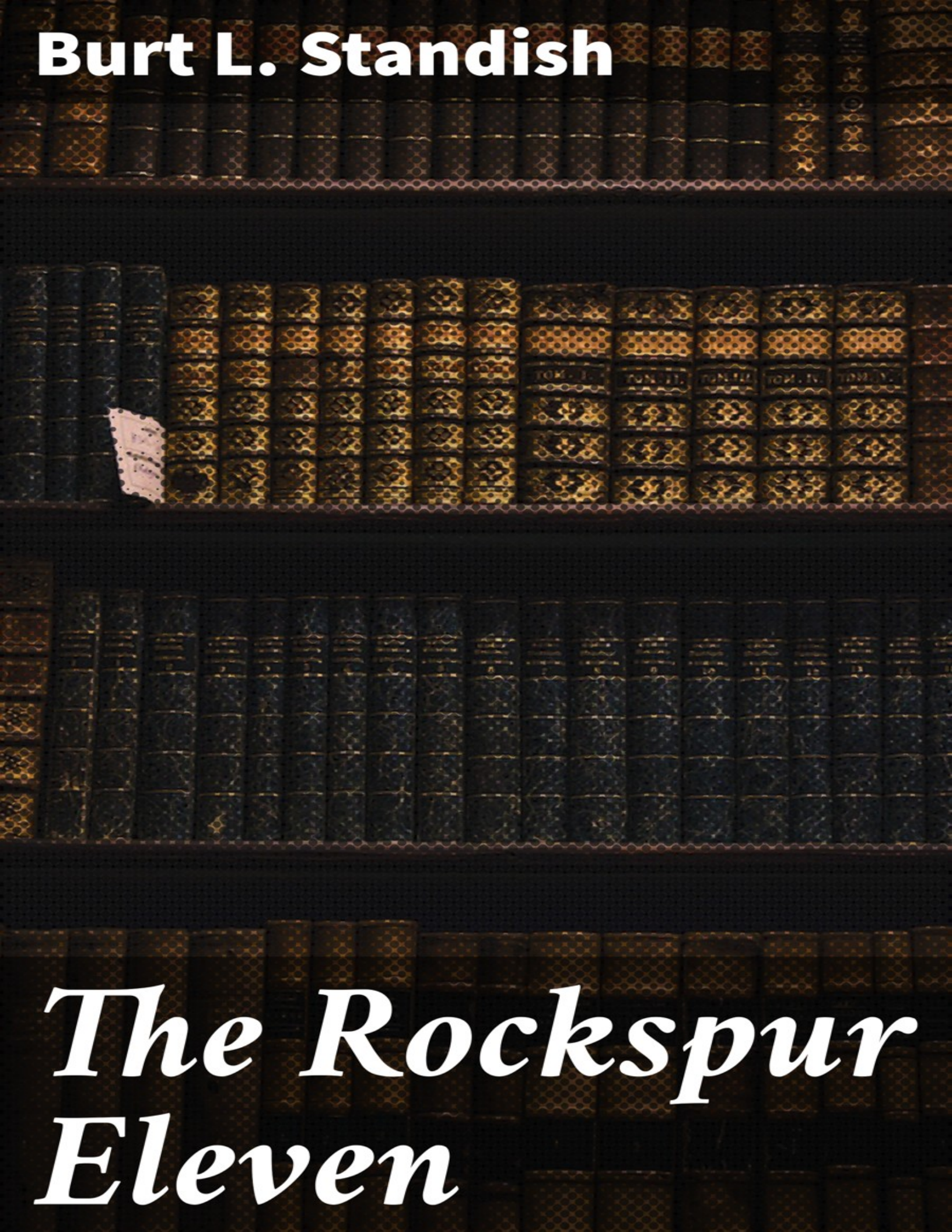




Burt L. Standish

*The Rockspur
Eleven*

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The Rockspur Eleven

A Fine Football Story for Boys



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CHAPTER I.

A BOY WITH A TEMPER.

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Danny Chatterton came up the street whistling a merry tune, while Don Scott lay under an apple-tree back of his father's house, munching an apple and scowling blackly, although the September afternoon was pleasant and sunny enough to put any boy in an agreeable humor. Judging by the sour expression on Don's face one might never have fancied the half-devoured apple in his hand was sweet.

Spying the boy beneath the tree, Danny stopped, leaned on the fence, and called:

"Hullo, Scotty! What you dud-dud-dud-doing?"

"Can't you see?" growled the boy addressed. "I'm eating an apple."

"Dud-does it hu-hurt ye much?" grinned the cheerful lad at the fence. "What do you eat it for if it makes you fur-fur-feel so bad?"

Don's answer to this bit of persiflage was a still blacker scowl and sullen silence. Danny kicked the fence and whistled, a twinkle in his eyes.

"Say, gimme an apple," he entreated. "You'll mum-mum-mum-make yourself sus-sick trying to eat the ho-ho-whole of 'em."

The boy under the tree picked up an apple and threw it viciously at the sarcastic fellow outside the fence, who caught it with one hand, crying:

"Judgment! Out! Gug-gug-great work!"

Then he gave the apple a wipe on his jacket and took a trial bite out of it, his manner being suspicious till he had tested it, upon which his face betrayed satisfaction and he immediately took a still larger bite.

“Ji-ji-ji-jimminy!” he stuttered, speaking with his mouth full and chewing and talking at the same time. “It’s sus-sus-sweet! I never knew that was a sus-sweet apple tut-tut-tree, and I thought it must be sus-sour or bub-bub-bitter from the way you looked. If I’d known——”

“Better not come round here for apples after dark,” grimly warned Don. “Pat sleeps over the kitchen, and his window looks right out onto this orchard. He’s got a gun loaded with rock-salt, and he’d shoot just as quick as he’d take a drink of water.”

“If that’s the case,” grinned Danny, “judgin’ by the cuc-cuc-color of his nose, there ain’t no great danger that he’ll ever dud-do any sus-sus-sus-shooting. But say, ain’t you coming up to the field for pup-pup-practice?”

“No!”

Don replied in such a short, savage manner that Chatterton paused with his mouth stuffed full and stared.

“Hey?” he exclaimed. “Wh-why not?”

“Because I don’t want to.”

“Well, that’s a gug-good reason, but it ain’t mum-mum-much of an explanation. We cuc-cuc-can’t do our bub-best without the whole eleven, and we’ve got to pup-put in some hot pup-practice if we expect to cuc-cuc-cut any ice with them Ha-Highlanders next Saturday. Sterndale will lul-look for every mum-man this afternoon.”

“Let him look and be hanged!” snapped Don, sitting up and clasping one knee with both hands. “He’ll find out there is one fellow who won’t stand to be called a chump and a duffer by that cheap city dude, Renwood.”

Danny threw the apple-core backward over his shoulder.

“But Renwood is our cuc-cuc-coach, you know,” he said. “He knows all abub-bub-bub-about playing football.”

“He says he does, but I don’t believe he knows half as much as he pretends to, and I’ll bet he’s a great bluffer. Anyhow, he can’t shoot off his mouth at me. What’s the matter with Sterndale? He’s captain, but he permits this Renwood to run things. He makes me sick!”

“So that’s what ails ye, is it? I knew it was sus-sus-something. You gug-gug-gug-got mad because Renwood mum-made some talk to ye when you fur-fur-fumbled his pass last night.”

“I didn’t fumble it!” snarled Don. “He was to blame himself, for he didn’t pass it right, and then he tried to lay it all on to me. I won’t take that kind of talk from anybody, I don’t care who it is!”

“Bub-bub-bub-but the rest of us have to tut-tut-take it,” chattered Danny. “He even gave Sus-Sterndale a bub-bub-brushing up abub-bout his kicking.”

“And the more fools you for standing it! Just because he’s lived in Boston and played football on Boston Common, he takes us for a lot of chumps down here. No stuck-up city chap can lord it over me, and don’t you forget it!”

“But he’s our coach!” said Danny, again. “We don’t know much about fuf-fuf-football, and he knows everything.

Highland has a reg'ler college player for a cuc-cuc-coach, you know."

"That's all right. He doesn't play with the Highlanders; he only coaches them; and he knows his business. If we had such a fellow as that——"

"You'd get mum-mum-mad the first tut-time he tut-talked straight to ye. You're always gug-gug-gettin' mad and sus-sulking so you sus-sus-spoil everything you go into. That's what's the mum-mum-matter with you."

Don sprang to his feet, his face turning pale and his eyes gleaming. With his hands clenched, he advanced toward the fence.

"You better go along about your business, Chatterton!" he grated. "I won't take that kind of talk from you, either! You can run your old football team without me, and you're all a lot of soft-headed chumps to let Renwood lord it over you. Now, don't make any back talk to me! Go on and tell them what I think of them."

Danny backed away from the fence and sidled off, as Don came forward threateningly.

"I don't know but we'll get along bub-bub-better without ye," he declared, with a taunting grin. "You're always rah-rah-raising a rah-rah-row."

Don had reached the fence, and, in a sudden burst of rage, he tore off a broken picket and flung it after Danny, who skillfully dodged the missile and then hastily scudded away, still laughing.

"That's right—run!" snarled Don, glaring after the little fellow. "If I had hold of you, I'd make ye laugh out of the other corner of your mouth!"

He kicked the fence savagely, and then retreated to the apple-tree once more, in anything but an agreeable humor.

Pat, the Irish hostler and man about the place, came round to the front of the house, leading Dr. Scott's horse, attached to a light driving carriage. The doctor, medicine-case in hand, appeared at the front door; but, instead of descending the walk and entering the carriage at once, he came down the steps and turned into the orchard back of the house, where his son was still sulking under the sweet apple-tree.

"My boy," said the doctor, a gravely handsome man with iron-gray beard and dark eyes, which now seemed strangely sad, "sitting there at my window just now, I happened to overhear your conversation with that other lad."

Don flushed a little, but continued to scowl, though he had risen to his feet and was standing in a respectful attitude of attention before his father.

"I noted," said the gentleman, "that you were in a very bad humor, and your words told me why you were angry. I also observed that you flew into an unreasonable passion at the close of your talk. Now I am not going to lecture you, Don, but I wish to warn you. You must learn to govern your temper, my son, or it will control you, to your sorrow and everlasting regret."

"But, father, there are times when it's impossible not to become angry," protested the boy.

"Perhaps it may seem so, but every time a person gives way to a fit of anger he weakens his self-control and makes himself less capable of successfully coping with the trials and emergencies of life."

Don made a swift, impatient gesture.

"I can't help getting mad!" he cried. "It's no use for me to try to restrain my temper; I have tried, and I can't do it."

"It shows how much your will-power is weakened already when you make such a confession," said the doctor, regretfully. "I once thought the same about myself."

"You, father?" exclaimed the boy, in surprise. "Why, I never knew you to lose your temper. I didn't suppose——"

"Because I was taught to control my passions at any cost, and a bitter lesson it was, my son. When I have noted how quick and choleric you are, I have sometimes been tempted to tell you the whole sad story, but it is something of which I do not like to think or speak, and so I have refrained. Perhaps I will do so some day; but, in the meantime, I urge you, Don, to struggle with yourself to get the mastery of your temper at any cost, which I sincerely hope may never bring to you such sorrow as an act of mine, done in a moment of anger, brought upon me."

The doctor spoke with such earnestness that Don was greatly impressed, and he immediately promised:

"I'll try, father—I'll try, though I am afraid I cannot succeed."

"You can and must, my boy. Be sure you have my sympathy, for I know you inherited your passionate temperament from me. Do not fear to come to me for sympathy and encouragement any time."

With those words, the doctor turned away, leaving Don standing there beneath the tree, watching him depart. The gentleman entered his carriage, and, with a wave of one gloved hand to his son, drove away. Don followed the

retreating figure with his eyes till it disappeared from view, and then he earnestly murmured:

“It doesn’t seem possible that he ever could know what it is to be really and truly angry, for he is the best and kindest father in the whole world. For his sake I’ll do my best to control my temper—I’ll do my best.”

CHAPTER II. ANOTHER BOY.

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Don's musings were broken in upon by a familiar voice, which cried:

"Hello there, old man! What's the matter with you—in a trance? Come out of it!"

Looking up, Don saw Leon Bentley stopping outside the fence. As usual, Leon was smoking a cigarette. He was dressed in a padded football suit, with his cap set rakishly over one ear, and his manner was that of one possessed of unlimited conceit and an overwhelming sense of his own importance.

Don had never liked Bentley but his dislike had not been particularly noticeable, for he was a fellow who, on account of his quick temper and sulky moods, had few associates and no close companions among the boys of the village.

Bentley had a strong taste for flashy clothes and cheap jewelry, being inclined to swagger and boast and use profane language, so it was not strange that any thoroughly self-respecting boy in the village did not care to be regarded as his intimate friend.

At one time close friendship had seemed to exist between Leon and Rob Linton, a lad whose bullying inclinations had caused him to be disliked secretly by those who openly professed admiration and regard for him; but even Linton, awakened at last to his own faults, sickened of Bentley and fell to avoiding him as far as possible, which left Leon casting about for another associate.

Remembering the words of his father and his own resolution to try to control his temper, even though Linton's free-and-easy manner around within him a feeling of resentment, Don held himself in check, nodded shortly, and said:

"Hello, Bentley. Going to practice?"

"Sure thing," returned Leon, airily. "Got to do it, I suppose, though it's a horrid bore. Fellow has to practice to keep in the swim and be a real athlete; and he has to be an athlete nowadays, or take part in athletic sports, at least, in order to stand any show with the girls. If he isn't right in it they'll throw him down for some fellow who is, even though that fellow may be as long, lank, awkward and clownish as that duffer John Smith. Why, even a girl like Dora Deland, proud as she is, has fallen to raving over him since he happened to turn out something of a baseball pitcher. You must show your skill, old man, if you hope to cut any figure with Zadia Renwood."

Bentley fell to laughing over his final words, as if he regarded them as a good joke; but he stopped suddenly as he saw Don step quickly toward the fence, scowling his fiercest.

"Have a care with that tongue of yours, Bentley!" Scott almost snarled. "Because I happen to be acquainted with Zadia Renwood does not give you license to make cheap talk, and I won't take it from you."

Leon whistled softly, and then hastened to declare:

"I didn't mean anything, Scott, so what's the use to flare up and get mad like that! You ought to take something for

that temper of yours. At the smallest spark you go off like a flash of powder.”

Don paused, and his flushed face suddenly began to pale, for he realised how soon he had flown into a passion after vowing to do his best to control his temper, which filled him with shame and vexation over his own weakness.

With an effort, the boy cast out from his soul the anger that had seized upon him, and he actually forced a faint smile to his face, which made it seem rather handsome in a dark and cloudy way.

“You’re right, Bentley,” he said; “I was a fool to become angry over your careless words, but neither Zadia Renwood nor any other girl is anything to me, for you know I dislike girls. They’re all silly creatures.”

“They may be silly, but they’re sweet,” Bentley grinned, in a manner that was decidedly repulsive to the other boy. “I tell you, girls are great inventions, and I know you’d like them, old man, if you’d just overcome your foolish prejudice against them. And Zadia Renwood is a peach, too! I’m sure she’s struck on you, and you only have to brace up——”

Don stopped the speaker with a gesture.

“That will do, Bentley!” he exclaimed, harshly, holding himself in check. “Even if I cared for girls, I’d steer clear of Dolph Renwood’s sister.”

“You don’t like him?” questioned Leon, pulling out a package of cigarettes and selecting one, which he proceeded to roll gently between the palms of his hands, all the while watching Don with a curious, cunning look in his washed-out gray eyes.

"I hate the cad!" broke out Scott; but he suddenly seemed to remember his failing and got a firm hold on himself. "He puts on too many airs, Bentley, and he makes a great bluff that he's a football expert; but it is my private opinion, which I am willing to express publicly, that he doesn't know the rudiments of the game."

"I think so, too," eagerly nodded the lad outside the fence, as, with his yellow-stained fingers, he nervously pulled a little of the filling from one end of the paper wrapper. "And Sterndale is a fool to let that city fop run things the way he does. Never knew Dick to be so soft before, but I suppose we'll have to stand it if we wish to play the game. Come, it's time we were on the field now."

Don hesitated. "I don't think I'll go," he said, in an unsettled manner.

"Oh, rats!" cried Leon, lighting the prepared cigarette from the stub of the one he had finished, which he tossed aside. "Come along, Scott, for you're needed, and it's your duty to play for the honor of Rockspur."

"By your own words a few moments ago, you confessed that you are not going into the game for any such reason, but simply to win admiration from the girls. I do not believe any fellow who plays football for such a reason can do his best and be of real value to the team."

A suggestion of color mounted to the sallow cheeks of the cigarette-smoker, and he laughingly retorted:

"That was talk, Scott; of course I'm going into the game to help the home team win. We can't afford to lose any good man, and so you'll come along with me. As for Renwood, we're not the only ones who are sick of his high-handed

style of lording it over us, and we may be able to bring about a change, if we go at it in the right manner. Get your suit and come on."

Plainly undecided, Don leaned on the fence.

"My suit is in the dressing-room under the grand-stand," he said. "I did make up my mind not to have anything more to do with the team as long as Renwood was coaching——"

"That was when you were mad, old man. Of course, I don't blame you, but don't let your temper cause you to go back on your own town. Renwood doesn't really belong here, anyhow; he's only just moved here since his father, seeing that Rockspur is bound to become a famous summer resort, has bought up the East Shore land as a speculation. I don't believe in letting such an outsider come in and run things. If you and I combine against him, we can bring enough of the others to our way of thinking to set him back into the place where he belongs."

Don did not fancy the idea of forming such an alliance with Bentley, but he sought to justify it by telling himself that it was for the good of the Rockspur football team, and that there was no harm in uniting with Leon on such an issue.

"I'll not become friendly with him," thought Don, "simply because we both think the same way about this matter. A man is likely to find it needful to have business relations with another whom he would not accept as an associate, and this is purely a matter of business."

He was soon to learn that such relations are always to be avoided when possible, and that, justly or unjustly, a man or a boy is judged by the company he keeps.

“Come on,” urged Leon. “We’ll talk it over on our way to the ground.”

“When I was angry I declared I wouldn’t play on the team with Renwood,” Don mentally said; “but it is my duty not to let my anger control me.”

Then, vaulting over the fence, he joined Bentley, and they set off together toward the football field.

CHAPTER III.

THE FOOTBALL FIELD.

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The Rockspur baseball ground, leveled and fenced through the energies of Dick Sterndale, captain of the village nine, was also to serve as a football field. Already Sterndale and Renwood, assisted by others who were interested and enthusiastic, had measured and lined off the field and erected the goal-posts at each end.

The marked-off field was three hundred and thirty feet long and one hundred and sixty feet in width. The measurements had been obtained by the aid of a tape, and then lime-lines had been drawn with a marker to indicate the actual field of play. Outside this field and inside the fence was a varying amount of room. At one point the fence was only eight feet from the boundary of the playing field, and this was the smallest permissible amount of space.

Having obtained the outer boundaries of the playing field, the tape was run down the side-lines and wooden pegs were driven into the ground exactly five yards apart. When the pegs were all down, the tape was stretched across the field from a peg on one side to a corresponding peg on the opposite side, and the lime marker was run over the tape, so the field was marked off with twenty-one lines between the ends, or twenty-three lines if the end lines were included.

Then the fifth line out from the end, or the twenty-five yard line, the point of kick-out, was made broader than the others, so it could be plainly distinguished. This was done at

both ends of the field, and then the exact centre of the field, on the eleventh five-yard line, was marked with a large round spot to indicate the place of kick-off.

With this accomplished, the field was fully laid out, and the setting of the goal-posts, the most difficult task of all, followed. Sterndale selected four cedar posts which were long and straight and obtained two cross-bars which satisfied him in every particular. The posts were cut to a length of twenty-three feet, which gave an allowance of three feet to be sunk into the ground, and the cross-bars were somewhat more than nineteen feet long, as the posts were to be set exactly eighteen feet and six inches apart, it being necessary for the cross-bars to overlap, so that they might be securely spiked to the posts.

In setting the posts, the tape was stretched across the end of the field and the middle of the line marked, which was a distance of eighty feet from either side. This done, with the middle mark as a starting point, nine feet and three inches were measured off in opposite direction along the line, the two points for the posts being thus determined. Holes nearly three feet in depth were excavated at these points and the posts erected in them, the ground being packed solidly about them, causing them to stand securely without braces, which are needless and dangerous, as a player might trip over them or be forced upon them and injured.

When Scott and Bentley reached the field they found all the members of the newly-organized Rockspur Eleven were present, besides a number of youthful spectators and a few who were anxious to be classed as substitutes.

A little at one side from the others, Dick Sterndale, the handsome, manly-looking captain of the team, was essaying the drop-kick, coached by the boy Don Scott disliked, Dolph Renwood. Renwood was rather slender, although just now, in his padded football suit, he did not look so, and he had sharp, blue eyes, which to the village boys often seemed full of laughing scorn and contempt even while he spoke to them in a most serious or friendly manner. It was those eyes which caused the Rockspur lads to distrust Dolph for all of his apparent sincerity and interest in their sports and pleasures; and those eyes had done not a little to arouse the resentment of quick-tempered Don Scott, who bore half-hidden ridicule with less grace than open contempt.

The players' bench used by the baseball team had been moved aside to make room for the football field, but it stood back by the rail in front of the bleachers, and Don walked toward it, passing close to Sterndale and Renwood. Having seated himself on the bench beside two small boys, he was able to overhear Renwood's instructions to the captain of the team, although he pretended to be giving them no attention whatever.

"There are three ways to make a drop-kick," Dolph was explaining. "You can't do it any old way, Sterndale. In the first place, you must take hold of the ball right."

"How's that?" the big captain meekly asked.

"You may hold it with one hand, like this, with the point toward the goal, and drop it that way, taking a somewhat side-swinging kick; or you may hold it precisely the same with both hands and drop it; or, finally, you may hold it with both hands in this manner, pointing it away from the goal. It

must never be dropped flat or directly upon the end. Now watch."

The "coach" dropped the ball and kicked it handsomely, sending it sailing through the air in a long, graceful arc. It was pursued and captured by some small boys, who had a scrimmage over it, out of which one broke with it hugged under his arm and came running back toward Dick and Dolph.

"In kicking the ball," Renwood went on, "you must hit it squarely with the toe the very instant that it rises off the ground. Now let me see you try it."

Sterndale took the ball from the panting youngster who brought it up, held it with both hands as directed, and dropped it. In kicking he was a trifle too quick, and the result was anything but satisfactory.

"No, no!" exclaimed Renwood, impatiently. "Don't kick it after it hits the ground. Can't you understand that? Your toe must hit it just the instant it rises from the ground. Try to fix that in your head."

"Is that Sterndale?" Don Scott asked himself, in amazement. "Can it be that he'll let anybody talk to him in that tone of voice?"

Dick was the acknowledged leader of the village boys and their accepted commander in all things. As captain of the baseball nine, he had seemed to know everything worth knowing about the game, and he had been skillful in imparting his knowledge to others and in handling his men to the very best advantage. When the Rockspur lads decided to organize a regular football team for the first

time, Sterndale was unanimously chosen captain, although he confessed that he was almost unfamiliar with the game.

The boys regarded it as a piece of good fortune when Redwood offered to coach them, claiming to have been a member of the Hyde Park A. A. C. and to have played in a large number of football games in and around Boston; but Scott and Bentley were not the only ones who had been annoyed by the city lad's supercilious ways and condescending airs, although the others held their resentment in check, feeling that they could not afford to antagonize Dolph as long as he was instructing them in the arts of the game they wished to learn.

Again Sterndale tried the drop-kick, and this time he was successful, sending the pigskin sailing through the air in handsome style, so that Renwood declared:

"That was good. Try it again."

When the ball was returned, the captain made a still better kick, and again received an expression of approval from the coach.

"Now," said Dolph, "all the members of the team seem to be here, so I think we'd better get them together and put in some practice on signals. They bungled things terribly last night. I think you'll find some of them are no earthly good."

As he said this, he turned and looked at Don Scott, who felt on the instant that the words were meant for him, and a pang of anger shot through his heart, causing his hands to clench savagely and his jaws to harden.

"We have the best fellows in the village on the eleven," asserted Sterndale, loyally.

“Good fellows do not always make good football players,” said Dolph, knowingly. “But get them together, and we’ll see if they can do any better than they did last night.”

Observing Don, Dick called:

“Come on, Scott. Where’s your suit?”

“Don’t need it,” returned the boy on the bench. “I’m not going to practice.”

“What?” exclaimed Dick, walking over. “Oh, come, that’s nonsense! You aren’t sick, are you?”

“Yes.”

“Well, that’s different,” said the captain, quickly. “If you’re sick, I don’t expect you to practice.”

Don rose to his feet.

“Yes, I’m sick,” he hoarsely declared. “I’m sick of that fellow Renwood and his airs and insults. I’ve stood them just as long as I can. I know he meant me when he said some of the men on the team were no earthly good, and——”

“I know you’re mistaken,” cut in Dick, quickly. “Now, wait a minute, Don. It was only a short time ago that we thought of getting the team together for practice, and he observed that you were not here, and that Bentley had not arrived. He said we’d better wait, for, while we might get along without Bent, we needed you in your position as half-back. That was not all. He said that, whatever changes were made on the team, he believed you had been given the right position and should be kept there.”

For a moment Don found himself at a loss for words, but he finally muttered:

“He didn’t mean it. It was just some of his sarcasm.”

“I am sure it was nothing of the sort. He was in earnest.”

“Then why did he make such talk to me last night? And why did he look at me in such a way just now when he said some fellows on the team were no earthly good?”

“He didn’t talk to you any plainer than he does to any of the fellows. They say professional coaches sometimes swear at the men they are training and are as bad as slave-drivers. You must remember that he has been coached by a professional on the team he played with in Boston, and I suppose he considers that the proper way to talk to men. Now, Don, old man, you know we can’t get along without you on the eleven any more than we could have made the record we did if you hadn’t been on the nine. I know you’re loyal to Rockspur, and you’re going to help us down those Highlanders. Don’t mind the way Renwood gives his instructions, but just get right into gear and show what you can do. I’m depending on you, Scott.”

Dick had a hand resting on Don’s shoulder while speaking, and there was deep persuasion in his manner and the inflection of his voice. It was this quality of inducing others to do as he desired that had made Sterndale a leader.

Don wavered a moment, the thought coming to him once more that he must do his best to conquer his temper and that this was another occasion for him to prove his self-control, whereupon he said:

“All right, Sterndale; I’ll do it for you. But I can’t stand everything from Renwood. I’ll get into a suit in a hurry.”

Then he trotted off toward the dressing-room beneath the grand-stand, while Dick, following him with his eyes, muttered:

“Confound your surly temper! I’d like to tell you just what I think of you, but it isn’t policy now, for we need you on the team.”

CHAPTER IV.

DON LEAVES THE TEAM.

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It did not take Don long to get into his football suit. Danny Chatterton met him as he was coming from the dressing-room.

"So you ch-ch-ch-changed your mind?" grinned the little fellow, winking in a taunting manner. "Must have cuc-cuc-cooled off sus-some after I left ye. Or was it Bub-Bentley gug-got you to come along? He-he'll make a real good ch-ch-chum for you! Tell you what, I'd rather be fuf-friendly with a stuck-up city chap, as you cuc-cuc-call Renwood, than to only have a ch-chum like Bub-Bentley."

"You mind your own business, Chatterton!" harshly advised Don. "I'm not making a chum of anybody."

"Well, there's a pup-pup-pup-pretty good reason for that," returned the aggravating little rascal, as he sidled away. "If you had a ch-chum, you'd gug-get mad and eat him inside of th-th-three days."

Scott bit his lip, assailed by a sudden conviction. "That's the reason I've never had a real chum," he thought. "It's my temper. I have no one but myself to blame, I suppose."

He was actually feeling humiliated and humble when he joined the others, who were grouped about Renwood and Sterndale. Dolph and Dick were talking over the code of signals and the simpler plays to be learned.

"Of course," said Renwood, "when we become familiar with the common and conventional plays, then we can study up new formations and new moves in the game. Until we've seen just what kind of material we have and what sort of a team it forms as a whole, we cannot decide upon our general style of playing. If the men prove to be fast and light on their feet, we'll see what we can do in the way of running and surprise plays. If they are not fast, but are dogged and heavy enough, we'll see what kind of a bucking team they'll make. Or it is possible we may find that we have a great kicking team. But, no matter what general style of playing may be decided upon, after getting into a game it may be found expedient to change to another style in order to best assail the weak points of the opposing team."