

the specimen, but, as a matter of private work, we had repeatedly gone over our author, each one of us in turn building sentences in English, and the rest of us rendering them into Latin similar in form and idiom to the style of Sallust. Others of the class, however, were dismayed, not that they were unfit, but that they lacked confidence.

Very soon the examiners were hard at us, pelting us with simple sentences. One by one we were asked in turn, and at the end of three rounds not a boy had been remanded to his seat. But now the examiners, following the initiative of the president, fell to introducing "kinks" into their sentences, whereupon the slaughter commenced. Ten of our twenty-five classmates succumbed at the first fierce onset, leaving fifteen of us in the field. At the next charge seven bit the dust. There were now left Percy, Tom, Quip, Whyte, Ruthers, Richards, and myself.

To the surprise and dismay of all, Percy tripped on an irregular verb and, blushing violently, went to his seat. We all pitied him, for there wasn't a better scholar or a more popular boy in the class. Whyte, Ruthers, and Richards soon followed him, and there remained Tom, Harry Quip, and myself.

But, as the saying is, we had gained our second wind. Tom was cool, as usual, and steadied us.

"Stick up for the honor of the class, boys," he whispered. "Don't answer till you're sure."

We followed the advice, and held our positions for half an hour longer. The clock struck eleven.

"Two hours are up," said the president. "The contest is at an end. My dear students, permit me to congratulate you on the very extraordinary speci-

men you have given. If it were possible to be above the standard of the class—and that is an open question into which I shall not enter—I would say that in Latin you certainly are above the standard. Your contest in off-hand theme-work is one in which boys of higher classes seldom come off with honor. Certainly, if you can write Latin as you speak it, there's a chance, and a good chance too, for you to carry off the collegiate honors. For the rest of the day you are free."

That last sentence was the sort of peroration we wanted; on this occasion, indeed, it was a surprise.

Of course, we had a pleasant time of it. Percy made light of his failure. "I thought a little too much of my Latin," he said. "It humbled me very much to fail. But to my mind nothing succeeds like failure." And then Percy congratulated the three of us with a genuineness which showed us all how defeat may be turned into victory.

CHAPTER XII.

IN WHICH IS BEGUN A FULL AND TRUE ACCOUNT OF A GREAT BASEBALL GAME.

THE sun rose in an almost cloudless sky upon the long-looked-for day. I was wondering, as I proceeded to First Academic, how our boys would bend themselves to their work. Mr. Middleton received us with a smile more genial, if possible, than usual.

"Now, boys," he said, after concluding prayers, "will you be good enough to promise to pay close attention?"

"Yes, sir! Yes, sir!" exclaimed many.

"We'll do our level best, Mr. Middleton," said honest Tom, "but-a—you know how it is, don't you, Mr. Middleton?"

Tom was almost pathetic in putting this question.

"So," continued Mr. Middleton, "you Blue Clippers are going to put on your baseball uniforms for the first time this afternoon?"

"Yes, sir!" cried six voices as one.

"And you're going to be beaten hands down."

"No, sir!" was the unanimous answer.

"Well, for the next two hours I want you to put baseball out of your heads."

Mr. Middleton paused, while the boys gazed at one another ruefully.

"Because," continued the professor gravely, "I am going to read you a story."

I wish we could have been instantaneously photographed at that moment. Such a collection of genial smiles and sparkling eyes never yet, I dare say, fell under the camera.

"Isn't he a teacher and a half!" exclaimed Tom, *sotto-voce*.

The "teacher and a half" had selected a tale of absorbing interest, and he made what would have been the dulllest and longest hours of the year a little jaunt through fairyland.

At three o'clock we Blue Clippers emerged from our dressing-room in all the splendor of our new uniforms. We came out in single file, with Frank Burdock in full uniform as mascot and scorer at our head. The other boys of the small yard, who had been awaiting our appearance with no little impatience, gave us a rousing cheer; and, indeed, I think

that we presented a brave appearance. With the exception of myself all of us were strongly built. Percy was a trifle slim, but his erect carriage and grace of motion made him the most striking figure of us all.

Our costume was simple: white flannel shirts, with "Blue Clippers" lettered across the breast, white knee-breeches, blue stockings, blue belt, and a white cap.

Tom was proud of our appearance.

"You look like poems," he observed. "It's a pity," he added, turning to me, "that we didn't pad your legs a little bit, but you'll pass muster, anyhow. You stand straight now, and have left your wretched stoop behind with your delicate health. Forward, boys!"

And forward we marched, escorted by a noisy following, to the baseball field. The large boys were already at practice; but at a quarter past three sharp they resigned the grounds in our favor. We tossed the ball from hand to hand for a few minutes, then retired to the players' bench, satisfied that we could move about in our uniforms with all the ease that we had anticipated.

Tom won the toss, and at 3:30 Willie Tipp set himself to beating a tin can as an indication that we were to take the field.

On taking my place in the pitcher's box, I felt not a little nervous. I was to make my *début* before the whole college. A large boy named Foley was the umpire. As he stationed himself behind the batter and threw me the ball, his call of "Game—Play" was lost in the shout of enthusiasm that arose from the spectators.

In order that the reader may follow the game, I append the batting order and the positions of the contending sides:

BLUE CLIPPERS.

Wynn, l. f.	Quip, c. f.
Keenan, s. s.	Richards, 3d base.
Donnel, 2d base.	Ruthers, r. f.
Playfair, c.	Whyte, 1st base.
	Dee, p.

JUNIORS.

Cleary, 3d base.	Fox, c. f.
O'Connor, s. s.	Earle, c.
Drew, 2d base.	Hudson, r. f.
O'Malley, l. f.	Poulin, p.
	Bennett, 1st base.

First Inning.—Cleary tapped his bat against the home plate and stood awaiting my pleasure.

"One ball," called the umpire as my first pitched ball curved away from the plate.

"One strike," as the second curved in and over it.

I next gave him a drop. He caught it close to the handle of his bat and sent it bounding to me. I fumbled the ball, then got a firm hold of it, and sent it in my excitement at least three feet over the first baseman's head. Donnel was behind him, however, and caught it. Cleary was safe on first.

Following Tom's directions, I gave O'Connor a number of incurves, and to the joy of the small boys he retired on three strikes.

Drew sent the third ball I pitched him bounding slowly toward short field. Keenan came in at a dead run, picked it up neatly, and threw it to Donnel at second, who in turn threw it to first base.

"Out at second—safe on first," cried Foley.

I threw an outcurve to O'Malley, and it seemed to be just the sort of a ball he wanted. There was a sharp crack as his bat met the ball, which went sailing far over Quip's head into centre field, and before it could be returned to the diamond O'Malley was standing breathless on second, while Drew, amid the plaudits of the large boys, had scored. Fox retired his side by striking out.

When Percy Wynn stepped up to the home plate there arose a loud cheer. With the possible exception of Tom, he was now the most popular boy in the college.

"Everybody likes Percy," said Ryan, who happened to be near me. "You should have seen him last year when he first came! He could hardly do anything except look pretty. One would never have imagined that he'd turn out a ball-player. He hasn't lost any of his gracefulness, but he's gained strength, and physical courage, and endurance. Some of the boys sneered at him a great deal when he first came; now they're shouting for him at the top of their voices."

Percy contrived to bother the pitcher a good deal. One ball and one strike were called; then two balls. Percy struck at the next and made a foul. The umpire finally gave him his base on balls.

There was a buzz of enthusiasm.

"What's the excitement?" I asked Ryan.

"The boys expect some great base-running from him. They know he's a good runner, and they know, too, that Playfair would not put so weak a batter first on his list without a good reason."

And now Tom stood near first base and began coaching.

"Double A, double E," he exclaimed.

Percy took more ground, while the hum of voices died away.

"Double E A E," continued Tom.

The pitcher stood in consternation, staring blankly at the coacher.

"Triple A," shouted our captain.

With the exception of the Blue Clippers, every one was nonplussed. This was the first time within the experience of any one that coaching had been done by algebraic formulas.

With the expression of consternation still on his face the pitcher sent in the ball for Keenan, and as he raised his arm Percy dashed down the base line with a speed and grace seldom found together. Earle sent the ball on a low line-throw to Drew.

"He's out, sure," said Ryan.

But just as he spoke Percy "took a header," and ploughed his way, as well as I could judge, full fifteen feet. He reached the base after the ball, it is true, but before Drew could touch him with it.

There was a great shout.

"That's the best slide I've seen here yet!" said Ryan, with enthusiasm. "It takes lots of nerve and dash even to try it. Who'd think that Percy Wynn would be the first to show us how to make the 'Comiskey' slide?"

Keenan drove the next ball bounding to the second baseman and was called out at first, while Percy took third. Donnel, after two strikes had been called on him, sent the ball on a fly back of the shortstop. Percy stood on his base till it fell into O'Connor's hands, then dashed for home.

"You've got to slide!" bawled Tom as O'Connor threw the ball in to the catcher.

And Percy did slide. As before, the ball had beaten him, but the catcher did not succeed in touching him, and Percy emerged from a cloud of dust safe on home. Tom now came to the bat, and was easily retired on a foul tip. Score, 1 to 1.

Second Inning.—I had more confidence in myself as I resumed my place in the pitcher's box. Following Tom's signs, I easily struck out Earle and Hudson; Poulin sent a hot grounder to Richards, who fumbled it, and immediately after, as I pitched my first ball to Bennett, made a run for second. Tom threw the ball straight and low to Donnel in the nick of time to touch the runner. This was the first whitewash of the game.

For our side, Harry Quip died on a grounder to the third baseman, Richards struck out, and Ruthers was retired on a fly back of third base. Score at the end of second inning, 1 to 1.

Third Inning.—Bennett took the first ball I offered him, and as it rose into the air far, far out in left field, there was a groan from the small boys and a shout from the seniors. But almost at once every noise was hushed, and three hundred pairs of straining eyes were bent upon our left fielder, who was racing at full speed in the direction of the falling ball.

Will he get his hands on it? Hardly; and even if he does he will scarcely hold it. Now he is almost under it. Look! he takes a bound into the air—and then there's such roaring and shouting and clapping of hands as only a phenomenal play by a general favorite can excite.

"That's what I call fielding," said the second

baseman of the large yard. "That Wynn started for the ball before most of us knew it had been struck. He's got the trick of judging a ball as soon as it's touched. I've seldom seen as pretty a running catch."

For two or three minutes it was impossible to go on with the game. The spectators bawled themselves hoarse. At length, in obedience to a sign from Tom, Percy touched his cap, whereupon the noise died away and play was resumed.

Cleary drove a liner over the shortstop's head and took first. O'Connor followed up the good work by popping a fly into short right field, where no one could get it; Cleary made third on it. Things were now in a critical state. O'Connor started for second as soon as I pitched. Tom threw the ball with all his force to Donnel, and as he did so the runner on third made for home. Donnel lost no time; his catching the ball and touching the runner seemed to be simultaneous; then he returned it quickly to Tom in time to touch Cleary out on home, thus accomplishing a neat double play.

Our first baseman struck out and, I am sorry to say, I followed his example. But there was a revival of enthusiasm as Percy stepped up to the home plate. Percy was not a strong batter by any means, so he made it a study to get his base by other than hard hitting. He bunted the third ball pitched to him and easily beat it to first. He made second on a passed ball; then on the next ball pitched ran for third. It was an exhilarating sight to see his slender, supple figure bounding over the turf—his mouth firmly closed, his eyes dilated with excitement, and his fair, almost feminine face

flushed with exertion. For the third time Percy accomplished his great "slide;" the ball and he were on third together.

"How's that, umpire?" called Cleary.

"Out on third."

Tom Playfair, who had been hopping about in an ecstasy on the coaching-line, turned about at these words, and, with his hands plunged deep in his pockets and his shoulders raised to his ears, walked off and disappeared behind the backstop. I concluded that he had gone aside to suppress his anger, for Tom had a high temper. But the crowd was not so heroic. Roars of indignation poured upon the startled umpire's ears.

"Get off the earth, Mr. Umpire," cried Ryan. His request was taken up by the crowd, and petition after petition was proffered him to the same effect.

The most furious spectator was Frank Burdock. With an expression on his face which would have rendered him invaluable to an artist as a model for a Gorgon, he advanced upon the alarmed umpire, and dancing with rage, hissed out:

"Get a pair of goggles, you mud-eyed freak," and then this small bundle of nerves, I am sorry to say, sputtered out an expression or two which astonished and dismayed his friend Percy. To put it plainly, he used some rather profane language. It should be remembered that poor little Frank's early training had not been of the best; and in this moment of supreme excitement old habits asserted themselves.

Without stopping for breath, Frank went on:

"Come on, you ugly mud-eye. I'll thrash you and your whole family."

This was too much for the umpire. He could

stand the shouts of the college, but quailed beneath the blazing rage of the very diminutive boy.

"Safe on third," he cried.

This proved to be the prelude to another storm of indignation, in the midst of which Percy removed his furious little friend and brought him, with a few kind yet reproving words, to a sense of his scandalous behavior. Drew, the captain of the Juniors, was now giving the umpire a piece of his mind, and Tom, who, with an impassive face, had returned from behind the backstop, sided with Drew. And indeed it was a plain case. Evidently the umpire had been intimidated into changing his decision. Tom poured oil upon the troubled waters; at his word our men stepped into the field, and we began the

Fourth Inning.—Drew led off with a bouncer to our third baseman and was thrown out. O'Malley, after knocking several fouls, was sent to first base on balls. Fox hit safely into centre. There were now two men on bases and but one out. A slow grounder from Earle's bat to Whyte, on which he went out, advanced the two runners to second and third. Hudson came to the bat, receiving an ovation from the large boys, with whom he was popular. Tom gave me a sign for a low ball, but unfortunately I pitched a high one; and Hudson sent it on a line over our first baseman's head. Both runners made for home. O'Malley came in safely, and Fox was fairly on his way from third base, when an accurate throw from Quip nipped him at the plate. One run.

Keenan for our side knocked an easy grounder to Cleary, who fumbled it. He stole second and made third on Donnel's out at first. Tom knocked a fly

into left field. O'Malley caught it, and recovered himself in time to throw out Keenan in his attempt to make home on the catch. Score: Juniors, 2; Blue Clippers, 1.

Fifth Inning.—This was an exciting inning. Poulin reached first on a line hit over second. He was advanced one bag by Bennett's out at first. Cleary knocked an ugly grounder to Donnel, who succeeded in throwing him out without allowing Poulin to take third. O'Connor knocked me a slow grounder; before I had picked it up Poulin was close upon third base. I made a motion to throw it to third, but seeing that it was too late I lost my head, and before I could recover myself O'Connor stood safe on first. Drew was determined to make a hit. The third ball I delivered him seemed to be what he wanted, for he sent it on a low line into short left field. Percy was playing deep, but he made for the ball at once. On he came at a dead run, making what seemed to be a hopeless endeavor to get his hands on the ball before it touched the ground.

"He's got it!" "No, he hasn't!" "He can't get it!" Such were the exclamations as Percy literally threw himself at the ball, lost his balance, and made a complete somersault; and loud were the huzzas as he rose, holding the ball in his hand.

"Batter out!" called the umpire.

"We won't stand it," bawled Bennett. "He didn't catch it on the fly; he got it on the short bound."

Drew, the captain, then came in and helped to make life unpleasant for the umpire. As for the crowd, their sympathies were with Percy. Many

thought that he had made a neat pick-up, but the play was so brilliant that they were glad the umpire had blundered.

The squabbling went on. Every man on our nine came in save Percy and Quip and myself.

"I say, Percy," whispered Quip, "you didn't catch that ball on the fly."

"I know it," answered Percy; "I didn't say I did, either."

"Wouldn't it be honest to go and tell the umpire?" It was hard to say whether Quip were serious or not in putting this question.

"It would be absurd," answered Percy. "In baseball such candor would be sentimental. I read a story in *St. Nicholas* once, where a boy sacrificed a game by announcing to the umpire that he had caught a ball on the short bound when the umpire had already decided it a fly catch. The story was very nice; but the writer didn't understand the duties of umpire and player rightly. The umpire is to judge our plays by what he sees. If he decides me out when I'm not, through his own bad judgment, I grin and bear it; in the same way, if he declares me to have put a man out when I haven't, I grin the more."

Percy was good, but he was not goody-goody. His conduct in baseball, you will notice, was consistent. When the umpire blundered into calling him out at third, he submitted gracefully. When the umpire again blundered in giving him a put-out where he had made none, he said nothing. In both cases he acted on the principle that the umpire was umpire, and that so long as he stood within the letter and principle of baseball rules, his decisions could not

be reversed. Despite the protests of the Juniors, the umpire clung to his decision and ordered them into the field.

We of the Blues did nothing at the bat. Quip and Richards struck out and Ruthers was retired easily at first.

But as this chapter is getting very long, and as the most exciting part of the game is yet to come, I think the reader will be willing to begin the sixth inning in

CHAPTER XIII.

IN WHICH IS CONTINUED AND CONCLUDED THE ACCOUNT OF OUR GREAT GAME OF BASEBALL, AND IN WHICH I MAKE AN AGREEMENT WITH TOM PLAYFAIR WHICH, AS THE READER WILL FIND OUT LATER, HAS AN IMPORTANT BEARING UPON THIS STORY.

O'MALLEY got just such another ball as I had presented him in the first inning. It went further this time, and had it not been for Percy's promptness in chasing and fielding the ball he would have made a home run on it. As it was, O'Malley reached third, amid the jubilations of his fellow-players. Fox knocked a swift liner straight at Joe Whyte, who caught it and sent it to third to catch O'Malley. Unfortunately the ball came on an ugly short bound to Richards and went rolling beyond him. Before he could recover it O'Malley had scored. Earle followed with a single base hit, stole second and remained there, as both Hudson and Poulin struck out.

Our half of the inning was mercilessly short. Whyte batted a fly to Fox in centre field which Fox caught with ease. I struck out. Percy knocked a