery interview with Major Lawrence. For an hour he had been torn by a tumult of conflicting emotions in which he found it difficult to think clearly. The hot anger in which he had parted with his guardian had partially subsided and given way to stubborn determination to carry out his part of the program.

His mind was made up; Major Lawrence had called him ungrateful, a parasite and had hinted that he was incompetent to earn his own living. He would no longer accept alms, he thought bitterly. He realized that he had failed to lighten the supposed burden of woe for Helen Baldwin. She must bear it bravely for a little while and he would go out into the big world, fight the battles for himself and for her and return and claim her. His mind had traveled in circles over and over the same ground. Plainly he could not marry her at once because that would place him in a position where they must accept aid from either Major Lawrence or from the Baldwins—and to him the thought of either was hateful.

The roar of the crowd as the Cascade players trotted out onto the playing field broke in upon his tumult of thought. His brain cleared as if by magic, and a sudden grim resolve seized upon him. He would play that day as never before. It was his last game of ball and he would show them his ability. He jerked his belt more tightly and, diving sideways, fielded a hard-hit ball and tossed it quickly to Jacobs, who, pivoting as a dancer whirls, threw to first base. Another outburst of applause greeted the lightning-like handling of the ball and the applause was like balm to Larry's sore nerves. The weariness from a sleepless night, the mental strain of the morning passed; he felt quick return of confidence in himself. He looked upon the crowd, volleying cheers back and forth across the arena, and smiled cynically. They were all his foes now—he was going to fight them all now, to force them to his own terms.

Larry found himself giving directions with a coolness that surprised him. His low-toned advice to Katsura and Winans was given with the air of one accustomed to commanding.

“These fellows have been hitting against speedy pitching all the time,” he said. “I do not think they can hit your slow twisters Katty, keep the fast curve low, pitch the javelin ball close to their hands and across their chests, and tease them into hitting the slow twisters.”

“No breaks to-day, boys,” he called as his team left the bench. “On the toes every minute. Remember, every man hits when he sees the runner moving and every base runner runs. Make Herron pitch all the time. Don’t hit until you have to, and then run it out to the limit.”

The spirit of the Cascade team was high and their confidence rising. Katsura, pitching easily, puzzled the heavy hitters of Golden in the first inning and three of them retired on easy chances.

“They’re swinging their heads off,” remarked Larry. “All three of them hit at the ball before it got to the plate. Mix them up in the next, Katty, and keep them guessing.”

Inspired by their success, Cascade rushed the attack. Jacobs, leading off, reached first, and instead of waiting for a sacrifice or a hit and run sign, he dashed for second; Dalmores swung viciously, missed, and Jacobs was out at second.

“Great work, Jake,” said Larry, although the Cascade crowd was groaning. “Keep it up and he’ll throw the game away.”

Dalmores went out and Trumbull, after hitting a hard single, was caught trying to steal on the third ball pitched.

The Cascade crowd was vexed, thinking that two chances had been wasted; but the players were satisfied. Katsura, cunningly mixing his “javelin” throw with his slow, twisting curve held Golden at bay in the second inning.

“Rush ’em again boys,” ordered Larry tersely. “Rush ’em. We’ve got to upset them and get a bunch of runs in one inning. Keep at ’em.”

In vain they strove to smash the defense of Golden, and the third inning passed, neither team having been able to gain any advantage. The crowd was in an uproar and the excitement was growing. In the fourth, Cascade had two men on bases, and both were lost in striving to take an extra base on hits. The fifth found them in a deadlock. Cascade had had six men on first base and each had gone out, four of them striving to steal bases, and the others in attempting to go from first to third base on short hits. Golden had only succeeded in reaching first base twice, and both runners were left standing still.

The Cascade contingent in the stands was beginning to complain that the players were throwing away their opportunities. They did not stop to think that only twice had they succeeded in making two hits in an inning, and that, had any runner succeeded in advancing an extra base, each hit would have meant a score.

To Larry, keenly watching, forgetful of his own troubles and thinking only of winning the game, it was evident that the rushing tactics of the players were bothering both Herron, the pitcher and Langham, the catcher. Herron was worrying as he pitched because he was constantly compelled to watch the runners, and Langham was overanxious, and leaping into position to throw with every ball that was pitched.

Larry, glancing toward the stands, saw Major Lawrence sitting with Paw Lattiser. His face was purple from cheering and he applauded every play, good or bad and keeping the spectators near him convulsed with laughter by his display of ignorance of the game. Not far from them he espied Helen Baldwin, surrounded by a bevy of St. Gertrude girls. She waved a cane garnished with Cascade colors.

“She hides her troubles better than I do,” reflected Larry, watching her gay chattering with her companions.

In the sixth inning, with two out, little Atchison reached first base for Golden. Katsura, after having two strikes on Mortimer, tried his javelin ball, and the big outfielder, lunging at the first fast ball he had seen all day, drove it far to the right field corner of the field, and scored behind Atchison.

The Cascade throng sat silent, while a sudden tempest seemed lashing into golden waves the stands in which the University supporters sat.

“That’s all right,” called Larry. “We’ll get them back and then some. Keep right at them. They’ll break soon.”

He glanced toward the stands, where Major Lawrence was protesting frantically that the hit was foul by ten feet and, as he gazed, he saw Helen Baldwin standing and waving a streamer of Golden ribbons that she had snatched from one of her companions. The sight of this display of disloyalty aroused him to the fighting point. He raced to the coacher’s lines and led the team, cheering, coaching, pleading with them to get on first base. Katsura managed to draw a base on balls. On the first ball pitched, the fleet little brown boy was off far ahead of the pitch, and he slid safely into second, only to be left.

Golden, scenting victory, attacked with new vigor; but Katsura, pitching steadily and cunningly, prevented scoring, and the end of the seventh saw the Cascade team seemingly beaten 2 to 0.

“Hit every ball he pitches now, fellows,” cautioned Larry quietly. “Hit any ball he puts over the plate and run it to the limit. Don’t stop until the ball is ahead of you.”

Dalmores was first. He rushed to the bat, smashed the first ball pitched hard to left field. The fielder picked up the ball quickly and threw back to the pitcher, over the shortstop’s head. Dalmores turned first base in his stride and, before the pitcher could get the ball and throw it back to second, he slid in safely and the Cascade “Waterfall yell” arose in challenge to the waving of the golden banners. Trumbull hit the ball viciously, Golden’s shortstop fumbled and he was safe on first, with Dalmores perched on second. Winans hit a hard-line drive, straight at Golden’s shortstop, and both base runners were compelled to dive back to the bags to avert a double play.

Larry Kirkland came to bat with Cascade cheering wildly. He walked slowly to the plate, determined to turn the tide. He sent a long foul down the left field line. On the next ball he stepped forward, hit a curve as it broke and as the ball flashed over the third baseman’s head, he sprinted as never before. Dalmores scored and Winans, running at a terrific pace, reached third. Larry by a desperate slide, reached second in safety.

A hit meant the lead for Cascade and a sudden silence fell over the contending forces. In the crisis, Torney flied out to the first baseman and the chances seemed lost. Allen, the next batter was a poor hitter. Larry was desperate. He was ranging up and down, almost to the shortstop. Suddenly he called out and at that instant Herron, already goaded and worried by the aggressive base-running attack, whirled and threw the ball to the second baseman. Even as he threw Winans dashed for the plate. Larry stood still until he saw the second baseman hurl the ball back to the catcher to shut off the run. Then he raced for third. Winans had slid safe to the plate with the tying run and Larry, sprinting at top speed, whirled around third, and racing twenty feet toward the plate, suddenly stopped, dodged as if to return to the bag and hesitated. Langham saw him and with frantic haste hurled the ball to the third baseman hoping to trap the runner. As he threw, Larry whirled again and was in full flight toward the plate. The third baseman, leaping, dragged down the high-thrown ball and hurled it back to Langham, low and wild, and as Larry slid across the plate the Cascade yell poured down from stands and bleachers, and the Golden banners dropped.

Golden, in panic and broken by the dazzling, daring base-running attack, went to pieces. Before the rushing assault ended, two more runners had crossed the plate, and in the eighth inning Larry led the assault with a three-base hit that gave Cascade the victory 7 to 2.

Cascade was the champion. Years of defeat at the hands of Golden University were avenged. The Cascade crowd swarmed upon the field, even while the players were cheering their overthrown rivals, and Larry Kirkland found himself borne aloft and carried around the field on the shoulders of the students, he found no joy in it. The reaction had set in and with a rush he recalled his troubles. The victory seemed a hollow one.

CHAPTER XXVI

Facing the World

The cheers, the applause, the congratulations of friends who pushed and crowded to shake his hand meant nothing to Larry Kirkland. Fellows he had known and liked pounded him upon the back and shouted their congratulations and rejoicings over the victory. To hide his feelings he forced himself to smile and mutter thanks. To him the victory seemed all hollow and useless; and his years of struggling to achieve a place on the team and win his C appeared vain and futile, not worth the effort. He was facing stern realities now, and the achievements that had seemed to him all-important dwindled and appeared childish.

He was dressing hastily, taking little part in the boisterous celebration in the club house. The players, relieved suddenly from the strain, half-hysterical with joy over their victory, wrestled, pushed each other into the big swimming plunge, pounded each other with wet towels and hurled shoes and bats against the lockers in sheer delirium of gladness. They hugged each other, while each, trying to lift his voice above the others, yelled praise of the playing the others had done during the game. Larry, dressing rapidly at his locker, strove to escape unnoticed. Over on the opposite side of the row of lockers Harry Baldwin was dressing in sullen silence. He had not been allowed to have a part in the great game, and a sense of injustice rankled within him. Mentally he charged Larry Kirkland with treating him unfairly, although the truth was, Larry had forgotten him entirely, although he knew Helen Baldwin and her friends were waiting for Harry to dress. He must see Helen a moment before Harry joined her to tell her his plan. He threw his coat over his arm and hastened toward the door, hoping to escape unseen. The one thing he dreaded above all others was bidding good-bye to the fellows of the team. He feared if he attempted to say farewell he would break down. A lump was in his throat. He wondered whether they would miss him. He had resolved not to remain for commencement, not even to wait to receive the cherished C.

“Hey, you Larry!” roared Trumbull. “What are you trying to do? Going to ditch us for a skirt? Shame on you.”

The indignant outburst of the big fielder rallied the others and attracted their attention to Larry’s effort to flee. They seized upon him and dragged

him back.

“Don’t fellows,” he pleaded. “I haven’t got time to celebrate right now—important business. I must hurry before she—before”——

“SHE,” howled Trumbull. “I knew it! Let’s throw him in the tank and make him unrepresentable.”

“Not now, fellows,” begged Larry, struggling to get away. “Really, I’ve got to go.”

“All right,” vouchsafed his captors unwillingly. “If you will desert us, we’ll get even. Wait until the dinner to-night. We’ll make you give a speech and then hiss you.”

“So long, fellows! Hate to leave you,” Larry managed to say. There was a tug at his heart-strings, but he tried to smile, and backed out of the door dodging a shower of shoes and gloves that enabled him to hide agitation. Only Katsura saw something was wrong. He ran quickly after Larry, overtook him in the corridor, and laid his hand upon the captain’s arm.

“If it is any trouble in which I may help,” he said, “command me. I would like to help you.”

“Thank you, Katty,” Larry gulped. “I’ll never forget—never—good-bye.”

“Good-bye,” said Katsura, shaking his hand firmly. “Is it nothing I can help?”

“Nothing,” said Larry thickly, turning away, leaving Katsura gazing sadly after him.

He hurried out into the late afternoon sunshine and across the campus to where a bevy of girls fluttered around a waiting automobile. They waved the Cascade colors and set up a shrill cheer as he approached—a cheer that ended in a burst of laughter. Hat in hand, he walked directly to Helen Baldwin.

“Oh, Larry!” she said, “it was glorious, it was magnificent—why what is the matter?”

“Walk with me a little way,” he said. “I came to tell you.”

“It is bad news then,” she said petulantly as they drew apart from the others. “I knew Mr. Lawrence would not consent.”

“He refused,” said Larry. “I defied him. I told him we would not take a penny of his money.”

“How foolish of you,” she said lightly. “You should not have quarreled with him.”

“But we could not accept charity,” he protested. “You must stand it until I can come back and support you.”

“Come back?” she exclaimed. “Where are you going?”

“I do not know,” he said. “You must be brave, Helen. I am going away. I have broken with Major Lawrence. I’ll go away somewhere and”——

“That is foolish,” she said. “I was afraid when Major Lawrence came to me that you had quarreled with him. He didn’t seem a bit angry with me. He was very polite.”

“You saw Uncle Jim?” he asked in surprise. “What did he say? What did you tell him?”

“I told him it was all a joke”——

“A joke?” The boy’s face was ghastly from the shock.

“Of course, Larry,” she replied impatiently. “Be sensible. You did not want me to quarrel with him, did you?”

“But it wasn’t necessary to tell him that,” he protested.

“I did it to throw him off his guard,” she said lightly. “Then we could run away and get married. I know he’d forgive us, now that he knows me. He really seemed to like me, and patted me on the arm and said I was a sensible girl.”

“It sounds as if you deceived him,” he answered sulkily. “We cannot treat him that way—deceive him and come to him as beggars, asking him to support us.”

“Be sensible, Larry,” she pouted, drilling holes in the gravel walk with the end of her stick. “All’s fair in love and war.”

“I know it is hard on you,” he said. “But it is better that we make our own way. I can work and support you.”

“And give up everything?” she asked with open eyes. “Ridiculous!”

“You will have to wait a year—maybe two years,” the boy said softly.

“Helen!” Harry Baldwin called sharply from the group near the automobile. “We are waiting.”

“Coming in a moment,” she cried back gaily. “Don’t be foolish, Larry,” she added.

“You will not forget? You will wait for me?” he asked holding her hand.

“They are looking, Larry,” she said, drawing her hand away. “Be sensible.”

“You will wait?”

“Coming,” she cried as Harry called again, and then hurriedly. “Yes, yes—now be sensible and make up with Major Lawrence.”

She turned away. Larry walking determinedly across the campus, saw her in the gay group in the tonneau as the car whizzed around the circular drive. He stood gazing after the retreating car, but she did not turn to look back. Then he hastened to his rooms.

* * * * *

That night there was a vacant place at the head of the table when the baseball squad gathered for the Jubilation dinner at which the C's were awarded. A rapid search of the campus failed to reveal a trace of the missing captain. The squad sent to bring him to the dinner found Major Lawrence alternately storming up and down the dismantled room and dropping in helpless dejection into a chair.

During the dinner Larry Kirkland, bravely choking back the lump that persisted in arising in his throat, sat in a seat of an eastbound Overland train, looking out into the darkness of the Sierras and trying to plan his future.

THE END

Transcriber's Notes:

A few obvious punctuation and typesetting errors have been corrected without note.

[The end of *Jimmy Kirkland of the Cascade College Team* by Hugh Stuart Fullerton]