

of regaining it had made the remainder of the day seem endless.

'Here,' said the doctor, 'sit down, girl. I suppose you understand that you were working that exchange better than nine greenhorns out of ten could have worked it, don't you? But a wizard couldn't fill Martha Deane's place. And the truth is, that was the only course to take after you opened my eyes.' He rose, lighted the gas, and then turned a searching look on his companion. 'And you knew it would be, Ray McCoy!'

'What other could there be?' replied Rachel, cheerily.

'Martha didn't mean to be obstinate, the doctor said. 'She wasn't conscious of any crankiness at all. But she was flickering out like a lamp after the oil is gone.'

Rachel got to her feet.

'Wait a minute,' commanded Doctor Bruce. 'I, for one, am not going to have a hand in nipping that career of yours in the bud.' His big laugh rang through the little room. 'I've been talking with the directors of the telephone company for about the twenty-fifth time, and they've agreed at last that Ashton ought to give her operator a rise. Then I settled things with the Deanes. The girls jumped at my plan, and Martha, as long as she can peg away even a little at her old job, doesn't care if she never sees a red cent again, and said as much. So the upshot is, you're to do most of the work and draw most of the pay—that is, if you want the contract.'

'If I want the contract!' exclaimed Rachel. 'And more than I was expecting to earn!'

'Certainly,' said the doctor. 'That surplus is for your consultation fee. Now, let's call up our patient.'

As he bent over the telephone, he pulled Ray's head down to a level with his own.

'Listen to Martha Deane, will you?' he whispered. 'Getting things to rights along the line. Bowling over her patrons like so many tenpins. Here, here, Central,' he broke in, 'can't you stop rigging your patrons long enough to answer your physician? How're you feeling to-night?'

The little instrument in his hand seemed fairly to vibrate with the keen joy of the old voice that leaped back over the wire.

'Me, Tom Bruce? Fine as a fiddle!'

## NOBODY'S FRIEND

'You will probably have a little trouble with Bernard at first,' said Mr. Russell on entering his son, aged fifteen, in Holy Cross Academy.

'In what particular?' asked Brother Lawrence, the president.

'Well, you see, the boy's mother died when he was but eight, and I, being busy with my professional duties, was rather negligent in training him. The consequence is that he has been permitted to run the streets and associate with a rough class of boys.'

'I noticed that he is rather undisciplined, but he will get over that.'

'I hope so; but make him toe the mark, even if you have to use the rod.'

Bernard was a typical boy of the street grafted on a boy of good breeding. It is not surprising, then, that he found it hard to get used to the new life. From the very first he did not take well with the other boys.

Among the boys who had taken a special dislike to him were Daly, coach, and Moran, captain, of the first track team. Said Daly to a group of the students:

'That new guy's got too much gall. Did you hear him trying to give me pointers on coaching yesterday?'

'Yes, and did you hear him brag what he can do? He's punk,' returned Moran.

'He's as grouchy as an old cluck,' chimed in Bobby Johnston. 'He says this place is worse than a prison, and I suppose he knows.'

'Whew! wasn't he sore last night when the boys

put him under the pump? They're going to keep it up till he gets over his grouch.'

Then Daly spoke impressively. 'I know something about him. I wouldn't have peached on him, but he's so confounded fresh. I read in the paper that he and a gang of other toughs beat up an old Italian and got away with all his stuff—so I warn you fellows to look out for your pocket-books and other valuables.'

'He'd better not try that here,' declared Moran, 'or he'll get worse than the pump.'

Hence Bernard's life at the Academy was not the most pleasant. The students took delight in tormenting him, and the professors were obliged to punish him for misconduct and lack of application. Twice he had been up for expulsion; but, chiefly through the intervention of Brother Luke, who was his prefect and his teacher of mathematics, he had been given the alternative of doing a long detention.

Time passed, but things did not improve. The real cause of his unpopularity was due to Daly and Moran, both of whom resented a criticism by Russell. Being recognised as leaders, they took advantage of their influence to discredit him and to make him the butt of the academy.

The situation had become almost unbearable to Bernard and he was thinking seriously of running away, but an ever-watchful eye was observing him. Brother Luke, more than any other member of the faculty, had the confidence of the boys. He was organiser of their teams and the most enthusiastic promoter of all student activities. A strongly marked trait was his sympathy for the timid and the persecuted. Noticing that Bernard was very dejected, he spoke to him kindly and offered to help him in any possible way. At first Bernard met his advances with indifference; but he soon recognised the Brother's sincerity and opened his heart to him. Brother Luke then pointed out Bernard's worst faults and gave him a few helpful suggestions. He also spoke to Roberts, captain of the second track team, requesting him to give Bernard a chance to make good in the sports and to help him along in every way.

Sympathy was what Bernard needed; it cheered him up. Progress was slow, however. It was hard to change from a tough, as he had been called, to a good boy; but Bernard really improved in his conduct and in the sports. His popularity, however, thanks to Daly and Moran, had not increased.

Holy Cross, like most academies, had its athletic contests, among which the most important was the annual track meet with St. John's Academy. The previous meet had been won by St. John's and the Holy Cross team were determined to recover their lost prestige. They had practised until they thought themselves invincible. Bernard tried to get on the team, but Daly ignored him. Brother Luke, however, saw that they were weak in substitutes; and, when he heard that Bernard had done track work at home, induced Roberts to try him out. Bernard surprised Roberts and the Brother, especially in the dashes.

At last the great day arrived. An enthusiastic crowd of Holy Cross supporters wearing purple and white ribbons occupied the west bleachers, and about an equal number of St. John's rooters occupied the east bleachers.

At the end of the sixth event, the score stood 28 to 22 in favor of Holy Cross. In the 440-yard dash, Moran, the Holy Cross star who had already taken part in several events, weakened, and fell back to third place. Roberts ran in the 220-yard dash and barely succeeded in taking second place. The score was now 36 to 32 in St. John's favor. There was great cheering from the St. John's crowd. With Moran out of the relay, it looked like certain victory for them. The prospects, surely, did look dark for the purple and white. Coach Daly was at his wit's end. There was no one to replace Moran. Roberts suggested Russell, but Daly scowled and said:

'What are you giving us? This is no time for kidding!'

'You'd better try him,' advised Brother Luke. 'He'll surprise you.'

Seeing no other way out of the difficulty, Daly reluctantly consented to let Bernard run. The Holy

**Ken. Mayo**

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