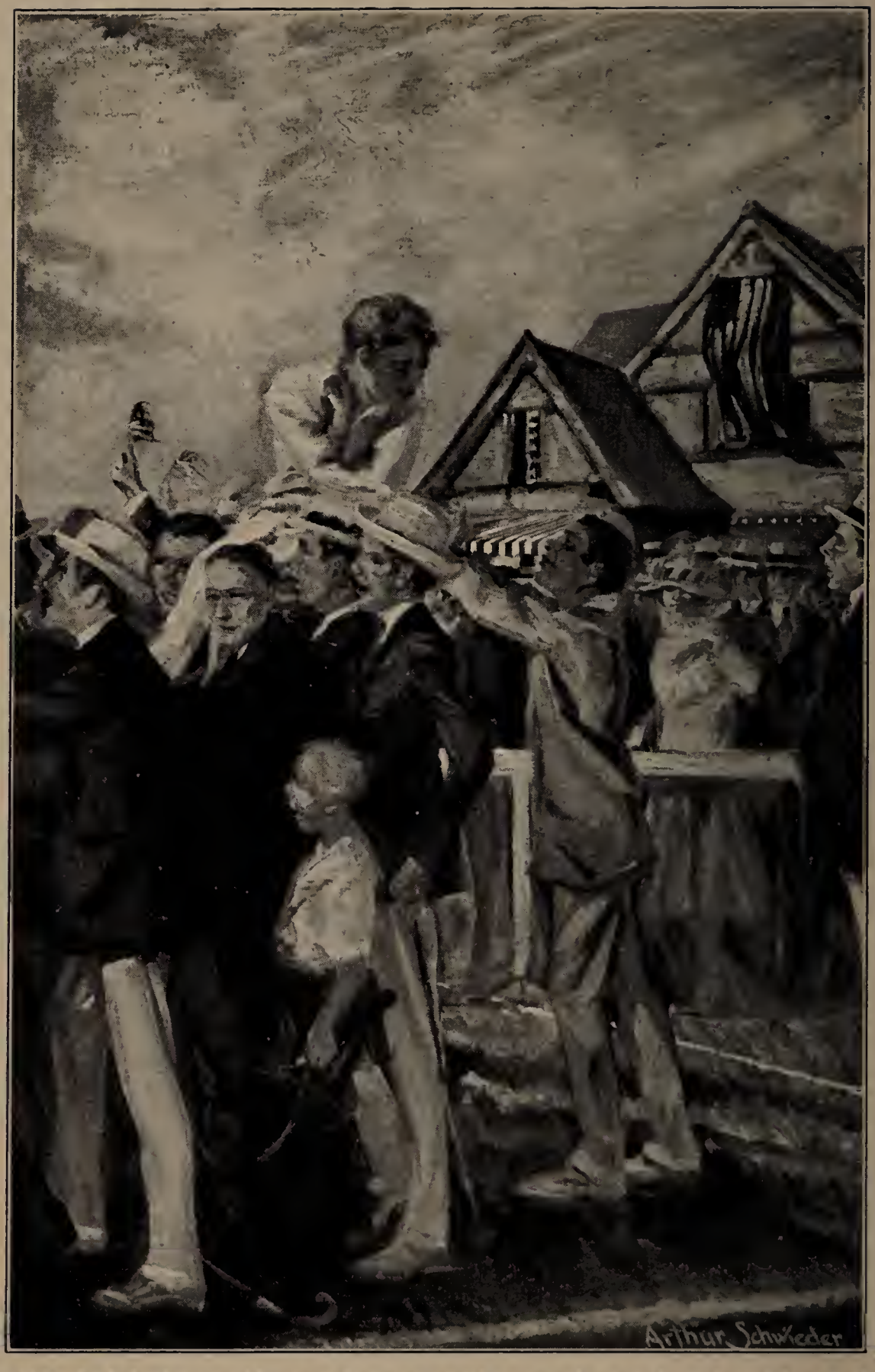

"Bob felt himself caught up and tossed on the shoulders of several men. He looked down—yes, there was Dick."

It's All in the Game

And Other Tennis Tales

BY

WILLIAM T. TILDEN, 2ND

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TO
BUDDIE
OF
"IT'S ALL IN THE GAME"

HIS INSPIRATION IS LARGELY RESPONSIBLE FOR
THESE STORIES ALTHOUGH HE DOESN'T KNOW IT

PREFACE

EVERY sport has its own literature. Baseball, Golf, Football, Track, Polo, Crew—each and every one has found a great reading public for the books of fact and fiction that have grown up around the sport.

Tennis has had many authors who have laid forth the science of the game, its history and its many incidents in books of facts, but thus far fiction has more or less escaped. There must always be a start and from a feeble beginning sometimes great things spring. So I dare to offer the feeble beginning of tennis fiction in this small collection of short stories, hoping that someone else will carry on the idea to bigger things.

These stories are based on true incidents in many cases. They will be recognized by tennis enthusiasts. In fact, many players are called by their own names while many more are very thinly camouflaged. I have drawn from the store of my own experiences and have

even abducted a few plots from some experiences of my friends. For this impudence I pay grateful tribute to them and trust they will forgive and forget.

"Buddie" in the first story is a real boy, a great pal of mine. His future development in this book is, I fear, in the nature of a prophecy, for "Buddie" is now but 15. "The Kid" is also drawn closely along the life of a famous young star, while "Dick Thomas" and "Billy Jolson" need little introduction to the tennis world of America.

It is with a hope that some little of the spirit of fair play, good sportsmanship, and honesty that characterizes tennis, has passed into its pages that I offer this little book to the tennis readers of the world.

WILLIAM T. TILDEN, 2ND.

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IT'S ALL IN THE GAME

BUDDIE was a fiery little portion of American boyhood. His real name, which was Robert Wallace Cotter, did not matter to those who knew him. In fact, most of his friends never knew he had a name other than Buddie.

He was a well-built lad of medium height. His hair was light and wavy, curling around his well-shaped head in a manner that was at once his greatest attraction and despair. Buddie resented those curls. He considered that someone had played him a dirty trick by wishing them on him. His eyes were green—decidedly, unmistakably green. The merry little twinkle that always was hidden in their corners made Buddie a favourite wherever he went. In fact, his general appearance was a splendid first aid to spoiling

him, but fortunately a complete lack of conceit saved him from this fate.

Buddie was fresh. However, that was not remarkable, for freshness is universal among humans of his age. It is a sign of normal development.

During his sixteen years of struggle in the harassed world he had fought his way through infancy and childhood, scrapping with everyone from the doctor who ushered him into the world to the principal of his school and the head of the summer camp he attended. Buddie was a born scrapper, but Nature had only half completed the job by wishing a well-set-up but not over-husky body on the fighting temperament. This condition resulted in Buddie's receiving many a drubbing at the hands of boys larger and stronger than himself. Unfortunately, he never learned the truth in that good old platitude that discretion is the better part of valour.

Buddie had two great passions, fighting and tennis; but, unfortunately, he was the victim of a temper that would get away with him to the detriment of both his sports. Buddie had had many serious altercations with his family over his temper which led him into

innumerable scrapes. Buddie really was his own worst enemy.

Like all boys of his age Buddie had a set standard of justice. It may not have been conventional (boys' standards rarely are) but he adhered to it scrupulously. Any one who did not give him a fair deal according to Buddie's lights, incurred his overwhelming hate. And truly, this was some hate!

What the future held in store for him was the least of Buddie's worries. He lived in the present and meditated deeply at moments on past wrongs. Unfortunately, it was only at moments he could remember them, so he lost much grim pleasure that he would otherwise have greatly enjoyed.

Tennis early gained a hold on him. His father had been a star, while his two elder brothers, aged nineteen and twenty-one, considered themselves great players.

Buddie had his own views of their ability but usually kept these to himself, parading them only when the older boys publicly proclaimed his inferiority. Then he waxed eloquent. His father, a very busy man, had started him correctly and then had left him to his own devices. This start was so sound

in theory that by the time Buddie was thirteen, he was forcing his brothers to their limit to beat him.

The summer he was fifteen he met both his brothers in the local tournament and decisively defeated them. Their views of his tennis were not quite so freely expressed as before, but Buddie found the disclosures of his inmost thoughts on their games something which demanded loud and frequent expression.

It was this same summer that he met the national champion, Dick Thomas. He had gazed from afar, with longing eyes and beating heart, at his hero but never expected to meet him. The champion played tennis for amusement and the love of the game and held a keen interest in young players. He and Buddie were staying at the same hotel at a famous summer resort on the Atlantic coast. The Champion had been ill and was resting. He never played on the hotel courts and Buddie could think of no suitable way of meeting him unostentatiously, and not for the world would he admit to any one his worship.

One day the hotel tournament for boys was under way and Buddie was to meet his greatest

rival in the final round. He had seen the Champion ride off in his little red racer earlier in the morning, so he settled to his match with no thought of knowing eyes.

The match raged for hours. The two youngsters ran miles and sweated oceans. They played and played and played. Finally, by dint of better legs and a better brain, Buddie emerged victor in five long sets. Wiping his dirty face on his shoulder, with a gesture he had carefully copied from the Champion, he started off the court.

"Well played, kid! Shake hands!"

Buddie started, looked up, and nearly lost the last bit of breath in his little body. It was the Champion!

Buddie put out a grubby hand and gave the tips of moist limp fingers into the big man's hand.

"Well done!" said the Champion. "Look me up after you're dressed. I want to talk to you."

Buddie incoherently muttered something, he hardly knew what, and plunged for the dressing room.

Gee, he knew the Champion! Wouldn't that be something to murmur casually at

school? "He said to me"—he could hear himself saying. In a daze he took his shower and dressed. Naturally he couldn't really talk to the Champion again. That "look me up later" stuff was all bluff. Still, he had spoken to him.

After luncheon Buddie, still nearly as puffed up by pride as by the enormous meal he had eaten, sauntered out on the porch.

The first person he saw was the Champion. In fact, he ran into him while interestedly gazing over his shoulder at nothing of any real importance.

"Hello, kid!" grinned the big man, who in reality was nothing but a big kid himself. Buddie grunted. He meant to say "Hello!"

"What's your name, little one?"

This time speech came. "Buddie."

"Want to hit a few with me this afternoon?" said the Champion.

Buddie stared, thrilled, and then felt wobbly. Did he dare? No, he didn't.

"Sure I will," he heard himself saying. "When? Now?"

"All right," the other laughed. "Go get dressed," and off chased Buddie.

Fifteen minutes later, Buddie, very excited

and decidedly warm from his hasty dressing, was hitting the ball with the Champion. Things were not at all what he expected. The Champion was a good guy. He was all right, but somehow Buddie couldn't get the ball on his racquet. He missed the easiest shots, shots he never missed at any other time, and then he couldn't get them away from the Champion. No matter how hard Buddie hit the ball, or where it went, the other easily returned it. These incidents got on Buddie's nerves. Finally, missing an easy shot, he flung his racquet to the ground furiously.

"That's enough for to-day," said the Champion. "Meet me at ten to-morrow morning," and he walked off.

Buddie felt stunned and very much ashamed. The old temper getting him in wrong again, and this time with the Champion. It was wrong, all wrong. He would control it. But could he? Well, anyway, he had another chance the next morning.

Ten o'clock the next day found Buddie dressed and ready, full of good resolutions and a desire to show he could keep his temper. The Champion came out from the hotel in street dress. Buddie felt injured.

"Look here, Buddie," his new friend said, "I want to talk to you to-day instead of playing. There are a lot of things to learn about tennis and the sooner we get at them the better."

Buddie nodded silently. He was still slightly annoyed, but a long talk with the famous player had infinite attractions and he could hit a tennis ball any time.

"Now, cheer up, boy!" The Champion had a genial grin. "Don't let your temper get away with you again. It's ruined many a great tennis game. Let's consider several things about tennis itself first. You know first of all you must keep your eye on the ball until you see it hit your racquet."

Buddie looked slightly sceptical.

"Didn't know that before? Well, it's true. Then you should always be *sideways* to the net when you hit the ball. Your shoulders are along the line you want to hit. Once you are in position to stroke, swing free and easy from your shoulder and shift your weight forward with your shot and there is your stroke. See how it goes." The Champion rose from the bench he was occupying and made a shadow swing of his famous forehand.

Buddie wagged his head eagerly and followed with a very fair imitation of the stroke.

"That's the idea, kid," encouraged the man.

Buddie grew interested and then enthusiastic. For an hour the two talked tennis, its strokes, players, tactics, and ethics. Then the man rose to his feet.

"Well, kid, this afternoon at four o'clock. Think over what we've talked about and don't forget what I said about your temper."

A moment later and Buddie watched the little red racer flying down the road.

"Gee, he's some guy! I'm goin' to make good!"

From this little talk there sprang a friendship that was destined to last through life, a friendship which meant as much to the man as to the boy. Daily during that summer the two worked, Buddie steadily progressing with his game and slowly conquering his temper. His love for a fight diminished as his love for tennis grew.

September found Buddie in the club house or on the side lines as the Champion fought his way round after round in the tournament for

the national crown he held. Finally, he emerged successful, and his title was safe for another year. The great player found his best inspiration in the steadfast devotion and confidence of his young friend Buddie.

Following the final match he turned to the boy who came up to him in the club house to congratulate him, and grabbed him by both hands.

"Well, we did it, kid, didn't we?" he cried.

That "we" meant more to Buddie than all the prizes on earth.

During the winter, Buddie heard from his friend regularly every week, receiving letters full of advice for the coming season. The spring and summer found Buddie practising daily for the Junior National Championship, which was held at the same time as the men's.

The great event finally came. Buddie was at the top of his really marvellous game. His whole style bore the impress of the Champion's coaching. Round by round the two friends mowed down their opponents in the championships until Labor Day found them both in the final round of their respective classes.

The junior match came first. The Champion sacrificed his own comfort and was on hand to give Buddie a last pat on the shoulder and "Go to it, kid," as he went on the court.

Buddie's opponent was a fiery, hard-hitting, but erratic youngster from California. Buddie found him a hard nut to crack. The end of the third set found him two sets to one down but fresh, while the little Californian was showing wear and tear.

The base linesman at one end of the court was clearly asleep on the job, for he had three times given wrong decisions, once costing Buddie a very important game. Buddie had curbed his temper but it was badly strained and near the breaking point.

Buddie rushed away to a big lead in the fourth set. He piled up an advantage of 5–2 and 40–15 and, getting a shot just to his liking, drove hard to the base line. The ball fell squarely on the line and chalk puffed up.

"Out," called the linesman, suddenly recalling his whereabouts.

Buddie gasped. It meant a set, and they took it away from him and called it out. He lost all control of his temper. He did not show it outwardly. He was far too fine a boy

for that, but his whole game collapsed as he inwardly raged at the injustice of the decision. Error followed error, and the match ended in a landslide of nets and outs. Buddie was ignominiously defeated.

The Champion was dressing when he came in.

"Hard luck, boy! Better luck next year," was his sole comment.

Buddie slowly undressed and took his shower. He did not want to see the men's final. He would have won that match of his if only they had not robbed him. He knew it was an unintentional mistake but he bitterly resented it.

The final round of the men's event was two sets over when he came out. The Champion had the first and the new challenger the second. It was a bitter struggle.

The third set see-sawed for ten games, but experience told and the Champion broke through and won it at 7–5. The fourth set was hard fought. The Champion was serving the odd game and service held to 4–5 in his favour. By virtue of terrific driving he succeeded in reaching match point at 30–40. The challenger served and the Champion

drove furiously across the court. The ball plunged downward on the chalk of the side line. It was the match. The challenger started for the net.

"Out," came the voice of the linesman. The Champion never turned a hair but walked quietly to position to receive. The challenger lifted his face to the umpire in protest but the calm voice of the man in the chair rang out:

"Deuce."

Shot for shot the men battled on. The Champion was tired but so was his opponent. Finally, a lucky net cord shot and the 'vantage game went to the challenger. Another moment and the score stood two sets all.

Buddie's soul rose within him. It was cruel hard fate. Would it rob his friend as it had robbed him?

The Champion stayed with his match, fighting with every ounce of strength in him. The challenger was a younger man. He gradually wore down his opponent and broke through to lead at 5–4 on his own delivery for the match. One game and the Champion was dethroned. Buddie grew sick.

Suddenly the Champion flashed into life.

He called on the last ounce of his reserve, and launched an attack that broke all defences. Point after point went to him on earned strokes. It was marvellous tennis. The tenth game was his at 15 and score was tied. The eleventh game he took at love.

The end was in sight.

The Champion crashed through the other's weakened defence in a terrific driving orgy and the match and championship were his when he placed the final shot past his opponent along the side line.

Ten minutes later, Buddie rushed up to him breathless.

"How did you do it? How did you keep your temper in that fourth set?" he cried.

The Champion merely smiled a little wearily and pulled off a shirt.

"All tennis players take what comes in a match, boy. It's all in the game."

DICK TAKES THE CHAIR

"BUDDIE" was "Buddie" no longer. He was Robert Wallace Cotter to the world and Bob to all those to whom for years he had been only Buddie. Bob was convinced that at his advanced age of twenty-one "Buddie" must go by the board. Only his old friend the Champion still had the right to call him Buddie, but then the Champion could call him anything and Bob would stand for it.

Unfortunately, the Champion, too, had suffered the loss of his cognomen, for two years previously he had gone down to defeat before his younger rival Billy Jolson who had been pressing him closely for some years: now he was merely Richard William Thomas, ex-champion of the United States and referred to in all newspapers as "the veteran," "the aged net star" and "the veteran internationalist."

Dick Thomas was still in the first five play-

ers in America, and with him in the select group was his protégé, Bob Cotter. Only the champion, Billy Jolson, had a distinct edge on them.

The Davis Cup matches were almost at hand. Australia, the challengers, had arrived in the country and the Davis Cup committee had just announced the team. It consisted of the national champion, Billy Jolson, the ex-champion, Dick Thomas, his old rival, Karl Baring, and the young star, Bob Cotter.

The challenge match was only three weeks off and the team was practising daily at the big club at Forest Hills where the challenge round would be staged. Jolson was in magnificent form and won his practice matches decisively. There was no question as to his position on the team. Baring, who had gone off in his singles play, was Jolson's doubles partner and the two scored several clean-cut victories over Thomas and young Cotter. Bob was uncertain in doubles. He did not like the game and was not willing to study it to improve. Thomas and Cotter both beat Baring regularly in singles and the second singles position rested between the friends. The first week of play Bob beat Dick two of

the three times they met. The second week Bob was even more impressive and won all three practice matches, each time by a narrow margin.

Saturday night of the week before the match was scheduled, Dick and Bob dined together at the Biltmore.

"Well, Buddie," said Dick, as the two friends were idling away their time over their coffee. "It looks to me like you and Billy Jolson for the singles."

"Oh, cut it out, Dick," Bob laughed; "of course you will play. Why try to kid me?"

"No! I mean it, kid. You have been beating me consistently all year. Your tournament record is as good, except for one foolish defeat at Seabright that you should never have had. The past two weeks you have defeated me decisively. Honestly, I think you are better and I believe you should play."

"Dick," said Bob suddenly, "do you think strict obedience to the word of the committee is necessary? I mean if you felt they were making a mistake that endangered the cup, would you carry out their orders?"

"I don't know, Buddie: I don't know! It's

a pretty serious question. Obedience is the first requisite of any team. If the men in charge make a mistake it's their fault and they must take the blame. Still, if I were absolutely certain that some order was endangering our chances of holding the cup I might violate it. However, the idea is foolish. Such a question could never come up, so why talk about it?"

"Oh, I was just thinking out loud, that's all," said Bob, and their talk drifted away into other channels.

Dick remembered this conversation as he tumbled into bed that night. He lay awake some time pondering the ethics of it. Finally, he dismissed it. "Bob's an idiot," he grunted. "Such a case is impossible."

Monday night before the first match, which was scheduled for Thursday, the Davis Cup committee met to select the team. Three former champions, including Dick Thomas, the president of the National Association, and several members of the executive committee were at the meeting. Mr. Hyrock, the president, was chairman.

Mr. Hyrock rose to his feet.

"Gentlemen, I believe the quickest manner

in selecting the team to-night is to offer one line-up and throw open to discussion that team. We have all followed closely the work of our men and face with confidence the result next week-end. There can be no question of Jolson as one singles player, and Jolson and Baring as the doubles team. The only question is Cotter or Thomas as the other singles. You know Cotter has won the majority of his matches from Thomas, but by narrow margins. Gentlemen, notwithstanding this record, it is my opinion that experience in matches of the sort of the Davis Cup is more important than the slight superiority of youth without experience. I am in favour of Thomas for the second singles player. Gentlemen, what is your pleasure?"

Dick started to his feet but sat down as one of the other former champions rose.

"Mr. President, in my experience in international tennis, I have found young players have a great tendency to blow up at a crucial time. I agree with you that Thomas is the man to play."

Dick jumped up.

"Mr. President!"

"Mr. Thomas."

"You are making a mistake, all of you. I have played with Bob Cotter for years and he is a great match player. He is playing better ball now than I am. He has beaten me five out of six times in practice, while his tournament record last year speaks for itself. Remember, he beat Williams in five sets at Seabright after dropping the first two, and pulled out from two sets to one and 4–2 down against Murray in the Nationals. The boy is a fighter and a better player than I am. You should use him."

Mr. Hyrock looked coldly at Dick.

"I think your personal friendship for young Cotter may dwarf your judgment, Thomas," he said. "This is far too serious a matter to let personalities enter in. Gentlemen, you have heard Mr. Thomas. All in favour of Thomas for the singles please signify in the usual manner."

There was little doubt as to the committee's views and Dick's "No" was lost in the motion to adjourn.

The following morning the papers announced Jolson and Thomas in the singles and Jolson and Baring in the doubles of the Davis Cup.

Bob read the story at breakfast and fled to the 'phone to talk to Dick.

"Sorry, old man." Dick was sincere in his regret. "I tried to make them see it, but it couldn't be done. Stay in shape, boy, for if anything happens to Billy or me you go in. Well, Buddie, see you later at the club. So long," and he hung up.

Bob felt a little sore. What good was it to work and slave and make good in practice only to have the committee overlook it all and pick another man? If it had been any one but Dick he would have wanted to chuck the whole thing. What was it Dick had said? They were afraid of his inexperience. Well, how was he ever going to get experience unless they gave him a chance! Still, he knew the committee and he knew they had acted in a way they felt would bring the best results in the match, and he was not going to let it gloom his outlook even if he didn't see it their way. Having acquired this philosophic viewpoint he went down town to get several racquets he was having restrung.

Meanwhile, Dick was sitting in his office in a brown study. It was all wrong, he told himself. The committee didn't know Bob

as he did, and couldn't know what a fighter the kid was. Buddie could make good and now he didn't have a chance. Didn't he? Well, maybe he did. Dick reached for the 'phone.

"Green 793!" A long pause while Dick whistled softly to himself. "The kid is better," he muttered.

"Hello! Hello! Central? Let me have Green 793!"

Pause.

"Hello! Doctor Cameron's office? The doctor there? Yes, this is Mr. Thomas. . . . Hello! Hello! George! This is Dick Thomas. Can you come over at once to my office? . . . No, you idiot, I'm not sick, but I must see you at once. . . . All right, I'll wait. Half an hour, then."

A half hour later Doctor Cameron arrived. An hour more, and the Doctor, wearing a quizzical expression around the eyes, was back dishing pills and poultices to the people.

Wednesday was the last day of practice and Bob was called on to give Dick his last work-out. It was a damp day and the court was slippery. Bob suggested to Dick that they call off practice and take no chances, but Dick did not see it that way.

"I must tune up a little," he said.

They started playing, Bob in wonderful form, while Dick seemed listless and preoccupied.

Bob took the first set at 6–3 and was leading in the second when Dick came to life. The play grew faster and more intense. Finally, Bob drew Dick far out of court after an angle shot. Dick, running fast, apparently did not see the linesman's chair, unoccupied, in front of him. Bob called a warning that went unheeded and a moment later chair and man slid in a heap across the court. Bob rushed to Dick's assistance.

"Hurt, old man?"

"Ankle gone a bit, Buddie, I think."

Just then a man came running up. It was Doctor Cameron.

"Hurt, Dick? Let me see!"

"It's the left ankle, George."

Hastily Cameron pulled off the shoe from the injured foot and placed knowing fingers on the instep.

A groan escaped Dick's lips.

"Hold tight a minute, Dick." Doctor Cameron continued his examination. Then he placed the foot gently on the ground and

rose. Mr. Hyrock came rapidly up from the club house.

"How is he? What has he done?" demanded the president bluntly.

"Badly sprained his left ankle and torn a ligament as well. He cannot step on his foot for several weeks."

Mr. Hyrock without a word turned away toward the club house. At the porch he turned. "Cotter," he called.

Bob started toward him.

"Anything I can do for you, Dick?" he asked. "I'm damned sorry."

Doctor Cameron answered: "Nothing, Bob. I'll take him home in my car."

"Come and see me to-night, Buddie," Dick called after him.

Bob arrived at the club house to find most of the Davis Cup committee in consultation in Mr. Hyrock's office. He waited round about half an hour until Hyrock appeared.

"Cotter, you play singles to-morrow in Thomas's place. Go in and win. We are counting on you."

Bob coloured. He had his chance now. He'd show them. Only he wished he had not gotten it at Dick's expense.

"Yes, Mr. Hyrock. I'll try!"

"All right! Good-bye."

Eight o'clock that night found Bob at Dick's home. Dick was sitting in a chair with his injured foot on a stool. He was wearing a big carpet slipper that hid all trace of bandages.

"Well, Buddie," Dick was saying. "It's up to you. You have to make good for us both to-morrow. Win for yourself and then win to justify my judgment of you to the committee. There are three days' play: so you will have time to get used to the court and crowd. Remember, keep the ball in play. Don't throw away the easy shots. Take your chances when you are behind and play safe when ahead. I am going to get out there some way to-morrow. Cameron will run me out in his car. Come see me to-morrow night. Don't forget, boy, I'm counting on you in this match. So long, kid."

Bob thought over Dick's remarks on his way home. It was a lot of good tennis dope he had received. He had never realized before the time to take chances was when he was behind and not when ahead. Well, he would remember that. In other

words, Dick meant never change a winning game but always change a losing game. That would be his motto from now on. Great fellow, Dick. Shame he had to get knocked out just now.

Bob woke early the next morning to find a bright sun shining in at his window. He dressed hastily only to find breakfast was not ready. He considered calling up Dick Thomas to inquire about his foot, only it was too early to rake poor Dick out of bed.

Someway, he never remembered feeling quite so keyed up about a match as he did to-day. This Davis Cup stuff wasn't all fun, after all.

In due time breakfast was served. Bob could not eat as much as he thought he would beforehand. Something seemed to rob him of appetite. Dick reported a badly swollen ankle but would not allow him to come around to see it. The morning passed slowly for Bob.

Billy Jolson met young George Palmerson of Australia in the opening match. Jolson was in top form and although he dropped the third set the result was never in doubt. Time and again Jolson's famous forehand drive raked Palmerson's court as Billy dashed to the

net behind it. Palmerson fought grimly, a notable but losing fight, and the first point was America's, 6–4, 7–5, 3–6, 6–3.

Bob dressed during the last set of Jolson's match. He felt very nervous and a trifle uncertain. If only Dick were on hand to talk to: but Dick was up in the grandstand, pinned there by a badly injured foot. Well, if it hadn't been for that foot, Dick and not he would have been dressing now. A howl of joy from the crowd, followed by prolonged applause, announced the end of the first match and Bob hurried downstairs.

Norman Brokaw, the famous veteran known the world over as "the wizard," was awaiting him. Brokaw was the greatest court general in the game and in his prime had been the finest player the world had known. A hard man for a youngster to meet in his first international match.

Play opened with Brokaw serving. Bob felt confident albeit somewhat nervous. This confidence received a rude setback as Brokaw rushed away with the first set at love. Brokaw missed nothing and his sense of anticipation of Bob's best shots finally broke the boy's nerve. The second set was closer but Bob was clearly

on the defensive, playing mostly from the base line. The second set was Brokaw's at 6–3.

The men changed courts and as Bob stopped to wipe his streaming face, suddenly into his memory flashed Dick's advice—"Take chances when you're behind." All right, he'd do it. From the first point of the third set Bob threw caution to the winds and rushed the net at every opportunity. His change of tactics surprised Brokaw for a moment and the boy got away to 3–0 lead. Brokaw realized that the youngster was in a spurt that nothing could stop and was content to conserve his own energy while running the boy as far as possible. The set was Bob's at 6–3.

During the rest Bob made many solemn resolutions to attack from the moment of play in the fourth set. Unfortunately, Brokaw had had his lesson and waited his attack with a plan of his own. Bob dashed for the net on his first service only to see Brokaw toss a lob over his head that beat him completely. From that moment to the end Brokaw mixed up his game with surprising versatility. Short angle shots caught Bob at his feet as he came in. Lobs chased him to the base line or drives to the side line beat him clean. Bob struggled

hard and played well, but the old master held too much in experience. Australia scored its first point and tied the score when the last set went to Brokaw at 6–4.

Bob was defeated but came out of his defeat a wiser man. He hurried round to see Dick that night, anxious to analyze the tactics used by Brokaw. He knew Dick would have an answer ready for them.

"Well played, Buddie," said Dick, again in his chair with foot up. "Well played! I thought Brokaw would beat you. He knows too much tennis for you kids. It's Palmerson you must beat, for Jolson will beat Brokaw. I'm afraid of the doubles. I think we will lose them. By the way, when a man starts mixing his game on you as Brokaw did that last set, wait for your openings before going to the net. You forgot common caution after getting away with that net attack for one set. Always use your head, Buddie."

They talked for an hour and then Dick sent Bob home to bed. Dick's fears for the doubles proved well founded as Brokaw and Palmerson took three sets from Jolson and Baring with ease. The last chance for America rested in winning both singles matches.

Dick 'phoned Bob the morning of the match.

"Go to it, kid. I'll see you out there," were his parting words.

The Jolson-Brokaw match was a marvellous battle. The first set, a long deuce struggle, saw Brokaw at his best, and finally he pulled it out at 12–10. It proved too great a strain on his physical condition and Jolson's blinding speed proved too big a handicap. The next three sets were Jolson's and the match America's, 10–12, 6–4, 7–5, 6–3.

The score was tied at two matches all. The Davis Cup hung on the Cotter-Palmerson meeting!

Bob was dressing when he heard Dick's voice behind him.

"Buddie."

He turned hurriedly.

"How the——" he stopped.

Dick, fully dressed, was walking toward him without the semblance of a limp.

"What the—how——" Bob was flustered.

"Never mind the what's and how's now, Buddie. Remember this. I risked your reputation and my own and the Davis Cup itself on my firm belief in you. You must win

this match, boy, to justify my action. It's more than you and I, now, Buddie—it's America. Go to it!" and Dick hurried off.

Bob was speechless. He could not get it through his head that Dick, his Dick, had really faked his injury to give him his chance, not only because it was for him, but because Dick really felt it was better for the country. Well, at least he would try to justify old Dick's faith in him.

"Linesmen out. Cotter-Palmerson!"

Bob grabbed his racquets and hurried out. A howl from the crowd greeted his appearance. It was followed by a great burst of applause.

Decidedly it was up to him. For the moment he was America.

Palmerson was a big rangy man, full of strength and speed, but crude in game and prone to blow up. Cotter studied him carefully. Palmerson had a terrific service. During the first set Bob could not handle it. His best return was a pallid poke shoulder high to Palmerson as he came in. Bob held his own delivery with difficulty to 5 all, but a costly double fault and a missed volley cost him the eleventh game and Palmerson took the set on his own delivery.

The second set was almost a replica of the first, only Bob was slowly gaining some command of his service return. Gradually he began to pound the weak backhand of his opponent, but his returns were still too uncertain to insure success.

Five all!

Six all.

Seven all!

At 7–8 he reached set point on Palmerson's service only to have a terrific service ace deuce the score and a moment later he dropped the game.

He worried over it as he began his delivery, which cost him a volley he should have made. A brilliant passing shot of Palmerson's, an error, and a smash, and Palmerson led 9–8. Again that terrific service unsuccessfully handled and the set was Palmerson's at 10–8.

"Two sets to none! Australia leads!"

Bob gritted his teeth. He must win. He *must* win. If he won this set he would win the match.

Once more the battle of services was taken up. Bob divided with the Australian to 4 all. He won his delivery for 5–4 and a wild idea flashed into his mind. "Take

chances when you're behind." Bob stepped in close to the service line. Palmerson crashed down a terrific service to his forehand. Bob blocked it and the ball shot down at Palmerson's feet. The Australian missed it from sheer surprise.

Again the service and again the short block. This time it beat Palmerson clean. The third time Bob tried it Palmerson beat him with an ace down the centre line. Once more Bob took his chance and again he caught Palmerson coming up.

15–40, set point!

Bob stood in as if to block the return. Palmerson threw the ball up to serve and Bob jumped hastily back. Palmerson's service hit and bounced to Bob's forehand. Bob drew back and drove fast down the side line. The ball fell in by six inches.

"Game. Set. Cotter. America 6–4."

A yell, a veritable cyclone of sound burst from the great gallery. The match was not over yet.

Bob felt he had the keynote to handling Palmerson's service. He must save it for the pinch, however, for he knew Palmerson could find an answer to it if he used it too frequently.

The fourth set again found service ruling to three all. Cotter held his delivery for 3–4, and standing in again forced Palmerson to double fault in anxiety to ace him. Bob broke through for 5–3 and tied the score of the match at 6–3 for the set.

Two sets all!

Palmerson opened service and Bob strove for a break at once. Two service aces taught him that Palmerson had something left. The second game Bob lapsed in an unaccountable manner. He netted two easy volleys. Palmerson, quick to take advantage of it, forced the play and broke through for a lead of 2–0. Again his great service, slowing up a little now from wear, but still formidable, and he led at 3–0.

"Always chance a losing game." Bob muttered his motto under his breath. Up to now he had been hanging back this set.

Smash! His service won outright. Then he dashed for the net and scored the next point with a brilliant cross-court volley.

He netted his next volley but scored twice more, once off Palmerson's error, and once by his own placement.

3–1, Palmerson leads.

Bob got within a point of game but netted an easy kill and Palmerson served out the next two points.

4–1, Palmerson leads.

Again service held and 4–2 was quickly called.

Bob stepped in close for Palmerson's delivery. Smash! A service ace! He walked toward the other court to receive. As he did so he glanced at the club-house porch. Mr. Hyrock was in close confab with Dick and seemed to be arguing. Bob caught Dick's reply in the tense stillness of the court.

"He'll make good. Don't worry. I know it!"

So Dick still believed in him, even at 4–2 in the final set. Well, he would prove he was worth it. It wasn't for America only now. It was for America and Dick.

He took his position close in.

Smash! Bob stepped way in and half volleyed the service cross court. A perfect placement. The crowd howled. Palmerson looked worried. Again Bob stepped in. Palmerson set himself for a terrific delivery. In his anxiety he foot-faulted and his first serve was wasted. He threw away the next

in a careless fashion. The foot fault had worried him.

Bob fell back and drove hard at Palmerson as he came in. The Australian made a fine recovery but the ball fell just outside the far side line.

Again Bob stepped in. This time Palmerson served but stayed back. Bob hit to Palmerson's backhand and advanced to the net. Palmerson drove hard down the side line. Bob lunged at it, met it on his strings, and volleyed it into the top of the net. It hung a moment and then crawled over and fell dead in Palmerson's court.

3–4, Palmerson leads.

Bob felt confidence growing within him. A moment more and the score was tied. Four all.

Bob stood back and drove hard at Palmerson. Again the Australian made a magnificent recovery and volleyed to the side line, but the American was on the crest and could not be stopped. He rushed over and made a clean passing shot down the line.

A "net" by Bob, another by Palmerson, a clean volley by Palmerson and an "out" of a smash by the same player, and game

point faced the server. Bob stepped in. It meant the match, this next point. If he broke Palmerson's delivery he could hold his own for the final game. Palmerson drove his service hard to Bob's backhand. The American stepped forward and met the ball as it bounced. The return angled sharply across court. Palmerson lunged at it, reached it, but netted his return.

5–4. Cotter leads. Final set.

"One game—only one game." Bob set himself to serve. A service, a drive, and a net. Love–15. A service, a drive, and a winning volley for 15 all.

The next point saw Palmerson make a wonderful recovery on a hard drive but his slow return was killed. 30–15.

Bob netted a smash that he should have won, but scored a brilliant volley off a drive of Palmerson's. 40–30.

Match point!

Smash! Bob's service left Palmerson flat-footed on the court.

"Game! Set! Match! Davis Cup! America!"

A howl, a shriek, a bellow! Bob felt himself caught up and tossed on the shoulders

of several men. He looked down. Yes, one of them was Dick.

"What the—how——" he began.

"Oh, Buddie, Buddie! Now I'll tell you the what's and the how's. I didn't make a mistake, anyway!"

THE COME-BACK OF DICK THOMAS

AS a tennis player, Dick Thomas was through. He was a has-been. All the papers told him so daily. He had met defeat this season at the hands of several players not in his class, and already the press was loud in its condemnation of his game.

Dick himself felt he was through. Somehow the old love of the game wasn't there any more. He couldn't get interested. He didn't care if he won or lost. Well, anyway, Buddie wasn't there to see him licked: so what difference did it make, anyway?

Buddie was in Europe. He had been there since early spring and was only returning in time to play Newport, Southampton, and the National. Buddie, or Robert Wallace Cotter, to give him his legal cognomen, was Dick's protégé and best friend. Dick had met Bob when the former, as national champion, was at the heydey of his career and the latter was

a lad of fourteen. Bob Cotter was now twenty-three and already an international tennis star, while Dick was calling himself "a has-been and through with the game."

It was the end of July, 1920, and the big fixtures of Seabright and Newport were just ahead. The day before Dick left Boston for Seabright he received a letter from Buddie. Among other things it told him the boy was sailing that week. One portion interested and at the same time annoyed him greatly.

"At Wimbledon," Bob wrote, "I played a fellow named Cecil Herrick who claimed to be an Englishman. He doesn't look it. We played on an outside court with no linesmen. The umpire merely kept score. All during the match, which Herrick won in four sets, he took decision after decision. Please do not think I am crawling or offering alibis, for he is a great player: but I am writing you this so you will know why I am coming home earlier than intended. Cecil Herrick is coming to America for our National Championship. I am coming home to get some extra practice with you and go after him again."

Dick finished the letter in a red rage. Some rotter robbed Buddie of a match, and was

coming over to try to steal our title. Not by a damn sight. Not if he could stop it.

Seabright proved uneventful. Dick met defeat in the third round at the hands of young Richard Vincey, the towheaded phenom from New York. It was merely another proof that Dick was done. He had always beaten Vincey easily before.

Saturday found Dick at the dock in New York when the *Imperator* swung into her berth. Almost the first person off was Bob Cotter.

"Oh, Buddie." Dick's call reached the boy's ears as he came down the gangplank.

"Dick, Dick, old man! Gee, I'm glad to see you! Wait a minute till I get my luggage off." The boy rushed away.

In a moment he returned. "Say! See that fellow in the gray suit coming down the gangplank? That's Cecil Herrick."

Dick looked and saw a tall, spare figure in gray just disappearing in the crowd. He caught a glimpse of a clean-shaven, broad face that looked vaguely familiar. Where had he seen it? He could not quite place it.

"So that's Herrick, Buddie? He looks familiar to me. Maybe I'll remember him yet."

"He is going to Newport. Told me yesterday."

"Well, come on, kid. Got your bags? Tell your man to bring them along. My car is outside."

They were walking down the long dock, talking earnestly, when a hand fell on Bob's arm and a voice spoke in his ear.

"When are you going to Newport, Cotter?"

Bob turned. Cecil Herrick stood at his elbow.

"Oh, hello, Herrick. I'm going up tomorrow. Let me present Mr. Thomas, Mr. Herrick. Mr. Herrick beat me at Wimbledon, Dick."

Dick looked directly at the other. "How are you, Herrick? Have we met before?"

Herrick drew back and a flush of red ran up his face, suffusing it with a hot blush except for a white scar along his left eye, almost imperceptible when his face was its natural hue. Then the colour faded and he seemed at his ease.

"No, I think not, Mr. Thomas, unless I met you in England. I have not been away from home before."

Dick, however, merely nodded and let the

matter drop. Passing in his mind was an incident almost forgotten, but now recalled with startling clearness.

"Get a move on, Buddie. We're late. So long, Herrick. See you at Newport," and Dick hurried Bob outside to his car.

"Can I drive, Dick?" Bob asked.

"Sure; do anything you want, Buddie, but listen to me. I've got Herrick now, and I have him placed. He is a Bolshevik. You remember back in 1914, in the early stages of the war, I was in Paris. Well, one day at the big arsenal, I happened to be passing as an attempt was made to explode a bomb. Fortunately for me, the bomb did not go off, but the man who threw it ran directly into my arms. I gripped him as he was glancing back over his shoulder to look for pursuers. Naturally it startled him. He flushed up just as Herrick did on the dock and running along his left eye in the same position was a long white scar. He was running so fast he knocked me over, and got away, and so far as I know was never caught. However, I made inquiries about him and the prefect of police informed me the man had been identified as one of the most dangerous

agents of the German secret service. Now, he reappears as Cecil Herrick, an Englishman. What he has been doing in England, God only knows; mixed up in the I. W. W. I guess. But what he will do here you and I will try to know. Anyway, kid, our first pressing need is food. Slide along to the Vanderbilt and I'll blow you to lunch."

During luncheon Dick and Bob discussed the latter's trip to England and all he had done. Suddenly Bob looked up.

"Dick, what's all this talk about your being through with the game?"

"Guess it's true, Buddie. Anyway, everyone beats me now."

"Guess it isn't true. At least, I won't stand for it."

"Well, don't fight about it, Buddie. Come on! Let's pile in the car and shove off for Newport."

The Newport tournament had the usual list of entries and one new feature, Cecil Herrick, the English star. Herrick had burst on the tennis world that year like a comet. Unknown but a few months before, he was world-famous now by virtue of his winning the English Championships.

The draw found Herrick in one half with Murray, Jolson, and Kumagae, the famous Japanese star, while Bob Cotter, Dick Thomas, young Vincey, and Garland were the class in the other.

Dick Thomas and Bob Cotter engaged a double room at the hotel and next door was Cecil Herrick. Naturally they were thrown with him more or less intimately.

Dick Thomas had won the Newport tournament twice before and one more win would make the famous challenge bowl his property. It bore the names of many of the greatest players, past and present, and Dick wanted it more than any trophy in the world. It was a forlorn hope more than any real expectation, coupled with a desire to be with Buddie, that had brought Dick to Newport this year.

"One last try, Buddie," he had said. "If I win, it's my come-back and I will try seriously to get in shape for the nationals and I promise you I will play at least one more season of tennis. If I lose to some dub, I am through for good."

This was the best Bob could get out of Dick and it had to satisfy him.

The tournament progressed as expected.

Herrick was undoubtedly a great player; he defeated Kumagae in four sets in the second round and beat Murray in the third. Meanwhile, Dick Thomas had recovered some of his form and obtained revenge on young Vincey in a terrible five-set struggle. Meanwhile Bob Cotter defeated Garland decisively.

That night Bob and Dick attended a dance at the Casino tendered to the visiting players. The guest of honour for the evening was Cecil Herrick. The two friends, after dancing several numbers, prepared to leave early and were standing in a secluded corner of the hall by a window which opened into a small conservatory.

Suddenly Dick pinched Bob's arm. "Shut up," he whispered.

The voice of Cecil Herrick, carefully guarded, came to them through the window.

"Remember, Henry, come to my room at midnight to-morrow. Bring me the order without fail."

Dick silently nodded to Bob to move on. Once outside the Casino, he turned to the boy. "You heard."

"Yes. What shall we do?"

"I wonder what order he means? There

seems to be mighty little trouble he can cook up now around here. You know there is some talk of labour friction at the anti-aircraft plant across the bay, and Herrick may be mixed up in that. Well, kid, anyway, let's go home. Nothing to worry about right now. He won't leave until after the tournament."

The following day saw Billy Jolson, the national champion, go down to defeat before the attack of Cecil Herrick, the English star. The big challenge bowl seemed destined for Herrick, for only the winner of Cotter and Thomas stood between him and the cup. If Jolson failed, surely the winner of these two could not succeed. That night, following dinner, Bob Cotter excused himself to Dick Thomas on a plea of a bad headache, and went up to his room. He had a plan of his own to carry out. He locked his door and crawled out on the fire-escape, wriggling his way along to the window of Herrick's room. The interior was dark. Herrick was out.

The boy shoved the window. It gave to his touch. He pushed it up and crawled in. He had no very clear idea of why he wanted to see the interior of Herrick's room. He just felt he wanted to explore.

He switched on the light and rummaged through the papers. Nothing! He searched the desk and bureau, but no incriminating evidence turned up. Then he turned his attention to the doors of the room. There was one into the hall and one that connected with his own room.

Suddenly he caught his breath. The key to the latter was in the lock. Swiftly he was at the door. Another moment and the light was out, and he was back in his own room with the door between unlocked and the key in his pocket. He had made up his mind to visit Herrick that night.

He undressed and got into bed, turning the whole situation over in his mind. He had no weapon. He had a revolver in his bag but no cartridges. He was well aware he was dealing with a desperate man. Well, he would bluff it through. He arose and removed the revolver from his bag and placed it beneath his pillow.

Presently Dick came in. "Well, Buddie, how's the head?"

Bob looked up from the book he was reading.

"Better, thanks, Dick."

"Herrick just came in, alone. I wish I knew what to do about him."

"Oh, let him alone to-night. We can worry about that to-morrow. He may get the order, whatever it is, but he can't leave until after the finals; so why worry now? Go to bed, Dick. I want to get some sleep."

Dick undressed and crawled into bed.

"Good-night, Buddie," he yawned.

"Good-night."

Silence fell, to be broken shortly by a faint but unmistakable snore from Dick.

Softly Bob raised himself on one arm and gazed at his sleeping friend. Then he gently pulled his unloaded revolver from under his pillow and silently crawled out of bed.

He stole to the door between the rooms and, bending down, peered through the keyhole. Bob could see but little of the next room, but Herrick was seated at a table directly in front of him. Bob considered the situation. Had the other man come yet and did Herrick have the "order"? Should he risk it now? No, just a few minutes more. It was well he waited, for he saw Herrick straighten up and obviously speak to someone, although Bob could not catch the words. Herrick's

lips had formed the words "Come in." A moment more and a large, powerful man stepped into the room. He walked over to the table and placed a long envelope upon it. Bob gasped. There in front of him was the mysterious order.

The two men in the next room talked for several minutes without Bob's catching so much as a word. In fact, the only thing he heard was Dick's heavy breathing in the bed behind him. Then the big man turned and bade Herrick an obvious "Good-night" and disappeared through the door to the hall. Herrick remained seated at the table, the order still in the envelope on the table before him.

Bob grasped his revolver. It was now or never. He placed his hand on the knob of the door. Herrick, suddenly roused by a slight sound, looked up to face the business end of a revolver, held in the hand of a determined-looking boy!

"Be quiet. Put your hands on the table and don't stir." Bob felt he was doing well so far.

"What the hell do you think you're doing, Cotter?" Herrick was clearly puzzled.

"Shut up," said Bob fiercely. He walked over to the table and picked up the envelope. Herrick made a half-hearted move toward it and stopped. "I have the goods on you and your dirty Bolshevik tricks. Listen to me. The war is over, and I am not going to do anything foolish if you do what I say. I've the goods that if placed in the hands of the Department of Justice means federal prison or a firing squad for you. Now, I'll give you just twenty-four hours to clear out of the country. At the end of that time my evidence goes into the proper hands and if you are still in America, you go to jug. Get me?" Bob was fluent. The revolver waved to give proper emphasis.

Herrick opened his mouth to speak and then shut it again. Bob backed to the door between the rooms. The envelope was in his hands.

"Now, don't get fresh, Herrick, and don't start anything you can't finish. Remember, twenty-four hours." A moment more the door was shut and bolted. Bob turned to the light, the envelope in his hands, eager to explore his treasure. Dick stirred in the bed next to him. Bob had no desire to let

Dick into his secret then. He wanted to surprise him in the morning, and anyway old Dick needed his sleep.

Bob crawled into bed, chuckling over his success, and almost before he knew it Dick was shaking him and telling him to "For heaven's sake, get up." It was ten o'clock in the morning. Bob jumped up and grabbed Dick by the arm.

"Sit down, you old mutt. Sit down and listen to me. I had a big night." And Bob poured the story of his adventure into Dick's ears. He ended by pulling out the envelope. Dick grabbed it and tore it open. Inside was an official-looking letter addressed to the British Government. Hastily, Dick ran his eyes down the writing and then he turned to Bob.

"Well, kid, this is once you stuck your finger in a pie you had no business to touch. This is an official acceptance from one of our big aircraft gun plants to supply England with a certain large order. Perfectly harmless, and a thing that was announced last Tuesday in the paper. Now, what was Herrick doing with it? We'll let it go, anyway, for Herrick will show up to-day and I can return it and explain for you. I guess we've got

Herrick wrong, after all. Come on or we'll be late."

Bob and Dick hurried out to the club for their match. A large gallery was on hand, but Bob could not become interested. He was continually thinking what a perfect specimen of a supreme ass he was and wondering how he could ever set himself right in Herrick's eyes. He went on the court still wondering.

Dick was playing very badly at the start, and Bob, notwithstanding his preoccupation, pursued an even course through the first set, which he won 6–3. With the second set Dick improved. Bob found it harder to hold his advantage and finally forced himself to settle down to the match in real earnest. He pulled out the second set after a bitter struggle 10–8.

The third set found Dick in a flash of his old form. He was driving brilliantly and passing Bob as the youngster came into the net. Cotter was anxious to end the match and took unnecessary chances. The set went to Thomas at 6–4.

In the club house during the rest, Bob, rubbing off in his corner, heard a casual remark from two players in the next aisle.

"Young Cotter won't extend Herrick to-morrow. He's playing like an old fowl."

"Herrick to-morrow!" Suddenly panic seized Bob. He had to play Herrick, the man he had held up at a pistol's point the night before under the mistaken idea he was a Bolshevik spy and relieved of certain innocent papers to the British Government. He was to play the man to whom he had made a complete fool of himself. He felt weak at the idea.

"Herrick, to-morrow."

It rang in his ears as he went out on the court. Dick was awaiting him.

Bob's game lapsed with the beginning of the fourth set. He missed shot after shot. He was so bad that Dick once asked him if he felt ill. Bob shook his head negatively. "Herrick, to-morrow." It cried aloud in his brain. The fourth set was Dick's set, 6–1.

Dick was puzzled. Clearly something had gone wrong with Buddie. If the boy did not improve at once he would not stand a chance against Herrick. The great Newport bowl could not be won by a foreigner. Dick felt a personal grievance at the thought.

No, if Buddie couldn't stop Herrick, he, Dick, could and would.

He made up his mind to produce his best at any cost. He would need it against Herrick, if he won to-day.

The match progressed.

Still Bob could not shake off the feeling of lassitude that had gripped him. The first four games went to Dick in an avalanche of errors from Bob's racquet. At this point he roused himself for a game but carelessly threw away the next.

Thomas was playing magnificent tennis.

"5–1, Thomas leads fifth set."

"Herrick—to-morrow," still sounded in Bob's ears.

Suddenly he realized that unless he pulled out at once, there would be no "Herrick, to-morrow" for him. He woke and plunged into the hopeless struggle with wild keenness.

Three games he rushed through in a terrific attack that even Dick, with all his skill, could not stop. It seemed for a moment that Bob would pull out.

Dick was facing a serious problem. He hated to beat Buddie, yet the fear that the youngster would fail against Herrick still

haunted him. Something had upset the boy. It could only have been the knowledge that he would face the man he had held up.

Dick felt the old-time desire to win coming back. He knew he could defeat Herrick and he doubted Bob's ability to win.

Dick stepped to the service line.

Crash! A screaming service ace, 15–love.

Bob met the next delivery with a beautiful drive to the side line as Dick came in, but the veteran sprang like a cat and laid the fall on the far line for a perfect placement volley.

30–love.

Dick netted his next volley but match point came up when Bob drove out.

Thomas was hitting in all his old form. A long rally found both players striving for the net position. Bob finally drove deep to Dick's backhand corner. The former champion met the ball with that old famous sweep and shot it by the waiting youngster.

"Game. Set. Match! Thomas wins in 5 sets."

As the men shook hands, Bob looked Dick right in the eyes.

"Herrick—to-morrow," he said. "Go to it for me."

As the friends dressed, Dick plied Bob with questions as to the cause of his collapse, but the boy only laughed and evaded the answer.

"They said you were through, Dick. You'll show them to-morrow against Herrick that you've come back. Sorry I made a fool of myself to him but I guess I can explain. Anyway, smear him for me, Dick, will you?"

Bob blamed only himself and knew accurately the cause of his defeat. After all, it didn't matter so much since it was Dick Thomas who had smeared him. Well, anyway, old Dick would get a crack at Herrick in the finals and Bob knew Dick would make a game scrap.

Bob, coming out of the club house, heard the referee turn to another official and ask: "Where's Herrick? I haven't seen him all day. I just defaulted him in the doubles." Bob started and rushed back to tell Dick.

"Say, Dick, Herrick's defaulted in the doubles. Maybe he skipped, after all, on the strength of my bluff."

"Not a chance, kid. He has probably gone to the company to tell them about their letter and give the head men a good laugh at your expense."

Bob and Dick returned to the hotel. Dick asked for Herrick but was informed at the office that Herrick was out.

"He has not gone for good?" Dick inquired.

"Oh, no, he still has his room; and his trunk is there although he took a bag away with him. He said he would be back to-night."

Dick went up to his room. Bob was already there, idly sprawling upon the bed. Dick sat down by the window, and pulling out the letter Bob had so cleverly removed from Herrick, placed it before him and reread it. He drew from his pocket a pencil and carelessly started scribbling on the letter.

The letter irritated him. It was so innocent on its face and yet, why had Herrick disappeared? Dick placed his cigarette, still lighted, on an ash-tray on the desk and turned to Buddie. As he did so the letter slipped down over the cigarette. "I can't make anything out of it, kid. You must have misunderstood about Herrick's leaving. He knows the finals are to-morrow. He wouldn't leave to-night and come back to-morrow. He must be off visiting friends."

While Dick was speaking Bob came up behind him.

Suddenly, the boy uttered a startled exclamation and grabbed Dick by the shoulder.

"Gee! Dick! Look! See what you've done! You've solved the secret!"

"Buddie, for heaven's sake, what are you blabbing about? Have you gone clean off your nut?"

"Dick, you idiot! Look! Look at the letter!"

Dick gazed at the sheet of paper as it lay on the table in front of him. Just over the point where the heat from his cigarette butt fell on the paper, between the typed lines of the seemingly inoffensive epistle, words were forming.

Dick started to his feet, grabbing the letter.

"Quick! Buddie, a match! See the stunt! It's invisible ink. Heat brings it out."

"Carefully holding the paper well above the flame of the lighted match, Dick allowed the hot air to strike all portions of the surface. Words, intelligible and readable, appeared from nowhere between the lines.

Dick eagerly followed them. "You're right, Buddie. Herrick is a spy and I guess he's skipped. Listen to this:

"Recommend sending best operatives at once. Labour men deceived. Revolution and strikes in two months. Can cripple the whole aircraft plant if assistance is sent now. Jobs open for our men."

Yes, Herrick was gone and Dick knew now he would not return. There was quick action needed at once.

"See you later, Buddie," he called over his shoulder as he tore out the door.

Ten minutes later he was closeted with the chief of police at Newport and that worthy had the Federal Secret Service Headquarters in New York on the 'phone in ten more. Dick explained the situation, and the wheels of that great organization commenced turning.

The following morning Dick rose early and hurried down to the police station. Nothing official could be extracted. The New York papers arrived. Dick hastily bore them to his room. Finally, far down in one corner, he found something that interested him.

"Buddie," he called. Bob came over and stood behind him and the two read:

BOLSHEVIST MASTER SPY CAUGHT

Gustave Mahler, one of the most dangerous Bolshevist secret agents, was apprehended by U. S. Federal

officers as he was stepping aboard the liner *Aquitania.* Mahler, who is a German closely identified with the I. W. W. and who has been living here as Cecil Herrick, will be detained, pending investigation of certain charges.

Dick looked up at Bob. "Well played, Buddie," he said. "I guess this is my comeback, after all.

On Sunday the sporting pages of the papers held long accounts of the default of Cecil Herrick to Richard William Thomas due to unforeseen business complications calling the former suddenly away from Newport. The default gave Thomas the Newport bowl.

The same day Dick Thomas mailed his entry to the National Singles Championship. He had come back.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"MAY I see your paper a minute?" Young Frank Russell leaned eagerly toward the man in the next Pullman chair to him in the Merchant's Express on its way from Boston to New York one afternoon in late August, 1916.

The man looked up.

"Yes, surely!" and handed it over. Quickly, the youngster turned the pages until he found the sports and buried his nose in a column of news. The man's voice broke in on him.

"What's all the excitement, kid?"

"The draw for the National Tennis Championship is announced."

The man glanced keenly at Frank with a flicker of added interest in his brown eyes.

"Going to see it?"

"Sure. You see, this is my first time. I won the sectional junior this year from Boston. I live in Lynn and don't get much chance to play good tennis, but I follow it a

lot." Frank was warming to his subject as he realized he had a sympathetic listener. He allowed his always fertile imagination full sway. He romanced to his new acquaintance out of the pure desires he had never fulfilled.

"Say"—Frank edged forward on his seat—"do you know Dick Thomas of Boston, the national champion, you know?"

The man smiled suddenly and started to speak, but Frank hurried on.

"He's a great guy. Gee! That fellow can play some tennis!"

The other seemed amused but hardly enthusiastic.

"He is all right, but no world beater, kid."

Frank suddenly saw red. Who was this guy, anyway, to run down Dick Thomas? Frank decided the time for strong words was at hand. Forgotten was the other's kindness.

"Well, youngster, I suppose you know Thomas?" The man sounded patronizing and rather sceptical. Frank gulped and plunged in regardless.

"I guess you don't know Dick as well as I do or you wouldn't talk that way. Why, gee! he's got the greatest backhand in the world! Ever seen him play?"

The man grunted assent. He seemed choking over amusement he was trying to hide. It irritated Frank so that he lost all sense of proportion.

"I guess you don't play much tennis," he said. "Anyway, Dick makes his backhand off the rising bounce with a full swing and he can hit either side just as he wants. He's some guy. Maybe if you had had the chance to see him play and know him the way I have, you would be quite good some day, too."

Frank, although he had never seen Thomas, had an excellent if somewhat incorrect picture of his idol in action. He'd show this mutt what Dick Thomas was like.

"Look here." Frank grew very argumentative. "Do you play tennis?"

"Yes, some."

"Going to play the National?"

"I'm drawn in it."

"Well, I'll just bet you Thomas wins the tournament."

"Nothing doing, boy. I don't bet on tennis matches."

"Aw. Go on! Back up your statements if you think Dick Thomas is no good."

"No, I won't bet with you, but I tell you

what I'll do. If Thomas wins the tournament I'll take you to dinner anywhere you want that night. Give me your word you'll go."

"Sure I'll go and you'll owe me the dinner."

"All right. Meet you in the club house after the match if Thomas wins."

"Right. Dick has an easy draw. Only a couple of players any good in his half and Billy Jolson and Red 'Mac' in the other."

"Yes, so I saw." The man sat back in his chair and picked up his book. Frank took the hint and again fell to reading the tennis news.

Frank Russell was really a fine young tennis player. He was only sixteen and had never seen any big tennis matches or famous players. The tennis he had picked up was natural. Frank had always wanted to know some of the big players, and most of all, his hero, Dick Thomas, the national champion. He had never seen Dick but he knew a boy who knew him and from his friend's stories and newspaper accounts of Dick's matches and the never-too-accurate press pictures, he had built up his own idea of Dick. It was mainly a miraculous tennis player largely enveloped

in a big white sweater with a great red H. Frank had no idea what Dick Thomas really looked like.

As the Merchant's Limited pulled into Grand Central Frank's friend in the next chair rose and turned to him.

"Where are you staying, kid?"

"Vanderbilt Hotel. All the tennis crowd stay there, you know."

"So am I. Come along with me and I'll see you safely landed. Know New York at all?"

"No, but I'm joining some friends here."

"All right. Come on."

During the flurry of greeting his friends at the Vanderbilt Frank lost track of his new acquaintance. As he registered he looked over the other names. There was "Richard Thomas, Boston," written only a few names above his own, followed by several meaningless ones that doubtless contained that of his travelling companion.

Frank thrilled. He had come down on the same train with Dick Thomas and he hadn't seen him. "Idiot!" he told himself fiercely.

That night he recounted at great length to his friends the story of the poor fish who

didn't know enough tennis to know Dick Thomas was the greatest player in the world and was sure to win the tournament, yet was rash enough to play himself and even to stake a dinner against Dick.

"And oh, boy," Frank finished, "how I will enjoy that dinner!"

Next morning dawned clear and bright and noon found Frank and his young friend Bobby Martin, a keen tennis enthusiast, the boy who knew Dick Thomas, on their way to Forest Hills.

"Sure you didn't see Dick on the train?" asked Bobby for about the hundredth time. "You and he came through the door almost together."

"You mutt, why didn't you point him out to me! I was so fussed meeting your father and mother that I didn't see anything, even the fella I came in with."

"Dick was in a hurry and didn't see me and I just forgot."

"Dumb-bell," muttered Frank.

Dick Thomas, as national champion, was scheduled to play the feature match of the day at 3:30 on the championship court.

Bob and Frank wandered around the courts

during the early matches, looking over the players, who, until now, had been but a sort of dream in Frank's young life, with that superior blasé air that was ruined at times in Frank by his feelings escaping and forcing him to show the enthusiasm he really felt.

About ten minutes to three Frank, finding himself separated from Bobby in the crowd, walked over to the club house. A train had just come in from New York and the whole crowd of players for the 3:30 matches came trooping in. Frank saw his friend of the train. The man recognized him and waved over the heads of the crowd.

Frank heard an awed voice of a small junior behind him: "Gee, there's Dick Thomas!"

"Where?" asked another youngster standing near.

"Aw, he's gone long ago," replied the first.

Frank moved off and finally climbed to his seat in the grandstand where he found Bobby awaiting him.

"Say, Frank, I saw Dick when he was coming in, for just a minute. I told him where we were sitting and he is going to wave to me before they start. Gee, there they come!"

Two players walked out on the court. Frank saw a figure vaguely familiar yet decidedly like his ideal, wearing a big white sweater with a great red H.

"That's Dick, there with the big H," whispered Bobby.

Suddenly the Champion looked up in the direction of the two boys, caught Bob's eye and waved. A flood of horror and dismay overwhelmed Frank and he sank in his seat.

Dick Thomas was his friend of the train!

Frank sat still, not daring to move for fear Bobby would ask him what was the matter. "Fool! Idiot!" he muttered. Why hadn't he recognized Thomas? But why, oh, why, had he said he knew him? How could he ever meet Dick! He wouldn't dare. Yet he had given his word to meet Dick for dinner if Dick won the championship. Now he understood why Thomas had made him promise. Well, he'd see it through since he'd given his word. He sat stunned and before he came to, really to grasp his surroundings, the match was over.

"Come on," he heard Bobby say. "Come on and meet Dick."

"No!" Frank almost shouted. "No, not

now—some other time. I don't feel very well and I'm going in."

Slowly the week went on. The junior events developed as expected; Frank won his first match but was beaten in a close struggle by young Miles Burton of Philadelphia in the second round.

All the week Frank was ever on his guard to escape meeting Dick Thomas. Several times in the Vanderbilt Dick had seemed on the point of speaking to him, but each time Frank openly fled.

One evening Dick stopped at the table where Mr. and Mrs. Martin and the boys were dining, to enquire for something.

Bobby rose to the occasion: "Mr. Thomas, I want you to know my friend, Frank Russell."

Dick put out his hand. Not by a sign did he give away the fact he knew Frank. Gee, he was a good sport, Frank concluded.

"Glad to know you, Frank. How did the junior match go?"

Frank choked and finally muttered: "Got licked!"

However, the incident passed safely.

Saturday, the day of the semi-finals, Frank was standing with Bobby on the porch of the

club house watching the struggle between Billy Jolson and Mac. Jolson was leading, but it was a close battle. Dick Thomas was not playing until late.

"Hello, Bob! Hello, Frank!" Dick's voice sounded behind them. With one hopeless, terrified look, Frank, without a word, fled from the porch. He simply could not stop his legs from running.

Jolson pulled out his match by the skin of his teeth and Dick Thomas came through easily, so the two old rivals were to meet in the finals on Monday.

All day Sunday Frank was haunted by a fear of meeting Dick. It was becoming an obsession with him, yet he could think of no logical expression of his views or explanation of his actions. Dick was away, down on Long Island over Sunday, and Frank need not have worried, but the strain was getting on Frank's nerves so much that by night he had decided he hoped Dick got smeared. He told himself this about every five minutes to insure against forgetting it.

More than 15,000 people were crowded round the championship court when Billy Jolson and Dick Thomas took their places to

warm up. Bobby and Frank sat in the front row directly behind the court. Dick looked up and saw them. He smiled and waved and Bobby waved back. Frank grew white.

"Hope he gets smeared," he muttered.

"Linesmen ready! Play!"

Eddie Condon, dean of umpires, called the final round of the National Championship officially open.

Thomas was serving and amid a breathless hush he served the first ball. The little, sandy-haired Californian, set for the battle of his life, met the Bostonian's delivery and crashed a terrific drive down the line for the first point. From that moment thrill followed thrill. Such tennis had never been seen before. Both men were like tigers in the ferocity of their attack. The impossible happened so regularly that it seemed almost commonplace. Jolson broke through for the first set at 7–5 only to have Thomas reverse the verdict in the second at 6–3. Then came the startling moment. For six games Jolson lifted his play to a point never known in tennis annals. Thomas's greatest shots were met and returned by better ones. The set was Jolson's at 6–0.

Jolson and Thomas left the court together. To all appearances Dick was a beaten man. Such tennis as Jolson played in that third set could not be beaten. Thomas had not slumped; he had been overwhelmed by superior ball.

Frank sat on the stand, fierce satisfaction in his soul. Dick was going to get licked and Frank was very happy about it. Yet somehow he didn't feel as happy as he decided he should. After all, Dick was a good sport and it wasn't his fault if Frank had made a fool of himself to him. Still, Frank simply could not face that night if Dick won. No, he hoped Dick got just what was coming to him.

The players reappeared. Dick looked fresh and confident. Billy Jolson seemed equally confident but looked a little drawn around the eyes.

That super-effort had taken its toll. Even his determination could not force a body to such a pace and not feel the effects.

The first four games were bitterly fought and divided in the fourth set. Then Thomas broke through and drew away to 4–2 on his own service. Jolson made another effort

at this point, but when Thomas again broke his delivery Jolson chucked the next game and the set.

The score was tied at two sets all.

During Dick's brilliant fight the old worship was struggling with the new fear in Frank's heart. Slowly it triumphed, and at the close of the set Frank was howling with joy.

"He must win, Bobby. Dick must win." Frank grew coherent for the first time during the set.

Jolson opened service from the boys' end of the court in the fifth set. Frank noticed an air of certainty in Billy's manner. He had recovered his breath and with it his confidence. Dick was badly blown from his work at the close of the fourth set. Both men were tired.

Jolson took the first game easily. Dick, wearied more than he cared to show, blew his next delivery and Frank grew sick at heart as Jolson won the third game for 3–0.

Thomas walked back to pick up a towel directly below Frank. The boy leaned forward, his soul in his eyes.

"I want my dinner, Dick," he said distinctly.

Dick looked up and suddenly grinned as he mopped his face. "Righto, kid," he grunted.

The players changed courts and suddenly Dick came to life. Game by game he fought back. He struck a spurt that paralleled that wonderful third set of Jolson's. No matter how hard the return, Thomas met with a cleaner reply.

It seemed but a moment before the score was tied at 3 all. Bravely Jolson fought on, but Thomas was not to be denied. He crashed through Jolson's service for 4–3, won his own for 5–3.

Frank sat silent, unable to express his joy. He was going to see this thing right through to the bitter finish.

The final game was short. Four blinding drives that flashed by Jolson as he came in, and the championship was safe to Dick Thomas for another year.

Bobby turned to Frank.

"Gee, what a match. But Dick's some player, I'll say he is. Come on, let's hurry home."

"Sorry I can't go with you but I'm having dinner with Dick," he said.

Half an hour later, a silent, very nervous boy waited on the club-house porch.

"Hello, Frank!"

The boy turned.

"Congratulations, Mr. Thomas!" he said huskily. "I'm awfully glad."

"Well, where shall we eat? It's your party." This was Dick's first reference to the train episode.

Frank reddened and then went white. He looked Dick straight in the eyes.

"Biltmore Cascades," he announced. He intended to see this through all right if it took his last bit of self-respect.

"Righto! Come on. Here's my car out this way."

Dick talked cheerfully all the way into town. He talked about the tournament, about the juniors, about Bobby, which latter did not particularly please Frank. Dick seemed to know Bobby a little too well. Frank succeeded in getting a few words out at times, but very few.

At the Biltmore Dick secured a table with little trouble. He was the centre of all eyes. His marvellous victory that afternoon had caused widespread interest. Frank enjoyed

the reflected glory. Dick turned the question of ordering dinner over to Frank. The boy took a firm grip of his nerves and sailed in. He ordered a large, expensive, and somewhat conglomerated mass of food. Dick merely O. K.'d it with a nod to the waiter.

Silence reigned until the waiter placed melon and orangeade before them. Then Frank looked up. He took a long breath.

"Mr. Thomas, I'm sorry I made such a fool of myself on the train coming down."

Dick smiled at him and lifted his glass of orangeade.

"You called me 'Dick' then, and 'Dick' when you told me to-day you wanted this dinner. Why not call me Dick now?"

Frank caught his breath and looked straight at the man.

"Dick," he said slowly, "you're a darned good sport!"

"No, I'm not, kid. It's just part of tennis to play the game fair."

TWO UP, LUCK, AND THREE TO PLAY

NOW, you goopher, listen to me. You're wrong. In fact, you're always wrong, but this time more so than ever. Luck can never decide a tennis championship. Class will tell every time; so quit spreading this luck bunk so thick. Luck is a goopher, too."

Frank Russell leaned back in the window seat in his room in one of the big Yale dormitories and grinned irritatingly at his chum and room mate, Ray Mitchell.

Frank was twenty-one. He was a junior in Yale and present holder of the intercollegiate tennis title, to say nothing of being somewhat of a power in the little college world of the New Haven university. His only dangerous rival in intercollegiate tennis was his best friend, Ray Mitchell. Frank was a slender, dark, aristocratic-looking youngster from that town of boots and shoes, Lynn, Massachusetts. He had always loved tennis,

and his present success was due to a friendship that had sprung up under peculiar circumstances with Dick Thomas, the former national champion. Dick had given Frank much good advice, and although Frank had never received the actual coaching Dick had lavished on his protégé, Bob Cotter, he had profited by the little he received.

Ray Mitchell was a big, stocky, powerful lad from Chicago, whose breezy personality had appealed greatly to Frank on their first meeting in freshman year. Ray had felt the charm of Frank's easy-going, slangy, quiet manner and the two became inseparable.

Ray was a great believer in the god of luck, and was forever singing aloud his praises and telling everyone how luck decided many a question. Frank had stood a lot of this truck, as he termed it, and at times broke out in open rebellion. Ray had been preaching luck for about an hour, when Frank finally brought the question around to tennis by his open defiance of luck.

Ray watched the grin spread over the face of his friend and suddenly picked up the nearest pillow and hurled it at him with the remark, "Wait, scoffer. Luck will get you

for that remark some day, and I'll remind you of it."

Days and weeks passed with no startling exhibition of luck's desire for revenge on Frank.

The two boys practised tennis together through the spring and made the tour with the tennis team, winning all their matches fairly easily. Frank had one close call at the University of Pennsylvania, when young Carl Bishop, the rising young left-hander, led him at one set and 4–2; but as Frank afterward reminded Ray in the privacy of their own room, when Ray was kidding him for nearly getting beaten, "Class will tell."

The boys successfully passed through the ordeal of final exams and journeyed together to Philadelphia for the annual intercollegiate Tennis Championship at Merion Cricket Club.

All the way down in the train Ray talked luck until Frank grew desperate.

"Oh, you and your luck and your superstition! Old man luck will be so fed up having you blame him for everything you either win or lose, he'll get you good and proper some day. Watch your step, boy. Watch your step."

Ray merely laughed.

"Wait, you'll see whom luck tricks."

The draw for the tournament was posted when the boys arrived at the club. They looked it over together. It was very uneven.

"Well, Frank," Ray slapped the other on the back. "Look it over. You've Turaine of Harvard in the first round. Tabor of Princeton in the second, and your nemesis, Bishop of Penn, in the third. There's nobody on the other half with me. What about the old god, Luck? One up to him and the tournament to play."

Frank grunted.

"Huh. Wait and see! Class will tell, Ray, class will tell!"

The boys hurried in and dressed rapidly. Already a number of matches were under way, and Mr. A. L. Hoskins, the famous referee and for years a leading official of the United States Lawn Tennis Association, who always officiated at the intercollegiate tournament, was anxiously paging them.

Frank took the court against Turaine of Harvard. Turaine was good, but Frank did not consider him really dangerous. The first set seemed to justify his idea. Frank won

it decisively at 6–2. The second set was a replica of the first to 5–2, Russell leading, when Frank, running fast for a side-line drive, slipped and fell heavily, skinning the knuckles of his right hand. It bothered him. He grew careless and lost interest in the match. Before he realized it Turaine had pulled out the set and won it 7–5.

Frank was annoyed. His hand hurt him, and he did not want to play a third set. Turaine was shooting fine ball now and was full of confidence.

As Frank started the third set, Ray walked behind the court from the one on which he had been playing.

"How about it, Ray?"

"Oh, I won 6–2, 6–3. By the way, one set for luck on you, Frank!"

That was too much. Frank grew furious. That was really rubbing it in a little too far. Ray was a hell of a fellow, anyway.

Frank gritted his teeth and served. A double fault! Turaine by steady patball won the game. In fact, he not only won that game, but two more in a row. Meanwhile, Frank was growing cooler and his hand hurt him less. He settled down to work.

He stemmed the tide just in time. His game came up to his best. Once there, the result was never again in doubt. Russell took six games in a row for the set and match.

Frank was dressing when Ray came in.

"Hello, you big stiff. Luck almost put one over on you to-day. Gosh, you've got big feet. You're awfully clumsy."

Frank grinned.

"Well, as maybe you noticed, class told in the end."

Ray snorted and went out. All evening the two boys scrapped over the match and the relative merits of class and luck.

The second day, Tuesday, Frank met Tabor of Princeton. Tabor was a very brilliant, erratic youngster, a sophomore, who had won the national junior championship some years before. Frank knew he was a dangerous opponent, but also regarded him as apt to blow up.

Again Frank got away to a big lead. Ray, who had beaten his second victim easily, sat on the side lines and watched the match. Frank took the first set at 6–3 and led 4–0 in the next. He had 40–30 for the 5–0 lead and laid a ball directly on the line.

"Out," cried the linesman, who up to then had been enjoying an afternoon nap on the line and suddenly realized he should speak once in a while. His accuracy or inaccuracy did not trouble him.

The next point Frank foolishly threw away, while wondering from what institution for the blind and feeble-minded the linesman had escaped. A moment more and the game was gone on Tabor's fine drive.

Tabor won the next game on his own service with ease. The seventh game was hard fought. Both men had the advantage several times. At last Tabor again gained it. Russell drove down the side line and chalk rose in the air.

"Out," cried another well-meaning, but for the moment incompetent, incumbent of the linesman's chair.

"Game. Tabor. 4–3. Russell leads."

"Huh, who said luck didn't swing matches!" cried Ray to his neighbour.

Frank heard and turning, laughed at him. It was just what Frank needed to steady his nerves. He'd show Ray about class. He awaited Tabor's service with confidence. Smash! Frank drove an ace down the side

line off the delivery. Crash! He hit a perfect cross-court drive that Tabor merely looked after.

And so it went. The end was sharp and sudden.

"Russell wins, 6–3, 6–3."

Ray omitted the usual comments about luck, but Frank took special delight in quoting Ray's remarks about "Who said luck didn't swing matches?" Diplomatic relations threatened to grow strained.

The following day there were no singles matches. The unexpected happened when Frank and Ray met decisive defeat at the hands of the University of Pennsylvania pair, Carl Bishop and Andrew Morton.

That night, after a long period of careful avoidance of any mention of the match, Frank looked up at Ray and asked gently, "Well, do you call that luck, to-day?"

"No, dear boy, oh, no. Remember always, class will tell, you know. Class will tell."

Frank groaned and went to bed.

The following day both luck and class took a well-earned rest.

Nothing unusual happened that even Ray could blame on luck. It was only by dint of a

long, furious battle that went to 10–8 in the final set that Frank Russell succeeded in defeating Carl Bishop of Penn. Ray had his own struggles with Kier Mead of Cornell but finally pulled out the match.

This brought the two friends together in the finals the next day, and great was the jollying between them.

"Well, goopher," Ray cried at Frank that evening as the latter was shaving. "Don't cut your throat from fright. Remember, luck may relent yet. Luck is your only chance, boy, for if class tells, you know I'll trim you good and proper."

Frank appeared at the door with lather all over his face and a sloppy shaving brush in one hand.

"Class will tell you in about two minutes that you're all wrapped up in shaving soap if you don't shut up, and all the luck in the world won't save you any more now than it will to-morrow."

So through the evening the boys kidded each other about their relative merits and mottoes.

The following day produced good weather and a big crowd for the finals. Mr. A. L.

Hoskins, with dignity and a hoarse voice, mounted the umpire's chair.

"Play!" The stentorian tones rumbled over the court and a large portion of the immediate vicinity.

Frank and Ray were evenly matched. Far more so than Frank, who up to this year had had a slight edge, would admit even to himself.

Game after game the battle raged with no material advantage to either. Service held sway to 10–all with Ray serving the odd game. He won it for 10–11. Frank served and Ray netted. Frank missed a volley for 15 all. Ray won a clean point with a beautiful drive, cross court, as Frank came in behind his service. Frank returned the compliment with a service ace.

"30 all."

Frank served. Ray drove and Frank volleyed deep to Ray's backhand. Ray, running fast, made a glorious sweeping drive straight down the line that beat Frank by a foot.

"Good shot, Ray," called his chum.

"30–40," rolled forth Mr. Hoskins' sombre tones.

Set point!

Frank served a terrific smashing delivery down the centre line. Ray sprawled out after it and hooked it with the end of his racquet. The ball rose weakly in the air. Frank tore in and was awaiting it at the net. The ball hit the top of the tape, clung a moment—and rolling over, fell dead on Frank's side.

"Game. Set. Mitchell, 12–10."

Ray and Frank stood by the umpire's stand wiping their streaming faces. Mr. Hoskins looked down at them.

"Well, a bad break of luck, boys," he said.

Ray grinned and looked at Frank.

"One up to luck," he muttered. Frank did not appear to hear.

The second set was another tight struggle. Service held sway to 5 all. Ray, still serving the 'vantage game, pulled out of a 0–40 hole by aid of a lucky net-cord shot, a fine smash, and a missed volley by Frank. He took the game for 5–6.

Frank reached 40–30 on his own delivery and followed his service to the net.

Ray drove and closed in. Frank volleyed directly at Ray's face. Mitchell put up his racquet to shield his eyes. The ball hit the throat of the frame and fell back on Russell's

side of the net at a sharp angle. Frank lunged for it but netted his return.

"Deuce!"

Ray's perfect line drive beat Frank by inches.

"Advantage, Mitchell."

Again set point. Frank served.

"One fault."

He served again, a high, twisting delivery. It was short. The ball tipped the net and swung outward and over the net. It fell just out the side line.

"Out," cried the linesman.

"Game and second set, Mitchell. 7–5."

"Two up, luck," muttered Ray.

Frank heard it and smiled at his friend.

"Two up, luck, and three to play," he answered.

However, it hardly seemed like "three to play" when Ray broke Frank's delivery in the sixth game and led at 4–2. He maintained his lead by swapping services to 5–3.

The boys divided the first four points. 30 all.

Then Ray slipped a service ace down the centre line.

"40–30."

Match point.

Smash, a terrific service.

Frank in desperation lobbed it high over Ray's head.

Crash!

Twang!

The ball shot down suddenly into the net.

Ray stood gazing at his pet racquet, three strings gone in the centre. His luck had turned on him.

"Deuce."

Ray walked over and picked up another frame. It was almost the same, but it just wasn't his pet bat.

He served. A fault.

Again the delivery. Another fault. Verily the god of luck was fickle.

"Advantage, Russell."

Once more Ray served, but sensing the perturbation of Mitchell, Frank met the service on the rise and pounded it back at Ray's feet. Mitchell's volley did not reach the net.

"Game. Russell. 4–5. Mitchell leads."

A moment more and it was 5 all. Russell again broke Mitchell's delivery, aided by a fluky net cord.

"6–5. Russell leads."

The next game Frank served with the fe-

rocity of a tiger. Two terrific service aces and a netted drive by Ray brought 40–0.

The set was Frank's when he laid a perfect volley on the line.

"Game. Set. Russell! Two sets to one. Mitchell leads."

Then began an historic battle. Frank, gaining in confidence, played magnificently. Ray, struggling to maintain his advantage, obviously shaken by the break of luck on match point, fought stubbornly. However, Frank was not to be denied. Now, at last, Luck took his fingers out of the match and skill alone could prevail.

Ray had proved superior in the early stages, but Frank had a slight advantage from the opening of the fourth set. It was only after two and a half hours of heart-rending tennis that at last Mr. Hoskins announced: "Game. Set. Match. Russell, 10–12, 5–7, 7–5, 6–4, 8–6."

The two chums shook hands heartily.

"Well played, Ray. Thought you had me. If you'd beaten me to-day, you would have beaten the best I have in me."

"Not a chance, Frank, you're too good for me."

They started off the court together. Suddenly Ray looked up and grinned sheepishly.

"Now, if luck hadn't stepped in, in the third set! Well, I always told you luck decided tennis tournaments."

Frank hooted.

"You goopher. Why in five sets, class always tells, just as it did to-day."

So on they went to dress together, play together, fight together, and argue together, just as they had done hundreds of times in the past and will do hundreds of times in the future, let us trust.

THE HOLE IN THE PINCH

GRADUATION at Yale was over. The beautiful June evening made the historic campus in the quaint old town of New Haven glow with a light that added new splendour to its charm.

Frank Russell and his chum and room-mate, Ray Mitchell, perched on the fence along the side of the green campus and considered the immediate future. The future, in all its length, did not particularly worry them. Each had his own career planned.

Frank, who came from Lynn, Massachusetts, repudiated the boots and shoes that had piled up the great wealth of his father, and decided on law as his career. Next year would find him in Harvard Law School, a thing which at the moment rather aggravated the well-known streak of Yale bulldog in him.

Ray Mitchell hailed from Chicago, and after one more summer of tennis he planned to join his father in the big mercantile business es-

tablished, owned, and managed by the elder Mitchell.

Both boys were settled as to their plans for next winter and, in their own minds, all the rest of their lives. It was this summer of 1921 that weighed heavily on them at the moment and particularly the Intercollegiate Tennis Championship to be played the next week at Merion Cricket Club, Philadelphia. For the past two years Frank Russell had held the singles championship and Ray Mitchell, his best friend, had been runner-up. In fact, in 1920, Ray, who was a great believer in luck deciding matches, had had Frank match point down, only to break a racquet on the vital smash and thereafter Frank held the whip hand to the end. Now, however, the closed corporation on the title for Yale was seriously threatened by something more dangerous than the Sherman Anti-Trust Act. A new star had entered the arena.

It was this condition the two friends were discussing.

"Well, you big stiff," announced Ray finally after much aimless banter, "remember, it's your last chance. Three times straight intercollegiate champion is some record. Now

don't slip up next week. Even though luck decides, at times, class will tell; so go to it."

"Shut up, Ray, you idiot, about luck and class. Anyway, I'd rather lose a good match and meet a good sportsman in a sporting way than hold my old title another year. I've often wondered whether if it came to a question of keeping my title through a point that I knew was illegal but which no one had seen but me, or telling of it and losing, I'd be sportsman enough to tell it. I always say to myself I would, but I wonder what I'd do in the pinch. As far as this year goes, there are a couple of men I must look out for. What about Carl Bishop of Penn and you, you mutt?"

"Well, of course I'll beat you," grinned Ray, "but that is right and proper and doesn't matter; but if you let Bishop trim you again the way he did in Philadelphia in the team match this spring, a sharp and sudden death awaits you from me."

"Thanks, goopher. Only, look out that this same Bishop doesn't ex-communicate you from the tournament first. Kidding aside, that lad is good. Darned good. Believe

me, I know," and Frank gazed off into the distance with a sad air.

"Lord," Ray laughed, "you look like a pup with his tail between his legs barking at the moon." He raised his head and lugubriously howled at the sky.

"Wow-wow-wow."

"You ass!" Frank complimented him. "Well, come on! It's time for food. Where shall we feed?"

And with this vital question at stake, with issue undecided, the two friends wandered off down the street.

Saturday found the boys en route to Philadelphia. A well-arranged stop-over in New York entailed a successful visit to the newest musical comedy and a bit of late supper.

The Philadelphia journey was taken up and brought to a satisfactory conclusion when Frank and Ray met Harold Tabor of Princeton, a New York boy, who was driving his Stutz car over to Philadelphia, and joined forces with him.

The entire entry list of tennis players from the various colleges was staying at the club. The draw was made Sunday night in the presence of nearly all concerned.

One side of the singles contained Russell, the champion; Mead, of Cornell, and young Morton of Penn. The other half held Tabor of Princeton, Duane of Harvard, Mitchell of Yale, and Bishop of Penn.

Monday proved to be a bright warm day, and Mr. Albert L. Hoskins, for years the successful referee of the intercollegiate tournament, started the matches promptly at two o'clock.

Unfortunately, Tabor and Bishop met in the first round, and this match was placed on the feature court. It was expected to prove a hard fight but it flivvered. Tabor blew up. Bishop, who had been playing phenomenal tennis all year, was at his best, and he simply crushed the Princetonian 6–2, 6–3. Meanwhile, all the other stars were winning easily.

The second day's play brought Russell against Mead of Cornell. Mead, with his aggressive, hard-hitting style, fought a fine match, but Frank proved too clever and Yale triumphed over Cornell 6–4, 8–6.

Mitchell decisively defeated Duane of Harvard in sequence sets while Bishop was winning easily from a boy from Dartmouth.

Goo-Dold-ope, the well-known baseball expert, held true until the semi-final round was reached. Here Frank Russell met Morton of Penn while Ray Mitchell played Carl Bishop.

The Russell-Morton match was played first but the champion was too strong. He clearly outclassed his wild, erratic opponent and hung up a 6–4, 6–1 score.

The Mitchell and Bishop meeting proved all that any one could ask in the way of thrills. Twice in the first set Ray Mitchell had Bishop set point only to be beaten by a clever pass or a vicious smash, and the score evened. Finally, Bishop broke through for the lead 8–7 and took the set 9–7.

Mitchell was aroused. He wanted this match because he wanted another crack at Frank. He opened up another bit of speed in the second set. It proved enough. The set was his at 6–3.

Unfortunately, Ray underestimated Carl Bishop's staying power. Ray was tired from his extra effort in the second set and eased up to get his breath. Bishop jumped at his chance and before Mitchell could put on steam again Bishop led at 3–0. It proved too big

a lead and Bishop, by holding his service, took the set and match 6–3.

Russell, the champion, thus met Carl Bishop, his conqueror of some weeks before, in the finals. The next day Frank was dressing for the match as Ray came hustling into the club house.

"Frank," Ray panted, "have you seen the paper?"

"No, what's the matter? Fire, earthquake, or what?"

"No, you idiot, but look at this!"

Ray spread the early edition of an evening paper in front of Frank and turned to the sporting page. A big headline splurged across the top:

INTERCOLLEGIATE TENNIS TITLE
SHOULD COME TO PHILADELPHIA

And in the subhead below:

CARL BISHOP PICKED BY EXPERTS TO
DEFEAT RUSSELL, THE TITLE HOLDER

Frank grunted. "Well, Ray, that won't change the result any. Remember, class will tell! If he is going to beat me that paper won't help him, and if I am to get him I'm sure that mess of rot wouldn't keep me from the job."

"Well, anyway, Frank, remember that all the Penn men are talking big, and you know what talks, so I am going to shut them up," and Ray rushed out.

Frank completed dressing and picked up his racquets.

"Ready, Bishop?" he called.

"Sure."

"Well, let's go!"

A yell from the crowd greeted their appearance.

The boys took the court and began to warm up. Frank looked for Ray but could not see him. Just as play was about to commence a snicker and then a cheer rippled over the crowd. Frank followed the craning necks. Toward the court walked Ray. In tow, somewhat protesting, was a large nondescript bulldog almost smothered in a bow of the brightest blue ribbon Frank had ever seen. Ray and the bulldog proceeded majestically to a spot on the side line where both seated themselves.

Ray was taking no chances with luck and had brought the mascot. The dog at once went to sleep.

"Play." The funereal official voice of Mr.

Hoskins, so unlike his usual genial tones, rolled over the club grounds.

Frank opened service. Bishop beat him with a passing shot off his first delivery. It was the keynote to the match. Both boys were out for every point. Each took chances and often got away with them. Frank broke Bishop's service for a 4–2 lead but dropped his own. Bishop evened at 4 all. The games were divided to 7 all, when Bishop again broke through by virtue of two brilliant passing shots and a couple of missed volleys by Russell.

Frank set himself carefully for Bishop's delivery. He placed his return accurately to Bishop's backhand and followed in. Bishop's return was falling slowly at his feet as Frank came in. Suddenly with a rattle and clank, a flash of blue and brown shot by him and the ball itself went gaily on its way in the mouth of the big bulldog.

Ray had forgotten the pup and in an unguarded moment dropped the chain.

The crowd screamed with laughter. Frank still stood by the net, dazed. He did not know quite what had occurred.

"Let," announced Mr. Hoskins quelling the rising tumult with stentorian tones.

Bishop again served, but the incident had distracted Frank. He was listless and Bishop's return beat him clean. A moment more and the game and set were Bishop's.

"First set, Bishop. Penn. 9–7."

This roused Frank from his slump. Rotten bit of luck, but after all class will tell, so now was the time for a bit of class.

He set his teeth and went to work.

Drive, volley, smash, and drive again! Frank was playing brilliantly. Bishop fought on but the Yale man had the set in hand at all times. A short time and——

"Game. Set. Russell. Yale. 6–4. The sets are one all."

Now came the real struggle. So far the edge, if there was any, had been to Frank. He determined to press home his advantage. He opened the third set with a rush. Bishop met it with an equally ferocious attack. Crash! Slam! Bang! Both men were hitting like maniacs. Far too hard for really good tennis but thrilling to the spectators. Errors and brilliant placements were mixed up in a desperate chaos. Russell led, 5–4, when suddenly he changed his tactics. Instead of following on in his return of service,

he dropped soft, short shots at Bishop's feet and lobbed high off the return.

Bishop was so surprised that for a moment he weakened and missed three easy shots.

A final terrific drive down the line past Bishop as he came in and the set was over.

"Game. Set. Russell. Yale. 6–4. Yale leads two sets to one."

During the rest Ray came in. "Sorry, Frank, about that fool dog. It would have been three straight. However, it won't make any difference. You have him now."

Frank chuckled. "You never can tell, Ray," he said.

The fourth set proved a disappointment. Both men were tired and let down after the terrific hitting of the third and errors predominated. Frank could not quite put the finish to his stroke and Bishop, fighting desperately, finally pulled out the set at 8–6.

"The sets are two all."

Frank opened the final set with a service ace. Bishop followed with a clean drive cross court and again the tension of battle was strained.

Game by game they fought each other to

a standstill. Both boys were getting cramps but neither would yield an inch.

"Four games all."

Frank reached 30–0 on his service only to drop three successive points from weariness.

"30–40."

Bishop's big chance! Frank set himself and let fly with a straight, fast service. It beat Bishop clean.

"Deuce."

Frank volleyed safely for the next point and advantage and took the game when Bishop netted.

"4–5. Russell leads. Final set."

The crowd leaned forward eagerly. Could the champion come through or would the little left-hander who had battled so gamely pull even again?

Bishop served and Russell drove out.

"15–love."

The next point Frank, after a volley from the base line, followed in his drive to Carl's backhand and killed off the weak return.

"15 all."

Bishop served. Frank drove and Bishop volleyed out.

"15–30."

Bishop's service to Frank's backhand was answered with a sharp, cross-court drive. Bishop, running hard, drove to Frank's forehand. Frank hit deep to the far corner of the court and advanced to the net. Bishop lobbed short—a certain kill. It meant the match point if Frank would give it, for it would give him 15–40.

He leaned on the ball and smashed with terrific force. The ball hit the net tape flat—and a moment later flashed into Bishop's court!

"15–40," called the umpire.

Frank stood where he was on the court looking at a torn bit of rope in the net. His eye had followed the ball and he had not seen it go over. This bit of rope was just below where the shot had hit. It must be. Frank drew a deep breath and then raised his head.

"Mr. Hoskins, my shot went through the net."

Mr. Hoskins looked down at the net.

"I didn't see it at all," he said, "what did you think, Bishop?"

"It was over, Mr. Hoskins," replied the boy.

"He didn't see it at all," cut in Frank. "He was at the other corner of the court, running hard. I am sure I saw it go through."

The service linesman rose and walked over to the umpire's chair. He was a Yale man.

"Russell is right," he said. "The ball went through. I'm sorry, Frank."

"Thirty all," announced Hoskins. "The ball went through the net."

A moment more and Frank, very tired and considerably upset by the ovation he received for his fine sportsmanship, netted two more shots and the score was tied at 5 all.

Still the boys fought it out. Evening shadows were creeping over the court.

"Six all."

"Seven all."

"Eight all."

At this point a sharp cramp suddenly shot into Frank's right arm and hand. He wilted. His service collapsed.

"Nine games to eight. Bishop leads." Frank was through and he knew it. He had fought a game fight but a losing one.

A missed drive, a netted volley, a smash by Bishop, and a winning volley by the same man, and the match was over. The champion was dethroned. The king is dead. Long live the king!

The boys shook hands heartily. Each was sincere in his admiration of the other.

Ray rushed out and grabbed Russell's arm.

"Hard luck, Frank. It's a shame. Gosh, why did you have to pick out the hole in the pinch?"

"Well, Ray," Frank grinned back at him, "at least, thank heaven, I found the right way out of it."

ON A LINE WITH THE NET

GAME! Set! America! McLoughlin wins, three sets to none."

Norman E. Brookes, the famous star from the Antipodes, met his fiery-headed victor, Maurice E. McLoughlin, with his slow smile and heartily congratulated him on the first point to America in the memorable Davis Cup Tennis Matches of 1914.

Twelve thousand shrieking maniacs, who up to now had been accounted sane members of the American people, burst into howls of triumph and joy. Far up in the grandstand behind the famous championship court at Forest Hills little David Morton sat and still hugged himself with both arms. He did not realize that for over two hours he had hugged himself while the fortunes of the game see-sawed between these two stars of the court. He only knew that he was watching the most marvellous tennis he had ever seen, tennis of a type he never knew could be played.

Dave was twelve. He had lived the greater portion of his uneventful young career in Trenton, New Jersey, and certainly Dave saw no tennis like this in Trenton. Mr. Morton, David's father, had been a collegiate player of some repute, but business, which called him from Philadelphia to Trenton, also took him away from the game, and his sole tennis in the past two years had been obtained in coaching his small son.

Dave slowly unwrapped himself from his own embrace and sniffed gently. Then: "Gee, Dad!" he whispered, "Gee, isn't Mac some guy? Maybe I wouldn't like to play tennis like that!" His father turned and smiled at the glowing face of the youngster.

"Maybe you will some day," he said. "Stay with the game and work. Come on, boy. It's time we were getting home or Mother will think we are lost."

Two years passed quickly and with them changes came over the fortunes of the Morton family. Mr. Morton was transferred again to Philadelphia, and with his increased fortunes came slightly increased leisure so that he could give more time to his son. Dave was entered in one of the oldest and most historic

schools in Germantown, in which suburb the Mortons settled. He was a good student and found time from struggles with the three R's to play some tennis almost daily. Twice a week his father played with him and coached him.

Mr. Morton, like all true students of tennis, was a stylist in form and a true sportsman to his finger tips. Young Dave was inwardly assured, although outwardly passive, that his father was making a wholly unnecessary amount of noise over footwork and body position in making a stroke.

"Dave, how often must I tell you always to hit a ball with your body sideways to the net?" Mr. Morton would inquire about twenty times a day, as his son would advance facing the net and put his return somewhere thirty feet outside of court.

"But I swing as you told me, Dad!" Dave would retort.

"Yes, but your feet were wrong." And they would go at it again.

Dave spent many unhappy hours in which he told himself he was useless at tennis and what good was it anyway, even if he was any good, and anyway he wasn't any good, and so

forth, at great length. Still he kept at it, playing tournaments which his father wisely insisted on his entering, and getting decisively and regularly trimmed by boys slightly older and more experienced than he. All this training had its effect, and Dave grew stronger in body and quicker in mind with each passing year.

At fourteen he won his first tournament, the school junior championship open to boys under fifteen. This proved a turning point, for with the added confidence of victory came added surety of stroke and Dave forged ahead. In these two years "Red Mac," his hero of that memorable match at Forest Hills, had gone from his pinnacle and Dick Thomas and Billy Jolson were names to conjure with.

The war threw its blighting shadow over the sporting world of America in 1917, and the great tennis players left the courts and journeyed here and there at the call of Uncle Sam. They were but a part of that marvellous unit, the American nation.

During the war, Dave, too young by several years for active service, was keen to stay in athletics and fit himself for anything he could

do. His father, just before his enlistment in the Engineer Corps, made him promise to keep up his tennis, and this Dave faithfully did. Throughout the years of the awful struggle across the seas Dave waited for his father's return, and knowing his father's love of tennis, strove to improve his game so greatly that it would show how earnestly he had worked.

Once it seemed Dave might never have his chance to prove to his father, for Mr. Morton was severely wounded in the famous Château-Thierry fight and was reported as lost. Fortunately, his clean life and healthy body stood him in good stead and he pulled out alive although he left his right arm in France.

Following his return shortly after the first of the year, 1919, he took Dave aside.

"Dave, old man," he said, looking shyly at the place his arm should have been, "my tennis is over. I don't grudge my country my arm. It could have had my life if it needed it, but, boy, I am counting on you to do the thing I never could. I mean I am counting on you to win the national championship some time. It's a long road, boy, and

a hard one. It's a case of step by step. No man gains the national championship in one great spurt, and to-day the task is even greater, for there are more good players. You are seventeen now and this is your last year in the junior championship. Go to it, boy. Win it. Remember it means a lot to me. Win your sectional championship first, for as you know, you must win the sectional championship to qualify for the national. Go in to win, old man, and win."

The boy looked up. He had always known he loved his father but he never had realized just how much before. He felt he must make good this year. He wanted terribly to repay his father in some way for the loss of that arm, and he felt as if he might do a little toward it if he won the junior championship that year.

Suddenly he choked up and without a word fled from the room.

For days after Dave was obsessed with the idea that by winning this championship he was in some measure, at least, lightening his father's burden, and he worked at his tennis as never before. He studied, trained, and practised all through the winter. Spring found him hours a day at the club trying out

shots against the volley-board or talking tactics to any one who would discuss them with him. Only to his father did he refuse to talk tennis.. Somehow he could not do it. He wanted to win alone, without assistance from Dad.

This consistent work had its effect in a remarkable development. The boy was head and shoulders above his class in the city. He felt certain of winning the sectional championship. Only an unforeseen circumstance could rob him of it.

The Sectional Junior Championship was held annually in July at one of the large country clubs in the city. Dave passed up a trip through the White Mountains the two weeks before so as to be in top form.

Then the unexpected happened. Richard Vincey, the phenomenal junior star from New York, had wired in his entry at the last moment. He had been away from New York at the time of the sectional championship and nothing was left but the Philadelphia event to qualify him for the national.

Dave knew nothing of Vincey personally, but he knew his reputation as the most remarkable junior player in the world. Well,

it could not be helped and there was nothing to do about it except to play ball and beat him, no matter what one's thoughts were.

Dave and Dick Vincey drew on opposite sides in the tournament and both came through their respective buckets easily. There was no question in any one's mind about Vincey. He was a marvel, but so was Dave, and the papers vied with each other in lauding the games of the two boys. Public interest ran high and speculation as to the outcome was rife.

The Saturday of the finals dawned bright and fair. The courts were in excellent condition and a big gallery was on hand at the hour play was called.

Dave told his father the night before that he was going to sleep late and so would arrive at the courts just in time for the match.

"See you out there, Dad," he said. "Where will you sit?"

"Just across the court from the umpire, Dave," he replied. "I prefer that place."

Vincey was dressed when Dave, already in tennis togs, arrived. The linesmen took their places and the umpire mounted the raised seat.

"Play!"

The match was on.

Just as he stepped into position to serve, Dave glanced across at his father. Yes, there he was on a line with the net and smiling confidently at him.

Service held sway in the early games and the score mounted to 4 all. In the ninth game, Dave, trailing at 30–40, pulled Vincey in with a short shot. Vincey, running fast, reached it and wildly stabbed it. The ball hit the net cord and hung for a moment, then fell over in Dave's court. Game. Vincey. And the first break.

The New York boy was quick to realize his luck and by adding a mite to his service tucked away the next game at 15 and with it the first set.

The effort cost him more than he realized and before he could steady, Dave had captured a lead of 4–1. Vincey was content to allow him to run out the set at 6–2.

One set all!

The third set was a bitter struggle. Dave was playing phenomenal tennis, but the little tow-headed lad from New York had a slight edge. Gradually he forced his advantage,

and finally, in a terrific burst of volleying, he rushed the other off his feet and broke through for the third set at 7–5.

It was phenomenal junior tennis. Its like had never been seen in America and it was plain that the winner of the match would surely wear the junior crown for the year.

Dave came on the court, following the ten minutes' rest, fresh and determined. All his soul cried out within him he must win. It meant fulfilment of his pledge to himself to repay his father. He turned and grinned at his Dad. "I *will* win," he muttered. "I *will*."

Dave opened the fourth set with such a furious driving attack that Vincey was repeatedly passed as he attempted to gain the net. Cross court or down the line Dave drove, ball after ball passing the New Yorker as if he were not on the court. Vincey was game but could not avail against such tennis and the set was Dave's at 6–2.

Two sets all! Both keyed up and fighting for every point. Yet no matter how they fought they were always generous sportsmen, giving credit where due.

"One all!"

"Two all!"

"Three all!"

In the seventh game, Dave serving, Vincey called on his last reserve, and in a series of sparkling rallies finally forced his great little opponent to net an important point at deuce, and broke through, with a brilliant volley.

"Four-three. Vincey leads. Final set!"

The battle was telling on both boys, but Dave was the sturdier. In the eighth game Vincey's slight loss of speed cost him two costly volleys and Dave broke his delivery at 30.

"I *will* win," muttered Dave again and, turning, grinned at his father.

Crash! A smashing service ace.

"15–love."

Dave then advanced to the net and cut off a volley for 30. He served a double fault through over anxiety, but an error and another volley and he led at 4–5.

"One game, now. Only one game," Dave murmured to himself.

Vincey took the first point on Dave's net but double-faulted away the next. He was very tired.

The third point Dave staked all on a drive

down the side line. Vincey got his racquet on to it but by weariness turned it into an error.

"Two more points," yelled Dave inwardly. Vincey served to his backhand and Dave hit low to his feet as he came in. Vincey volleyed short and Dave answered with a perfect lob over Vincey's head. Back chased the New Yorker as Dave rushed close in toward the net, thinking to himself it meant match point. Vincey reached the ball, turned and hit low and hard, unexpectedly, directly at Dave. Dave saw the ball was very close to the top of the net. He stepped directly in on the ball and blocked it. It fell dead, a perfect volley. As he hit it he felt his leg brush the net. He opened his mouth to speak of it. He knew he had really lost the point by this action, so innocent on his part. Had the umpire seen? He turned away with bated breath. He knew by all the ethics of the game he should speak and admit he touched the net and yet——! It meant the match. It was match point now.

"15–40."

No—the umpire had not seen.

Vincey served and for once stayed back,

too tired to advance at that time and risk a pass. Dave drove deep to Vincey's backhand and took the net. Vincey lobbed. He lobbed short. It was high but clearly short and a certain kill.

Dave thrilled at the sight. The match was his. He could repay his father. Up went the ball, higher, higher. Could he pay his father with a match he had stolen? He had stolen that last point and knew it.

The ball began to fall.

For a moment he hesitated and then drew back and very deliberately killed, not into the court, but into the net.

A gasp went up from the crowd.

Dave raised his head and straightened his shoulders. He felt better. He had not yet repaid his father, but at least he had kept his honour. He glanced across at his Dad and received a serene smile. His Dad was still with him.

Dave went back to the base line and deliberately yet unostentatiously netted the next ball for deuce. He would throw this game he had stolen and fight it out from 5 all.

Vincey won the next two points for the game and the crowd cheered wildly. Dave

was done. He knew it. He was getting cramps and could not last. He made a last dying struggle but he was not quite able to bring off his shots and Vincey broke through.

"Six-five. Vincey leads."

A point to Dave, two to Vincey, another to Dave, and a brilliant service ace brought up match point.

"Well, not this year or any time," Dave told himself. It was the end and his father would never understand. At least he knew.

Vincey served and Dave ignominiously netted the final ball.

The umpire's official announcement of Vincey's triumph was lost in the howl of approbation from the gallery.

Dave shook hands and turned away. Suddenly his father's voice broke on his ear:

"Hard luck, boy! The men's championship is still coming. This was a great victory."

Something in his face made Dave suddenly look him squarely in the eyes. His father nodded, smiled a happy smile, and patted Dave with his left hand.

"Yes, I know. You see, I sat on a line with the net!"

MINE!

"MINE!" The man's voice rang out clear as the tennis ball rose over his partner's head in a high parabola. Watching the ball intently, he swung back and hit with all his power. Just as he did so the slender figure of his boy partner appeared in his vision. The boy had disobeyed orders and tried for the shot.

The man strove to change the direction of his swing, but too late. The racquet, travelling with all the power of the big athletic frame behind it, crashed on the head of the youngster.

The boy staggered and without a sound fell to the court. The man dropped his racquet and kneeling picked up the little figure in his arms. He walked rapidly toward the club house.

The boy stirred in his arms and opened his eyes dazedly.

"Sorry, Roy," he murmured, "my fault,"

and the eyes closed as unconsciousness claimed its victim.

The man strode into the club house and laid the boy on a couch. "Quick, a doctor! The boy is badly hurt."

An attendant hurried up. "Doctor Graham has been summoned. He will be here in ten minutes."

"Get ice and place it on the boy's head. I will be back in a moment."

The final rounds of the Rhode Island State Tennis Championship were under way at the Agawam Hunt Club in August, 1916. The singles had been settled that morning and the doubles championship was at stake when the accident occurred. The title-holders, two local veterans, were playing Roy S. Gardner, the famous New York star, and his young protégé, David Morton, the wonderful little player whose game had been the sensation of the meeting.

Roy Gardner walked out to the committee.

"I'm sorry, gentlemen, but we must default. The boy is badly injured, I'm afraid."

John E. Davis, for many years an old Rhode Island star, one of the title-holding doubles team, turned to Gardner.

"No, Roy, don't default. We won't take it. At least hold it over a few days until the boy is better."

Gardner turned and smiled.

"Thanks, Jack," he said, "but that will do no good. I will never play doubles again." He turned and went into the club house.

The group looked at each other aghast. Roy Gardner to quit doubles. It was incredible! Impossible! He was one of the greatest players in America, and he was going to quit. It couldn't be.

In the club house an anxious little group watched the physician working over the unconscious boy.

The doctor straightened up. Gardner pushed his way through the group.

"How is he, Doctor? Seriously hurt?"

"I cannot tell. A hard blow on the head causing slight concussion is all, I hope. If so he will come around in a few minutes and with a little care and rest will be quite all right in a few days."

"Thank God," and Roy Gardner dropped on the floor beside young Morton, joy and relief written in every line of his face.

Unfortunately the doctor's hopes proved

ill founded. Instead of a slight concussion, a serious fracture of the skull was discovered. For weeks Dave hovered in that borderland where life might slip away at any moment. During all that anxious period Roy Gardner was always at the boy's side. High strung, sensitive, and conscientious at all times, the feeling that he had brought this on Dave was almost breaking Roy.

Daily, almost hourly, he made a vow. "If he lives I swear I will never again play doubles."

It seemed as if he were actually attempting to ransom the boy's life, so urgently did he make the appeal.

Day after day, in the moments of delirium that roused the sufferer from his stupor, the boy kept repeating "Sorry, Roy, my fault."

It only made it harder for the man.

Finally, almost six weeks after the accident, while Roy was sitting quietly conversing with Dave's mother at the bedside, the youngster opened his eyes with the light of realization glowing in them.

"Hello," he weakly murmured, and the battle was won.

During the remainder of the season Roy aided Dave in his fight back to health. Autumn found the boy once more his merry, robust self. During late October and November, Roy and Dave practiced singles together regularly. The Christmas vacation found the indoor championship of the United States scheduled in New York.

Dave and Roy entered the singles. Dave asked Roy if he would play the doubles with him. Roy refused.

"Why, Roy? You always have played with me and I'm well again now. It won't hurt me!"

"Nothing doing, kid."

"But why?"

"Well, because I don't want to."

Dave was hurt and showed it. He turned away with a queer little tightening around his mouth that Roy knew well.

"Oh, Dave, kid, don't get any idea I don't want to play with you. I do! I'm crazy to, but while you were so ill I swore if you lived I would never play doubles again and I won't."

"But, Roy, I want you to play with me."

"I can't do it, kid, I'm sorry. I'm through with doubles forever."

The years passed swiftly. The great war carried its terrible tide over the world. The flower of all nations answered its demand and gave freely of the best.

Roy Gardner and Mr. Morton, Dave's father, were in the same company fighting on Flanders Fields. It was Roy who brought in the elder Morton from the battlefield after a desperate skirmish in which Morton was so severely wounded that he lost an arm from the result.

Dave was too young to go, but during the long, terrible years waited for the return of his father and his friend. How he sought to repay his father in a small way is another story, for another place, but his friendship for Roy Gardner grew stronger in his absence.

The dark days of 1918 passed into the more hopeful ones of 1919 and with the passing of winter, Dave's father and Roy Gardner came home.

Dave was playing fine tennis for a boy and proudly awaited an opportunity to show both men his improvement. Unfortunately, Roy was demobilized in the South and business called him away for a year. He read with pride of Dave's wonderful match with Rich-

ard Vincey that summer and wrote the boy his pleasure.

The season of 1920 found Roy again in the East and playing tennis. He was at the top of the heap in singles, scoring victories over both Jolson and Tilton, but business complications made it impossible for him to go on the Davis Cup trip to either England or Australia. Not once had he played doubles, and Dave's most earnest pleadings with him produced nothing more than his quiet, "No, boy. I am through with doubles and you know it." Through all the season of 1920 Dave Morton practiced with Gardner. In one year he developed from a fine youngster to one of the greatest tennis players in the world.

Early in 1921 the tennis world was startled by the simultaneous retirement of the two Davis Cup players who had brought home the trophy. One of them was the famous Californian Billy Jolson. The question of finding a new team to defend the cup faced the Association. The team finally selected was Roy Gardner, Bob Cotter, Dick Thomas, and young Dave Morton.

Gardner and Cotter were certainties in the

singles, for Thomas was in a slump while Morton was still an untried quantity.

The great question was the doubles. Cotter and Thomas and Cotter and Morton were tried and found wanting. Gardner could save the situation but refused even to consider it. He was through with doubles definitely, he said, and nothing would shake his decision.

The singles were scheduled the first two days and the doubles the last, a slight alteration from the usual procedure.

The great Japanese team of Kumagae and Shimidzu, sportsmen and tennis players of the finest type, had scored a remarkable victory over Brookes, Patterson, and O'Hara Wood of Australia in the final round, and thus challenged to meet America.

The singles battles produced surprising results. Roy Gardner scored a brilliant victory over Kumagae in five terrific sets that left the great gallery of more than 15,000 people howling like maniacs. Then Shimidzu nosed out Bob Cotter after dropping the first two sets and the score was tied at one point all.

The following day Shimidzu, greatly en-

couraged by his victory the day before, surprised even himself by defeating Roy Gardner in four sets and things looked dark for America, but young Cotter, with the cup at stake, playing magnificently, defeated Kumagae decisively in four sets.

The doubles would decide the issue. The committee named Cotter and Thomas for the team as Gardner still definitely refused to change his decision.

Saturday, the day of the final match, dawned clear and hot. By twelve o'clock long lines of people besieged the box office of Forest Hills. A record crowd pushed, jammed, and hammered its way into the grounds and massed about the court.

The Davis Cup Committee met in the club house at 1.30. The match was scheduled to commence at 2.15.

Dick Thomas entered the club and caught sight of the committee. He hurried up.

"Sorry to tell you, but Bob Cotter is ill with ptomaine poisoning and cannot play today. I guess it's Morton, if you cannot get Gardner to play."

Mr. Junius Hyrock, president of the Association, looked out of the window. "Here

come Gardner and Morton now. Let me speak to them."

Gardner and Morton entered the club and Mr. Hyrock called them. "Gardner, Morton. Just a moment, please."

The two entered the committee room.

"Bob Cotter is ill and cannot play to-day. Gardner, the committee wishes you to play. Will you?"

Roy shook his head. "No," he said, "I am through with doubles."

"Is that final?" Mr. Hyrock asked.

Roy did not reply.

"Morton, it's up to you and Thomas and we know it's a forlorn hope, but go in and no matter what happens, fight, and remember we are all with you."

Thomas walked over to Gardner during this remark.

"Roy," Dick spoke softly, "it means the cup. The boy and I can't win. You must play. It's your personal feelings against America's chances. It's up to you."

Roy looked silently out of the window. Dick turned away. Roy considered. Yes, Dick was right. The kid and Dick did not have a chance, but, on the other hand, did he

have the right to risk another accident of the same kind as the one five years ago? The cup against an individual. The chances were against a repetition, and the country needed him. He turned sharply.

"Mr. Hyrock, I'll play if you want me," he said quietly.

Thomas sprang up.

"Good boy, Roy. Go to it. Mr. Hyrock, Gardner is used to Morton and Morton to him and he is not used to me. Might I suggest you use Morton?"

Mr. Hyrock glanced at Gardner and caught the eager look on his face as he gazed at the boy.

"Gentlemen," said Mr. Hyrock, "Gardner and Morton for America to-day."

Dave and Roy rushed upstairs to dress.

"Dave," Roy was saying seriously, "remember two things. First, you must take all the lobs over your own head. Second, if I call for a ball as mine, even if it is right in front of you, you must get out of my way. If I hit you again, I'll default the match."

Ten minutes later the men walked out on the court. A howl of applause greeted the four players.

"Linesmen ready! Play!"

The final match with the Davis Cup at stake had begun. Throughout the first set, Kumagae and Shimidzu centred their attack on young Dave. Bravely the boy stood up to it, volleying well. The Japanese, soon realizing they could not break through his defence, began tossing lobs to him. Time and again they forced him back with deep lobs which Dave could not kill, but could only defend. He was too short to kill accurately. Gardner with his great height and reach would have murdered these lobs, but Gardner was inactive on the other side, unable or unwilling to step in and kill. Finally, Dave weakened. He missed smash after smash. The set was Japan's at 7–5. The second set was a repetition of the first, only Dave's defense was not so good. The Japanese lobbed America out of the set 6–4.

Roy Gardner was fighting a harder battle than the one against Japan. He knew he could stop that lobbing attack, but he did not dare take the risk of stepping in. Again he heard his racquet hit young Dave back in 1916 just as clearly as if it were today. He was afraid to poach. Game by

game the match slipped out of America's hands. Still Roy hesitated.

"Five–three, Japan leads."

40–30 match point!

Kumagae served, Gardner drove, and Shimidzu lobbed over Morton's head, a short kill.

Suddenly:

"Mine," roared Gardner's voice and he sprang for the ball. Swish! Smash! The ball bounded high out of Kumagae's reach. A perfect kill.

"'Atta boy, Roy," came from Dave as he scrambled to his feet from the ground where he had dropped at Roy's call. "Go to it. Pull it out."

Confidence had returned to Roy Gardner. Now, he would step in and hit, he told himself. And hit he did. Every lob brought forth his cry of "Mine" and the resultant shot called forth a howl of joy from the gallery at the perfect kill.

Gardner was magnificent. Such smashing had not been seen since McLoughlin was at his best.

America pulled out that set from match point and won it 8–6. They took the next 6–3 and the score was tied.

Still Gardner smashed like a madman. Young Dave Morton had regained his breath and his confidence but still Gardner yelled "Mine" for every lob. America reached 5–3 on Gardner's service. Three terrific drives by the Japanese were volleyed for placements. 40–0.

One point and the cup was safe. Gardner served and up went the return over Morton's head. "Mine" yelled Gardner and swung.

Dave for some reason did not duck as he had been doing. "Swish" started Gardner's racquet when he suddenly saw Morton in front of him. He turned his swing and the ball fell safely past him in his court. Japan's point. 40–15.

Gardner was visibly shaken. He served and again the lob rose over Morton's head.

"Mine!" yelled Gardner and Dave ducked. Gardner swung, but the old fear suddenly gripped him. Where was Dave? Would he hit him? His swing slackened and he netted his smash. 40–30.

Still match point.

Gardner served a fault. He again delivered the ball. Shimidzu lobbed short over Morton's head.

"Mine!" yelled Gardner and charged in.

"No, mine!" retorted Dave, leaping into the air and smashing with all the power in his little body. Suddenly, just as he hit the ball, something hissed viciously by his ear and hit him a resounding blow on the shoulder. It was Gardner's racquet. At the same moment a howl of joy from the crowd told of the perfect placement of his smash.

"Game. Set. Match. Davis Cup! America! Gardner and Morton win in five sets."

The four men shook hands and started off the court.

Dave grabbed Roy and howled in his ear.

"Aren't we some doubles team, Roy? Honest now, aren't we?"

"Use the past tense, Dave boy. Use the past tense. I'm through with doubles."

THE GHOST OF WIMBLEDON

DAVID MORTON gazed at the letter in his hand with an air of complete bewilderment. He could not realize that his greatest sporting ambition had been attained at last. Surely there was some mistake somewhere. Carefully he reread the words.

The letter was from the United States Lawn Tennis Association:

My dear Morton:

It gives me pleasure to inform you that you, together with Richard Thomas, Robert Cotter, and William Jolson, have been named on the American team to tour Europe during the current year. Please report in New York for practice Monday next.

It was signed in Mr. Hyrock's unmistakable scrawl. No, there was no mistake. He was really to play in the tournaments abroad.

Dave had once helped defend the Davis Cup at home but his chance had come through

a series of incidents, including the sudden illness of Bob Cotter, his chum, and the fact he partnered Roy Gardner, who was the mainstay of the team that year, so he felt that he had not really made the team on his own merits. That was some years ago when Dave was eighteen. He was twenty-one now and one of the recognized leaders in the tennis world.

Dave sat in the big armchair in his own room at home and thought back over the past three years. It had not been all beer and skittles to him. He had worked hard to graduate from school only to have his graduation spoiled by a sudden attack of grippe that put him in bed instead of in the valedictorian's place on the platform. Then came the retirement from tennis of his friend, Roy Gardner. Roy had never quite regained his strength after his hardships in France during the World War and although he had played several years of tennis he had been a sick man. Dave had realized that fact for some time, and it was as much the boy's pleading as the doctor's orders that finally induced Roy to lay aside the racquet for all time.

Roy played a little golf these days but his heart was not in it. He was true to his first

love, tennis, and now centred all his enthusiasm in Dave.

Roy had been over the day before and the two friends had discussed the trip and the possibility of Dave's making the team. Four men were to be sent by the United States Tennis Association to tour France and England and incidentally play in the Hard Court and Grass Court Championships of the World. It was some years since an American had held these titles and the Association had decided to send a team to try to regain them. Dick Thomas, Bob Cotter, Dave Morton, Bill Jolson, Frank Russell, the Kid, and several others of the leading stars had met in Boston for a series of try-outs. Upsets had featured the matches so that choosing a team on the results looked hopeless. In despair, Mr. Hyrock, after consulting various members of the Davis Cup Committee, picked what he considered would be a representative team, and Dave was one of the chosen.

Dave, as he sat with the letter in his hands, recalled a comment of Roy's the day before.

Dave had more or less kiddingly asked if there was any chance of Roy's going over with him.

"Well, I don't know," Gardner had said. "Make the team and I'll talk business later."

Dave decided that the time had come to talk business here and now. He jumped up and hastened to the 'phone.

Gardner himself answered.

"Roy, I've got it," Dave burst out on hearing his friend's voice.

"Got it? Got what, measles, mumps? What is the matter?" Roy seemed more or less worried.

"No, you nut, I've got my invitation to the team. I'm going to Europe to play tennis for America!"

"Great work, kid. When did you hear?"

"Just now. Now, Roy, listen. I want to talk to you. Remember, you said you would talk business with me if I made the team? Well, I've made it, so come over and let's discuss the matter."

"When? Now? All right!" Roy sounded quite keen and the boy felt a surge of hope rise in him. Gosh, it would be great to have old Roy along.

Gardner arrived shortly, and after about two hours' discussion of all things tennis-wise, and about ten minutes on the trip itself, Roy rose to go.

"But, Roy," Dave cried in desperation, "what are you going to do? Go with me?"

"Why, Davy, kid, of course I'm going. Hyrock told me two days ago you had been picked. The team sails in two weeks on the *Berengaria*."

The broad sweep of the deep blue sea as it surged and rolled by the mighty vessel as she plowed her way across the three thousand miles of liquid desert, had an irresistible appeal to Roy Gardner. He stood at the rail and gazed out over the glorious blue and found himself supremely happy. He was off again in a tennis atmosphere with a tennis crowd, for a great tennis trip. It was the life he loved.

Crouched in a steamer chair directly behind him was Dave. It was his first sea voyage. True, he was off in a tennis atmosphere, with a tennis crowd, for a great tennis trip, but he was far from happy. In fact, he was low, low in mind and body. He was seasick.

It was only the second day out and Dave had fallen an early victim to *mal-de-mer*. In fact, so early and violently did he fall that already he was making a slight come-back

from the horrors of the past night, and life began again to hold some slight allure.

Roy turned and saw a light of almost greeting in Dave's eyes. It was the first light of any kind he had seen there for two days.

"Hello, kid. Feeling better?"

Dave hunched himself a little more erect and muttered:

"Don't know. Couldn't feel worse so I guess I may feel better."

Roy chuckled. He showed scant sympathy, Dave felt. In fact, the boy was rather of the opinion that Roy was a gloom.

"Get up and take a walk. It will do you good."

"Can't."

"Come on," and ruthlessly Roy dragged the agonized Dave from his comfortable chair and propelled him, protesting feebly, twice around the deck. The second time round the pace was brisker, the protest less determined.

Dave was feeling materially improved. His appearance at the table in the dining room that night was greeted by cheers from his team mates.

Bob Cotter inquired which particular fish that he had fed was his favourite, while Billy

Jolson darkly sang "Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep," much to Dave's inward annoyance.

Tennis naturally drifted into the conversation, since all the men were very keen to be off the boat and at practice.

"The Hard Court Championship entry list looked pretty good," said Dick Thomas. "I saw it announced the day we left. It had Gobert and Laurenz, the Frenchmen, Alonzo, the Spaniard, and possibly Shimidzu, the Japanese star."

Roy Gardner looked up. "Well," he remarked, "I have always had one ambition. You may have the Hard Court Championship or any other, but the biggest thing in the world to me has been and is the Wimbledon tournament, the Grass Court Championship of the World."

"I don't think it's any more important than the American Championship. In fact, I believe ours is the bigger thing to win." This from Jolson.

"You don't get the idea, Bill," Gardner answered. "It isn't a question of the size of the tournaments. Usually the class in the American Championship is better than Wimbledon. It isn't that at all. It's the fact that

Wimbledon is the cradle of tennis for the world. It was there that tennis history was made. On that centre court those famous old veterans, Smith, Pin, and Eaves brought fame to England. It was on that same bit of grass that the Do's, Reggie and Laurie Doherty, made their names. For thirty years wonderful old Gore played his finest tennis inside that historic enclosure. Wimbledon made Wilding. It was there that Brookes proved himself the greatest genius of them all. My good friend Parke, old J. C., although never winning the championship, won undying laurels on the central court. If I had to die in harness I would prefer to go out at Wimbledon during the championships."

Dick Thomas straightened in his chair. "Why, Roy, you surely feel deeply bout Wimbledon!"

"I do, Dick. I love tennis. I believe in the game, because it's clean, honest, and a man's game. It calls men I am proud to know. Why shouldn't I love it? However, I'm out of the game now and Wimbledon is not for me, ever again. The ghosts of the great players of the past are there at Wimbledon. They love that centre court. They are jeal-

ous of their successors, for they want the standard of Wimbledon traditions kept high. Wimbledon is the ultimate in tennis.

"I tell you fellows, there is a Ghost of Wimbledon just as surely as I am sitting here. It is the spirit of sportsmanship, generosity, and honesty that the great players of the past have shed on that centre court. It is a concrete thing. Some men feel it when they play there and rise to heights unknown at other times. I have always wanted the chance to meet the Ghost of Wimbledon, but I guess I will never do that now." He laughed a queer, constrained, mirthless laugh. "I know you all think I'm looney. I guess it doesn't mean to most people what it does to me; anyway, they never admit it. Still, I feel that way and it's part of me."

It was a new conception of sport to these boys. Roy was right when he said it didn't mean to others what it did to him. The boys regarded it as a fantastic idea belonging only to Roy. Jolson was frankly unconvinced. He was a practical man with little or no imagination, and the dramatic value of the Wimbledon championship made no appeal to him. Thomas felt something of the

atmosphere that called Gardner, for he had played at Wimbledon before; but he was no idealist and the past meant nothing to him. Bob Cotter was far too interested in a charming young lady on board to waste time over matters of sentiment not intimately connected with his own personal views of the moment. Dave Morton, alone, with his sensitive, high-strung temperament, responded to Roy's outburst.

He looked at Gardner and slightly nodded his head to the door.

"Well, let's go," he said. "I have eaten enough to put me down and out."

The party broke up. Dave and Roy Gardner walked forward along the deck to the prow of the great vessel. The wind was blowing, fresh and keen, in their faces; the moon hung low in the heavens; the sea was growing tranquil. It was a glorious night. Dave turned to Roy.

"Roy, old man, I wish you were still in the game. You would win at Wimbledon. Why have you never gone over before?"

Roy stood silent for a moment, his face averted. Then he turned directly to the boy.

"Dave, I have always felt I could win at Wimbledon. Until the war came along, college and business made it impossible. I had intended to stay over in England after the war, if I could get my discharge, but it couldn't be pulled. Then came the two years of tennis at home before I cracked up and quit. So you see, kid, I haven't had a real chance. Now that I get it, it's too late."

"No, Roy, not too late. You'll come back some day."

"Never, Dave. I'll never even try. I don't believe in come-backs. I would rather be remembered at my best than with a sort of pity for the old man who tried to come back and couldn't. But, as you say, it isn't too late for me still to get my ambition. Only it's up to you to give it to me. It would mean more to me to have you win Wimbledon than anything else in the world. It would be even bigger to me than winning it myself, for I feel as if I were partly responsible for you and would have had a hand in it. It's been a great six years we have had together, Dave. I felt as if you were my own brother. Somehow, I feel as if I stood at a turning point, almost the crisis of my life right now. Win for me, boy,

and put the seal of success on my tennis career."

"Roy, old man"—the boy put his hand on the other's arm—"it's a big order; too big, I'm afraid, but I'll do my doggonedest."

"That's enough, Dave. That's all you need. You, alone, of all those men, knew what I was talking about when I spoke of the ghosts of the past at Wimbledon. They are fine boys, our team mates, but they just miss that one thing; but that one thing will beat them at Wimbledon. Wait and see. You, Dave, will feel the inspiration, the urge to make good. You will uphold the traditions of Wimbledon as they should be upheld." Roy paused with a sheepish laugh. "Don't think I'm crazy, but you cannot guess what it means to me. It's almost part of my faith in human nature."

"Don't worry, Roy, I don't misunderstand. I once had a debt to try to pay to my father for the loss of his arm in the war, that cost him his tennis. I know what it means to believe in something. If it is in my power, I will make good at Wimbledon for you."

Days raced past.

Two weeks later found the American team

comfortably settled at the Hotel Continental in Paris, daily journeying to St. Cloud to practice before the Hard Court Championship of the world. The tournament was to commence the next day with all the Americans but Jolson bunched on one side of the draw.

Dave Morton was dressing when Roy Gardner unceremoniously dashed into the room with a tall, fine-looking young American in tow.

"Dave, I want you to meet my friend Bob Adams. Mr. Adams, Mr. Morton!"

The two men shook hands as Roy continued.

"Bob was a captain in aviation in my sector during the war and I haven't seen him since. It's nearly five years, isn't it, Bob? Anyway, he is living in London now, just over here on a flying visit. Literally flying, for he came over in his old army plane that he bought from the government. We'll see a lot of him in London during Wimbledon. To-night you two boys are dining with me and then we will step out and look over the Folies Bergère."

The more Dave saw of Bob Adams during the next few days the better he liked him. He had an occasional twinge of jealousy where

Roy was concerned, but his ever-present good sense always brought him around, and he decided to enjoy Bob's company while he could and let the other question take its natural course.

Dave met Bob Cotter in the third round of the Hard Court Championship and went down to defeat in four sets. It was a good match. Dave, who was never at his best on hard courts, played better than usual, but Cotter was in great form and held the supremacy throughout.

Dick Thomas met defeat at the hands of Alonzo of Spain, but Cotter obtained a sweet revenge in the semi-final when he swamped the sensational Madrid star in three sequence sets. Meanwhile, Jolson, after one close call at the hands of Gobert in the fourth round, had reached the finals easily.

The all-American final of Cotter and Jolson brought out a great gallery. Excitement ran high when Cotter dashed away with the first two sets by a brilliant exhibition of matchless driving. Jolson was not discouraged, and sticking to his task with that characteristic doggedness of his, pulled out the next three sets before a wildly cheering multitude that

stopped yelling only because they had lost their collective voice.

Dave was not downcast at his defeat. Neither was Gardner.

"It's Wimbledon that counts, boy. Don't forget it," Roy cautioned.

"Don't worry, Roy, I never forget," and inwardly Dave pledged anew his last ounce of skill and strength to win for Gardner.

The trip across the Channel produced no incidents worthy of mention. The team was met by members of the English association who escorted them to their apartments at the Ritz Hotel in Piccadilly. The Championships were but a week away, and all that week found the Americans practicing daily on the famous turf at the All-England Club.

The first time Dave stepped on the centre court with the big horseshoe of empty seats, saw the sun in his eyes, and heard the echo of the ball against the racquet he feared he was not going to like it. It was a poor arrangement for championship tennis. He could easily understand why some men could not play well in that enclosure. He expressed his fear to Roy Gardner.

"Wait until you get in there with a crowd

around the court and the ghosts of past champions whispering in your ear," was the reply.

Wimbledon was a marvellous sight that year. The entry list contained so many great players that every day saw a battle of giants worthy of the average final round. The tennis public, great and small, swarmed to the grounds. Their Majesties, the King and Queen, together with the Prince of Wales, the Princess, and the Duke of York, were present on more than one occasion. They were there the first time Dave Morton stepped on the centre court. It was a mighty test for the youngster. He was to meet Shimidzu, the Japanese star, in the first round.

Just as he completed dressing Roy Gardner came in.

"Now, boy, for the Ghosts of Yesterday," he said.

"No, Roy," Dave replied. "Just you is enough."

So it proved. The spirit of the court, the electric personality of the crowd, and the marvellous tennis atmosphere caught Dave as he hit the first ball. He felt absolutely at home. It seemed as if he had always played here. It called forth the best that was in him. He

lifted his game to unheard-of heights and swamped the wonderful little Oriental star in an overwhelming manner.

Dave had met the Ghost of Wimbledon.

On through the two weeks of the tournament Dave battled his way through the hardest section of the draw. Major Kingscote, Alonzo, and Bob Cotter fell before him on successive days.

It was an awful revenge Dave took on poor Bob, who was bothered by "centre-courtitis" and far below his best.

Meanwhile, the other Americans had not fared so well. Bill Jolson had failed to find himself in the centre enclosure and gone down to Dick Thomas in the fourth round. The unexpected happened when J. C. Parke, hero of innumerable matches, but this year not considered a serious contender, flashed a day of his finest tennis and crushed Thomas in four sets. It was a bitter blow to America, for the possibility of an all-American final had loomed large. Now there was only Dave left, and it was decidedly up to him.

The semi-final saw Parke fall before Arthur Gordon, the brilliant young English Davis Cup star—while Dave decisively defeated

Babe Norton in the other bracket. It was America vs. England for the championship and excitement ran rife. The critics admitted that Morton should win, but Gordon was a great fighter and was playing at his best.

The night before the match Roy Gardner and Bob Adams carried Dave off to Bob's home for a quiet dinner. Tennis was tabooed, but just before leaving Roy turned to Bob and said:

"Bob, I want you to know something. All my life I have wanted to win the Wimbledon tournament above all else. I told Dave what it meant to me. I explained what the centre court at Wimbledon stood for to me and Dave understood. He is going to win this tournament for me. For me, do you understand, Bob? He is giving me the biggest thing in my life for he is doing for me what I could not do for myself. He will carry on Wimbledon traditions as they should be. If I should die to-morrow, I'd die happy if I knew Dave had won."

Bob stepped up to Dave and held out his hand.

"It's a big thing you are doing, Dave. It's big for you, for Roy, and for America."

Dave took the outstretched hand. "It's not for me or for America. It's for Roy," he answered.

"Oh, Dave," Roy suddenly cut in. "I am going to get you the most wonderful souvenir of the championship match that has ever been known."

"What is it, Roy?"

"I won't tell you now, but when I'm getting it, you'll know it. No, don't question or argue. I'm not going to tell you; so cut out the questions."

In vain Dave tried to worm the mystery out of Roy. His friend was obdurate and nothing would induce him to talk.

Dave and Roy reached the grounds together about a half hour before the match was called. Gordon was already there dressing. Dave hastened into his tennis clothing, chatting with Roy as he did so. Finally, as Dave pulled on his last shoe, Roy arose.

"Don't worry if you miss me during the final set. I'll be off getting your souvenir."

"Oh, Roy, tell me, please," Dave implored.

"Nothing doing. You'll know soon enough."

The two players took the court in a veritable hurricane of applause. Dave felt the

old surge of excitement grip him, coupled with an even keener determination to win than usual. To-day he would repay Roy in some slight measure for all the other had done for him.

He remembered Roy's words of the night before. "If I should die to-morrow I'd die happy if I knew Dave had won." Roy must care an awful lot to feel that way. Well, he would know to-day. Dave would win and Roy needn't die to know it.

The match opened with Dave serving. Never had the boy felt so certain of his game. It was his day and he knew it. He intended to play a match that would prove him a fitting successor to the men whose memory Roy so revered.

He simply annihilated Gordon. No matter how hard the Englishman struggled, the American held an answer. Dave crashed through the first set at 6–1, and the second at 6–3. Just as the players took position in court for the third set, Dave saw Roy Gardner rise from his place in the players' stand and go out.

"He is off for the souvenir," Dave muttered to himself. "I wonder what it is."

Still Dave was like an avenging angel, terrible in his power. He crashed on to certain victory. He was leading 4–2 on Gordon's delivery when far off he heard the drone of an airplane's engine. He won the game for 5–2 and by splendid volleying reached 40–30, match point. He was tossing the ball in the air to serve when a great airplane flying scarcely 200 feet above the court swept over the top of the stand.

Dave lifted his eyes. Then he knew!

It was Bob's plane and in it, he was certain, were Bob and Roy Gardner. Now he knew what the souvenir was to be: a bird's-eye picture of his winning stroke.

He served and ran to the net. The plane hummed directly overhead. Gordon tossed a high, short lob in the air.

Dave drew back his racquet for the certain kill. It was the championship. Roy would have his wish.

Suddenly a dead silence fell over the scene. The engine of the airplane went dead. A gasp arose from the crowd. Dave, the ball forgotten, turned and looked up at the plane. It hung suspended, a little to one side of the court. Suddenly it turned and dove, nose

down, hardly five hundred feet beyond the stands.

The ball had fallen unheeded at Dave's feet.

A sickening crash, heard only too plainly, resounded over the court and stands.

A woman screamed. Then silence. David Morton stood motionless in the centre of the court waiting for he knew not what.

Roy was dead. Dave knew it. He had known it from the moment the plane turned to plunge downward. Still he waited. Must he go on, must he play, heartlessly, pitilessly play tennis, while his best friend, his brother, really, lay dead within a stone's throw?

The gallery was growing restive. They were recovering from the shock and an atmosphere of hysteria was gaining headway.

The umpire spoke softly:

"Can you men go on?"

He did not know who was in the plane. Gordon nodded.

"Yes, if we must," he said.

"It may save a panic."

Dave raised his head.

"Go on," he murmured.

"Play," called the umpire. "The score is deuce."

Vainly Dave strove to hold his nerves. It was hopeless. He was shaken to his depths.

Over and over in his head rang the words, Roy is dead, is dead, is dead. What difference did anything make now? Nothing counted. All he wanted was to get away by himself where he could face matters squarely. Yet he had to play out the match.

Before he realized it Gordon had won the third set. It made no difference to him. Everything had ended when the plane crashed to earth. It was the crashing of his world around him.

Game after game went by him in the fourth set as he mechanically hit the ball. He did not know the score. He did not realize that now it was two sets all and Gordon leading 5–3 and he was practically beaten. It made no difference to him. Gone where the Ghosts of Yesterday. Gone was the exhilaration of Wimbledon.

Suddenly at his ear a voice spoke. A voice he knew well. From the hidden recesses of memory Roy's now silent voice said again: "If I should die to-morrow, I'd die happy if I knew Dave had won."

Dave came to life with a start. Had Roy really spoken? No, Roy was dead. What

was it Roy had said? He would die happy if he knew Dave had won. Well, he had gone to his death certain of Dave's victory. The boy felt sure of that. Yet it wasn't enough. He couldn't let Roy go to his death happy in a fraud, no! He would win. He would win for Roy dead as he had been winning for Roy living. What was the score? He had no idea. He turned to the umpire with the request. So Gordon led at 5–3. Almost too late. Almost but not quite. He still had a chance.

Gordon served.

Dave netted through over caution. Gordon placed a brilliant service but the boy sprang and shot a placement down the line.

Gordon reached 30–15 on an out by Dave but the latter took the next point on a sensational volley.

"Thirty all."

Gordon served and the boy drove deep to his backhand. The ball fell close to the line.

"Out," cried the linesman.

"40–30, match point!"

Dave stood silently in position awaiting service. Suddenly awoke within him a certainty of victory unlike anything he had ever

known. He knew, even with defeat staring him in the face, that he would win. He was paying a debt to the dead. Again he felt around him the players of the past but among them, stronger than all the rest, carrying him to victory by his confidence, was Roy Gardner.

Dave stepped in and drove Gordon's service for a clean placement.

"Deuce."

Such tennis as Morton played to the end of the match, which he won 7–5, has never been known. He scored at will. It was marvellous. He walked with stony face to the club house.

Dick Thomas was awaiting him.

Dave looked him in the eyes.

"Roy?" he murmured.

Thomas put out his hand and caught the boy's.

"He's gone," he said simply.

Dave looked away a moment and then back into Dick's eyes.

"Gone! No, Dick. He is not gone. No one ever really goes where they can't come back. Out there on the court Roy came to me as surely as I am here. He is here, a part of his Ghost of Wimbledon."

THEY ALSO SERVE

THE Old Man gazed at the big silver cup that stood in solitary splendour in the centre of his mantelpiece. His other trophies, too numerous to mention, were distributed around the big room in profusion, but the big bowl held its place of honour alone.

The Old Man walked closer and read the inscription:

Lawn Tennis Championship of the United States.
Men's Singles, 1913.

Below was his name. This cup was but the symbol of the great challenge trophy that now held the names of all the leading stars of American tennis. The Old Man had two legs on the championship bowl. A third win and it was his outright. Eight years is a long span of inaction for an athlete, particularly a tennis player, and the Old Man had grown heavy.

Visions of the past rose before his mental eye. Again he stood before that crowd of cheering lunatics which had been a sober, sensible tennis gallery until he stirred them to madness and they hailed him the greatest player of all time. That day he crashed through Dick Thomas in the finals of the championship in 1913 and won the second leg on the cherished trophy. He heard again the thunderous applause as he broke the defense of the wonderful Australians in 1914, and carried home two points in the Davis Cup matches for America.

Memory recalled that tragic day when Dick Thomas, playing as he had never played before, crushed him in three sequence sets in the finals of the National Championship and made it impossible for him to bring home the challenge bowl before another year.

He remembered that next season. The whole dope pointed to his victory; but Billy Jolson, his own team mate, upset the order of things and again the Old Man went down in the finals.

It was not the cup itself the Old Man wanted. It was the fact that he felt he had

not completed his career that troubled him. He had started something he couldn't finish.

The season of 1916 found him married and tennis was forced to take a back place. Years passed and always something intervened between the Old Man and his comeback.

The big cup glittered in the lamplight as the Old Man thought over these things. He wanted one more try at the championship. He wanted to feel again the thrill as the ball left his racquet in that marvellous service that had made him world famous. But the old serve was gone. Something had caught in the Old Man's shoulder during his layoff and he had lost the power to swing freely.

Even more than the championship he wanted his old service. He put up his hand and took down the big cup from the mantel. Could he come back? He knew the oft-repeated statement that they never do, but, after all, he would prove this a fallacy.

He was only thirty-three. He had been a boy wonder. He had gained the heights of fame at a very early age. It was hard to be national champion and a Davis Cup star by

twenty-five and a memory at thirty. He knew that business and the cares of married life had taken their toll, and he had slipped gently and gracefully from the game. His appearances during the past three years had been local and, in all, he found himself referred to as the "veteran internationalist." Once he was even the "aged net star." This latter comment piqued the Old Man. He'd show them he was not ancient, he fiercely determined. Slowly he placed the cup back on the mantel and turned away.

Yes, he would come back. It was this year or not at all.

All through the early season he trained hard and took off his superfluous flesh. No easy job for a heavy man, but he succeeded. He polished up his strokes and in many ways was a better tennis player than in the heydey of his success.

His ground strokes were improved, while age had ripened his strategy. Only his blinding speed and wonderful, awe-inspiring service were gone.

The Old Man himself could not tell what had become of that service. He felt it was just at his elbow and that he could turn and

grasp it, yet often as he turned, it was never there. He became obsessed with a desire to bring it back.

He practiced for hours during the spring, but the queer catch in his shoulder would not loosen. Osteopaths, or medicos of any description for that matter, could not tell him what was wrong. Finally, the determination to bring back the old service dwarfed even his desire to go East. Early summer found him despondent. His service was but a ghost of his former delivery.

"I'm through," he announced to himself.

Finally, in July, about a week before the state championship, he felt a returning sting in his overhead shots. One day he scored several service aces against Billy Jolson with whom he had been practicing regularly.

The Old Man was greatly encouraged. He believed he was rounding into his old-time form.

"I'll play the state championship," he told Billy. "Should I manage to win, I'll go East to the national championship."

The state championship that year was a representative event. The great players from the district vied with each other in their quest

of the title. The draw proved lop-sided. The upper half held all but two outstanding figures. The Old Man and Thomas Bandley, his old doubles partner, were in the lower bracket.

The Old Man felt confident and justified it. He went easily through round after round, finally reaching the finals at the expense of his old rival.

In the upper half upset followed upset. Everyone picked Billy Jolson, the famous little fighting champion, to come through, but he fell before an unknown youngster in the second round. "The Kid" became the talk of the tournament. He was only seventeen and unknown in tournament play. Another phenom from the public courts.

Round after round the Kid slaughtered his noted opponents. Wallace David, Richard Robertson, and Jack Strain fell before his attack and only the Old Man stood between him and the state crown. The critics conceded the boy the match before it was played, yet the love of the public for their fiery-headed idol of the past brought out an enormous crowd to cheer him on in what they felt was a losing fight.

The men divided four sets of sparkling

tennis. The first and third sets went to the Old Man, but the Kid was supreme in the second and fourth. The Old Man was a revelation to his most fervent admirers. His old game was all there. All the old-time tricks were at his command, but speed overhead was not his now. He could not swing. Every time he tried, his arm would catch behind his shoulder and the hitch spoiled his swing. It was incomprehensible to himself.

In the fifth set, after dividing the first eight games, the Old Man, by virtue of cleverly pulling his opponent out of position, broke through the Kid's delivery for a 5–4 lead. Oh, for the old service! How certain it would make victory. However, the Old Man knew it was not there, and set his attack in another form.

He ran the Kid unmercifully, and the strain was telling. He won the first point and the second, as the Kid netted difficult chances. The Kid drove cleanly for the third point, but missed an easy volley at the net, and it was match point at 40–15.

The Old Man steadied and served hard. The hitch caught him and he netted the ball. He carefully placed the next in court. The

Kid drove hard and deep to the Old Man's backhand. It was a beautiful shot and only a desperate chance could win for the Old Man, but at match point he could not afford to let it go. He ran hard and swung. As he did so, his feet slipped and he fell heavily to the ground, the ball passing him clean.

The crowd gasped, for the Old Man had hit hard. It was quickly hushed as he gained his feet and limped painfully to the base line to serve. It was plain to be seen that he was hurt. The Old Man knew it only too well. He could not bear his weight on his left foot. To run was physically impossible.

40–30. Still match point. The Old Man gritted his teeth and tossed the ball to serve. He shifted his weight forward to his injured foot. As he swung, his racquet gained momentum behind his body.

A stab of pain shot through his leg and a corresponding convulsive reaction ran along his entire body. His racquet met the ball with a crash.

Twang! A sound like a pistol shot rang out in the silence.

Like a flash of white lightning the ball shot into the corner of the Kid's service court.

The youngster, stunned by surprise, weakly swung at it.

The old-time service ace, that had made the Old Man famous, flashed for a moment before the eyes of the gallery. A howl went up from the crowd. The Kid raced across the court and jumped the net to congratulate his victor.

The Old Man sat down gently on the court at the base line, his face white, and awaited the Kid. He smiled a quizzical smile.

"Thanks," he replied to the other's hearty congratulations. "A bit of luck!"

A doctor came running up and began to examine his foot. The Old Man still smiled. The doctor looked up from his work. "I'm sorry," he said, "but all the ligaments are torn and there may be a small bone broken. I can't tell yet. Anyway, you are through with tennis for this year."

The Old Man looked up and his smile changed to a grin, "Aw, what difference does that make?" he said. "Did you see that last service?"

"THE HOUR-GLASS"

THE Kid was undeniably drunk! It was a regrettable but all-too-evident fact. He sat in the room of the Bellevue Stratford Hotel where he was staying and gazed in uncertain but indignant manner at the Old Man. The Old Man stood over him frowning furiously.

"I'm ashamed of you, Kid. Here I get you sent on East to the national championship and the night before your biggest match you go off on a party and show up in this condition. It's disgusting!"

"Wha' condition?" replied the Kid with dignity.

"Oh, shut up and go to bed," shouted the Old Man, and walking to the sleepy youngster, shook him vigorously. "Get out of those clothes and into your pajamas quick!"

The rough treatment carried the words into the boy's befuddled mind and slowly he succeeded in divesting himself of his street

dress and, pulling on his pajamas, stumbled into bed, almost instantly falling asleep.

The Old Man sat in a chair and gazed at him reflectively. So, all the stories about the Kid were true, were they! The Old Man was a fool to have doubted them, he told himself. He should have known there must have been some fires for the amount of smoke the Kid had raised at home.

The Kid was eighteen. The Old Man had won the state championship from him the year before when the former champion had tried his famous come-back. The match had gone five sets, the Kid playing so well that the Old Man had personally seen to it that he was sent East this year, and in order to give the boy a good start, the Old Man had come on, too.

The week before they started the president of the local association, Doctor Harvey, had come to him about the Kid. Stories about the Kid's drinking were floating around and Harvey felt that the Old Man should know of it. They had no positive proof. It was all hearsay.

"Well, I'll give the Kid the benefit of the doubt," said the Old Man, and promptly

forgot the matter. As he sat and watched the sleeping boy, the Old Man remembered not only the conversation with Harvey but stories, all too well.

His mind ran back over the Kid's tournament record. It was certainly suspicious. Twice in the past year he had dropped five-set matches, winning the first two sets easily but fading away in the last three. Once he had defaulted a match without explanation and several times not shown up when expected.

"Yes, I guess I have been fooled," muttered the Old Man. "Once, but never again. The Kid is up against the turning point now."

The Old Man rose early the next morning and was gone before the Kid awoke. A note just told the boy the Old Man would be back that night. The Kid felt far from well. His head ached, his hand was shaking, and his eyes felt stuck in his head. His mouth felt as if it were more or less well packed with a sticky brown. Altogether, he had a distinct hang-over. This was a great way to prepare for a final round in a national championship, he sarcastically told himself. Yes, he was an idiot, a fool, a rotter, and he knew it, but it hadn't stopped him the night before. He

didn't like booze. In fact, he rather disliked it, but he tried so hard to be a good fellow.

Ever since the first time he had said "Yes" to the first "Have one" he had fought an absolutely losing fight. He knew his all-too-frequent parties, started because he couldn't say no and finished because he wouldn't, had robbed him of many a match, but now his weakness might cost him the national singles!

He took an icy-cold shower that did much to clear his head. He dressed slowly and with great care. He ate a sparing breakfast. Somehow his hunger was lost in the sticky brown taste. All morning he fooled around the hotel, hoping to see the Old Man and attempt to show him how utterly he despised himself. The Old Man, however, was not around.

The Kid journeyed out to the club alone about a half hour before his match was called. He arrived to be greeted by a group of players he knew well, men he liked and looked up to. They bowed, a little coldly he thought. He passed into the locker room but paused to read a notice posted on the door. While he stood there he heard Bob Cotter turn to

Dick Thomas and say, "I saw the Kid last night at the country club, drunk as a lord. I'll bet he doesn't even extend Jolson to-day."

The Kid clenched his fist. So they all knew. They thought he couldn't stand the pace. He'd show them if he couldn't.

The Kid was certainly a tennis marvel. He was a born genius in the game. Nothing seemed beyond his ability. Twice already he had beaten Billy Jolson, the defending champion, the last time in sequence sets. The odds were or had been all in his favour for the match to-day.

The two players walked out to the court together. They were friends of years standing. In fact, they lived within a few blocks of each other at home. The Kid was about ten years younger than Billy Jolson and had always held a large slice of hero worship for him.

"Sorry to hear you were off on a party last night, Kid," remarked Jolson, as they reached the enclosure. "You know it doesn't pay!"

The Kid opened his mouth to protest but it was too late, for already the flock of photog-

raphers and movie men were swarming around them.

Play opened with the Kid serving. He started with a rush. Hitting like a madman, rushing the net at every opportunity, he broke Jolson's defense and crashed through for the first set 6–1. Jolson was not going well and the Kid, sensing his big chance, held the terrific pace with which he had opened, breaking Jolson's delivery in the first game and going into a commanding lead. Jolson was worried, plainly worried, for the Kid was playing marvellous tennis. The champion fought grimly, forcing the boy to chase shots to the farthest corners of the court. The Kid was feeling the pace, but by almost superhuman efforts he forced his tiring body to hold the speed necessary to give him a commanding lead of 5–1.

The Kid was suffering acutely. His breath came in laboured gasps. His head ached violently. His legs were wabbling from sheer fatigue. Jolson saw his chance and by forcing the attack, pulled to 4–5. The Kid was beaten. He knew it. Beaten by his own idiocy the night before, a victim of a moral weakness that in a physical sense he would

not show by quitting. He nerved himself to a final effort on his service and succeeded in pulling out the game and second set 6–4.

It was the end!

It was a mockery of a match from that point. Jolson, always in strict training, was in fine shape while the Kid was absolutely all in. Generosity on the part of the champion gave him one game in the third and two in the fifth sets but the match was never in doubt. The Kid went down to ignominious defeat and he knew he had only himself to blame.

He reached the hotel to find the Old Man awaiting him.

"Well?" The Old Man spoke drearily.

"I got licked," said the Kid, "in five sets as I deserved."

"Yes, as you deserved," said the Old Man.

"I'm sorry, more sorry than I can say, but it's the end for me. Never again will I be that much of a fool. No more parties during tennis." The Kid sounded sincere.

The Old Man looked him right in the eye. "Cut off that 'during tennis' and it's all right. No more parties for you at all if you stay in the game. Listen to me, Kid. I like you

and I have backed you, but there is one thing I won't back and that's a quitter. Any man or boy who is sent on to play tennis by an association who doesn't keep in condition is a quitter and not worthy of consideration. I want a solemn promise from you. Promise me that you do not touch a single drink, under any circumstances, for a year, and I will do all in my power to have you East next season. Go on as you have and I'll keep you off the team by every means in my power. We cannot afford to be represented by men who cannot take care of themselves. Which is it?"

The Kid sat silently for some minutes, then, raising his head, looked the Old Man in the eyes. "There is one thing in this world I value above all else and that's my word of honour," he said slowly, "I promise you on it that I will not touch a drink for one year."

The Old Man held out his hand. "Good," he said. "It's all I ask. The Red Cross exhibition match comes next week and you will meet Jolson again. Go to it!"

The following Saturday found the great stands at West Side Club, Forest Hills, crowded for the closing day of play in the

Red Cross exhibition matches. The teams were so even that when Jolson and the Kid stepped on the court the score was tied at two matches to each team. There was keen rivalry between the picked teams but even above that was the desire of the Kid to make good and show the Old Man he could play real tennis.

Jolson was in magnificent form and had learned his lesson against the Kid in the national singles. He opened an offensive with the first point that took all of the Kid's speed to hold. The games mounted following service until 8 all was reached. Finally the Kid broke through and ran out the set 10–8. The pace was killing. The Kid was in distress but so was Jolson. The second set found Jolson slightly the superior and the break was to him for 6–4.

The Old Man sat in the front row behind the court. The Kid often caught his exclamation of approval at some particularly brilliant shot. The third set again swung over to the Kid, and in a brilliant burst of volleying that sapped his reserve strength, he pulled it out at 6–3.

The rest was welcomed by both men.

Jolson in his perfect condition came back quickly. The Kid was very tired and the ability to react fast had gone through the effect of the many late hours he had kept.

Jolson started the fourth set with a rush. He dashed away to a lead of 3–1 and was never headed until the set was his at 6–4.

The Kid was gone physically but game to the end. He watched the Old Man closely for any sign of disapproval but the Old Man was clearly delighted. The Kid felt the other still believed in him. Oh, for just a little more pep. If only he could feel just a bit more energy rousing him. He knew he could beat Jolson if he had it. As it was, he only felt tired and thirsty.

He turned to the net ball-boy. "Get me some ginger-ale, quick," he said.

The fifth set saw Jolson suddenly fall off in his game. The Kid broke the other's service and held his own for 3–0. Service again held sway to 5–2.

The ball-boy suddenly appeared at the net, bearing in his hand a glass full of ice and ginger ale. The Kid, walking by the net, took the glass and lifted it to his mouth. How good it looked and how hot, tired, and thirsty

he felt. Just as it reached his lips a sudden whiff of the aroma he knew too well struck him. Someone had put a stiff kick in it.

He paused with the glass at his mouth. He had promised not to touch another drink for a year. He turned and looked at the Old Man and the latter smiled encouragement to him.

The Kid put down the glass and took his position in court. He felt old and weak. His knees were shaking. Jolson quickly won that game for 5–3 to the Kid.

Here was his chance. Victory was in the glass there on the side of the court. Between him and it was his promise. No, he would not take it. He would play on.

He served, but the sting was gone. His mind was not on the match but on the glass on the ground. Jolson, seizing his opportunity, crashed through the delivery and took the game 4–5.

The Kid walked around the far side of the net from the glass of ginger ale when they changed courts. He didn't dare trust himself too close to it. The idea that a drink would win for him was becoming an obsession. He was too tired to reason.

Jolson, playing well within himself, took the game and the score was tied at 5 all.

Still the Kid dared not go near the glass. He was fighting a bitter fight. The next game slipped away before he realized it and Jolson led at 6–5. Defeat was staring him in the face. It seemed certain. Only a drink stood between him and the loss of the match. The match meant everything to him. It meant he had made good for the Old Man! Made good? No, it meant he had broken his word. Still the Old Man would never know. He was in the stands and couldn't tell what was in the ginger ale. The Kid walked up to the umpire's stand and picked up the glass. He raised it to his lips. As he did so he glanced over the top at the Old Man. His friend was sitting gazing at him with a quiet air of confidence.

The Kid hesitated, then loosened his fingers around the glass. It fell and shattered at his feet. He walked out into court and looked up at Jolson. "Ready, Billy," he called.

The Old Man was closeted with Doctor Harvey in the latter's suite in the big office

building in San Francisco some months later. "I had arranged for it to be sent him," he was saying, "so when he deliberately dropped the glass, I scored a victory for the Kid as well as for Jolson."

THE DOUBLE CROSS

THE Kid had made good. There was no question about it whatsoever. He had made good with such a vengeance that he stood out head and shoulders above all other tennis players in America.

The turning point in the Kid's career had come two years before when his friend, the Old Man, had pulled him up short in his career of wine, women, and song—particularly wine—that threatened to cut short the playing life of the most remarkable boy in the game. The Kid was eighteen at that time and now at twenty he was recognized and admitted to be the greatest player in the world.

Billy Jolson, his old friend and team mate, was his only rival, but during the past two years as the Kid improved, he gained a slight edge even on Jolson.

The Old Man was really responsible for the Kid's success. All during the year that followed the Kid's defeat by Jolson in the final

round of the National singles, due, it must be admitted, to a far too merry party the boy attended the night before, the Old Man had helped the Kid win his fight against liquor.

The Kid was a youngster of strong likes and dislikes and his whole lovable nature turned to the Old Man in gratitude. It was now a case of "The king can do no wrong" as far as the Old Man went with the Kid.

The previous season the Old Man had gone East with the Kid and watched over him while the youngster swept all before him in winning the national singles. Then came the question of the Davis Cup trip to Australia and the make-up of the team that was to bring home the trophy from the holder.

The Kid was a certainty, as was Billy Jolson. Bob Cotter and Dick Thomas were the logical third and fourth members, but the captaincy was still vacant. The Davis Cup committee wanted the Old Man to go, but he felt business cares precluded.

Finally, however, things shaped up so that he saw a possibility of it and mentioned it to the Kid. From that moment his life was a misery. Morning, noon, and night

the Kid pestered him about it until almost in self-defense the Old Man said "yes" to the boy's urging and notified the Davis Cup committee of his willingness to go.

It was a long, hard trip with the many annoyances that always crop up under travelling conditions, but the Old Man with his ever-ready tact and cheery charm smoothed out the wrinkles and kept the team happy at all times. The players were favourites wherever they played.

Jolson and Thomas were experienced internationalists, while the two youngsters, Bob Cotter and the Kid, with their merry grins and dashing games, won the hearts of all who saw them.

Jolson and the Kid won all the singles and the Old Man wisely used Cotter and Thomas in the doubles, which they finally won in five sets. The cup was safe.

The Kid felt this year was the pinnacle of his tennis career. He was certain nothing would look important to him again. He was inordinately proud of the Old Man. He felt a personal triumph in the success. He was disgusted to find a strong vein of jealousy aroused at home toward the Old Man, due

to the glowing press tributes to his personal popularity.

Early in the spring the Kid and the Old Man went East. "It's a whole season in Eastern tournaments before the Davis Cup and nationals that you need, Kid," said the Old Man in deciding the issue. Just before he left the Kid received a letter from Bob Cotter, with whom he had grown quite intimate.

"I hear rumours in the East," wrote Bob, "that Jolson is sore over the Old Man's captaincy of the Davis Cup team and has intimated to the Cup committee that he will not play under him. Do you know anything of it? Mr. Hyrock, the president of the U. S. L. T. A., is anxious to overcome the influence of the Old Man, as he feels it is weakening his own power. I get all my dope from Dick Thomas, who is close to the powers that be; so I guess there is something in it."

The Kid read the letter to the Old Man as they journeyed East together. The Old Man laughed at it.

"Why should Jolson object to me? He and I are old friends. I don't believe he does.

Hyrock seems fair and I cannot think there is anything to Bob's ideas."

The matter passed entirely out of the minds of both in the rush of the early season play.

Suddenly a blow fell from a clear sky.

The Kid was taken seriously ill! He came down with an attack of flu that for five days threatened his life and then left him in so weakened a condition that any chance of his playing serious tennis seemed gone for the year.

The Kid took it very much to heart. He confided his feelings to the Old Man.

"I'm through for the year. I know it. Even if I felt well enough to play, the desire to win has gone. Somehow, I don't care any more. I guess I might as well call this my bad year."

"Nonsense!" The Old Man glared at him severely. "Cut out that kind of talk. You will be in shape by the Davis Cup matches. You need about two weeks in the country out of tennis talk and tennis atmosphere."

The Old Man never allowed time to slip away once his mind was made up, and the following evening found him and the Kid on their way to an inaccessible portion of the

White Mountains. Here they fished, loafed, and generally lazed away the days as the Kid grew stronger rapidly. Physically he came back with a rush, but the old-time keenness for the game still was lacking. He didn't want to see a tennis ball.

The Old Man was worried. He began to believe it might be the Kid's bad year, after all. Something was needed to shake the Kid out of his apathy, some keen stimulus that would drive him out of himself and make him want to win for someone else. The Old Man smiled grimly and settled down to think out the knotty problem.

Two days later he came into the Kid's room at the hotel where they were staying, just as the Kid was emerging from his shower.

"Say, Kid, I'm called to New York for a special meeting of the Davis Cup committee. I'll be away only two days. You had better stay here until I come back."

The Kid was annoyed. He had no desire to be left all alone in the mountains with nothing to do but "bay at the moon." He announced his intention of accompanying the Old Man at once.

"Nothing doing, Kid! It's only two weeks

to the Nationals, and after that the Davis Cup, and your place on the team depends on your showing in the championship. You must stay here!"

"But I don't want to stay."

"You must, Kid. You owe it to me and you also owe it to the country."

"Oh, very well. What difference does it make? I'm all in for the year so I might as well stay here as anywhere, since I haven't a chance for the Nationals, anyway."

"Oh, cut it out." the Old Man slammed the door angrily as he departed.

All that day the Kid fooled around the hotel. Nothing seemed to interest him. He was uneasy. He didn't like the sound of a special Davis Cup committee meeting. He remembered all the vague rumours about deposing the Old Man from the captaincy. It didn't seem possible some weeks ago, but now in the light of the sudden call for a meeting anything seemed possible. He considered calling the Old Man in New York on the long-distance 'phone, but quickly recalled that that would do no good, since the committee met that night.

Finally, in desperation, he went to bed

and almost before he knew it the 'phone was ringing and the office was announcing "Nine-thirty, sir," and he realized it was morning.

Hastily he dressed and rushed for the morning paper, his forebodings of yesterday even more strongly fixed in his mind.

He turned the pages of the New York *Times* until he came to the sporting page. His worst fears were realized. In large type on the first column he saw the head:

DICK THOMAS APPOINTED DAVIS CUP CAPTAIN

FORMER INTERNATIONALISTS WILL LEAD THIS YEAR'S TEAM AGAINST AUSTRALIAN CHALLENGERS NEXT MONTH.

The article went on to explain at length how the Davis Cup committee had met the previous evening, and after long deliberations Mr. Hyrock, the president of the U. S. L. T. A., had announced the appointment of Dick Thomas. One significant feature of the article was the statement that the ex-captain had had "nothing whatever to say," when interviewed.

The Kid found a laconic telegram from the

Old Man awaiting him when he went down stairs. Its contents were cryptic:

> Chucked. Hold your horses until I arrive.

The Kid exploded! He was furious! He swore vengeance on Hyrock, Jolson, Thomas, and everyone he could think of. He didn't know who was responsible and he didn't much care, for he'd get them all, he told himself. He'd show them who had the power in the tennis world.

He went back to the paper and reread the article. In it he came across something he had missed before:

> The Kid; who is recovering from his recent illness, is said to be in poor shape and it is possible another will be found in his place on the Davis Cup team. David Morton seems the most likely candidate to join Thomas, Jolson, and Cotter as our defenders.

So they were passing him up, too, were they! The Old Man first and now him! All right. He felt well and if he kept his health he'd show that bunch of robbers who would play on the Davis Cup team. He vowed to get in shape at once.

The Old Man arrived at five o'clock. He

found the Kid on the very bumpy, utterly inadequate dirt court belonging to the hotel, practicing his service.

"Hello, Kid," the Old Man greeted him, "what are you doing, catching butterflies?"

The Kid paused in the midst of a mighty service, and a moment later the Old Man found himself being forcibly propelled to their room, while an avalanche of questions and dire prophecies was poured into his ears.

"Easy, Kid, easy. I'll tell you the whole story in a minute. Wait till I wash up."

The Kid impatiently roved the room and every few minutes exhorted the Old Man to "hurry up, for John's sake!" John, whoever he may be, had a lot to answer for.

Finally, the Old Man came in and sat down in a big armchair and gazed at the Kid. The Kid paced furiously up and down the room and almost beat the air with his arms in his excitement. The Old Man leaned back in his chair.

"Sit down, Kid. No, sit down, or I don't tell you a word. That's better. Now listen and don't interrupt. It's a long story. I arrived at the meeting to find only Mr. Hyrock, George Albee, and Deal Bright present.

Albee plunged into the thing at once. He addressed me directly and told me that the committee had been well satisfied with my work the year before on the Australian trip and wanted me this year for captain but regretted deeply that they could not appoint me since Billy Jolson objected."

"Jolson——" the Kid cut in.

"Yes, Jolson, although I think Hyrock is in this. Anyway, Jolson objected on some fool ground concerning favours shown you and the fact I am receiving more honours than is my due, or some equally dumb objection. Frankly, I think they simply wanted to get rid of me and took that excuse. Anyway, they chucked me politely and nicely, but chucked me none the less. They appointed Dick Thomas in my place."

The Kid looked up, the light of battle in his eyes.

"Chucked you! Well, I'll get them. Billy Jolson chucked you! I swear I'll get square with that guy in the nationals if it's the last thing I do on earth. What's more, I'm going to New York to-morrow. I'm going to play tennis."

The following morning found them en route

for New York, both buried in the morning papers, working out the draw of the nationals which had been just announced. Fortune smiled on the Kid. He had the easy half of the draw, although both Bob Cotter and Dave Morton were on his side. Jolson was on the other side with Dick Thomas and Bill Gardner.

For the week before the championship commenced, the Kid practised at Forest Hills with the Old Man. Once he played Bob Cotter. The layoff had robbed him of his certainty off the ground and both Bob and the Old Man beat him decisively.

"I need tournament play," he would say to the Old Man, after a hard day's work-out. "I'll be all right as soon as I get in competition."

Time proved him a good prophet. From the first match in the Nationals the Kid found himself. He played the tennis of his life. He crushed Dave Morton in three straight sets in the round before the semi-finals. Bob Cotter proved a harder nut to crack, but the unflagging determination to avenge the Old Man by defeating Billy Jolson carried the Kid over many rough spots

in the five sets against Cotter. He finally won 7–5 in the fifth set.

Jolson, meanwhile, was mowing down his rivals with disconcerting ease. He swamped Bill Gardner with the loss of but five games in three sets. Even Dick Thomas could not hold him; so Jolson and the Kid met in the finals with the United States title at stake. Yet to the boy this title was not the paramount issue. It was secondary to the desire to show Jolson in what contempt he held him for the dirty trick Jolson had played the Old Man.

The Kid had not seen Jolson to talk to during the tournament. The truth was that he had carefully avoided his former friend. It was not until the two met on the court as the match was called that the Kid had met him face to face.

Jolson tossed his racquet. "Rough," muttered the Kid between clenched teeth. He could hardly speak, so bitterly did he desire revenge.

"Rough" it was, and the Kid took service. From his first screaming service ace to his final smash three sets later the Kid played such tennis as up to then had been seen only in dreams. Nothing would go wrong. He

simply couldn't miss. Drives, volleys, smashes, service aces, rained through Jolson's court in a perfect stream of placements. Jolson was stunned. This man he was playing had been pronounced down and out for the year; all the critics had agreed he was done; yet here he was playing such tennis as had never been known before.

Jolson strove valiantly, but in vain. He played his best but his best for once was not good enough.

The Kid romped home with a straight-set win 6–4, 6–2, 6–3. It was an annihilating, overwhelming, awe-inspiring victory.

The men walked off the court together. As they reached the locker rooms the Kid spoke to Jolson for the first time since he had called the toss of the racquet.

"I want to see you, Bill, when you're dressed," he said.

"So do I. I want to see you both." And the Old Man ran up and grabbed the Kid's hand. "Well played, Kid. Greatest tennis the world ever saw."

Bill Jolson turned wearily on the steps.

"Let's meet in the committee room," he said, and went in.

Fifteen minutes later Jolson, the Kid, and the Old Man faced each other around the long table in the committee room.

The Kid spoke with deadly calm: "Jolson, you beat yourself to-day," he said. "I was all in and down and out. I had given up all thought of winning the National, but you with your politics and your dirty tricks gave me a reason to win."

Jolson started sharply and turned to the Kid.

"Politics? Dirty tricks? I don't get you!"

"Yes, you do! You know only too well what I mean. Listen——!"

Suddenly the Old Man raised a hand.

"Wait!" he said quietly. "You two are at cross purposes. The Kid, through no fault of his own, thinks you double-crossed me and got me chucked from the captaincy of the Davis Cup team. For that reason he inflicted the biggest revenge in his power on you. He beat you in the National Championship."

Jolson turned from one to the other dazedly.

"I don't understand. You say the Kid thinks I got you chucked from the captaincy!"

"I don't think so. I know so!" broke in the Kid hotly.

"No, Kid, you don't," the Old Man said. "You only have my word for it."

"That's enough, isn't it?" demanded the boy. "That and the fact that Dick Thomas is the new captain."

"Not quite enough," the Old Man was smiling. "Not quite enough—because I lied to you!"

"You lied to me! You lied to me! And I have been living a lie all these weeks!" The Kid turned furiously on the Old Man.

"Hardly that, Kid. Hardly that!" The Old Man turned to Jolson. "Listen, Billy. Here is the whole truth. I owe you an apology, I suppose, for I did allow the Kid to think this of you for some weeks, but it was with a good reason. You know the Davis Cup is in danger. Nobody but you and the Kid can defend it successfully against these Australian challengers. He had to be at his best to win and he certainly was not in good condition. So I deliberately lied to him. The Kid was ill, ill mentally more than physically, and needed a stimulus to rouse him to a desire to win. I knew that he would

fight for me when he wouldn't fight for himself; so I told him you had double-crossed me and had me chucked from the Davis Cup team captaincy. It worked as you know." He turned to both. "Please, boys, say you forgive me."

The Kid arose.

"But Thomas is captain," he said.

"Yes, I resigned because I could not do the work this year and the committee accepted Dick on my recommendation."

Jolson put out his hand.

"Well played. America needs you at the helm of her tennis affairs," he said. "Shake on it!"

The Kid pushed both his hands into the grasp of the other two men.

"Me, too, please," he said. Then slowly, "I'm sorry, Bill."

THE ALIBI-BUSTER

GEE, I oughter won that match! I would have, too, if only I hadn't forgotten the score in the last set because Dick fell down on the next court and I laughed too hard and forgot my own match."

Bob Martin took his defeat seriously and he seriously addressed the crowd of boys standing on the club-house porch as he came up from the courts. He had been defeated. In fact, he had been smeared, and to make it worse, it was by little eleven-year-old Miles Burton. Bob really believed his own story.

Dick Gillespie, a lively little youngster of fourteen, chuckled and turned to Miles. "Well, Midie, how much do I get for winning your match for you?" An audible snicker and a few smothered remarks about "Alibi Ike" went floating round.

Bob was peeved. It was bad enough to get licked by an infant—Bob was sixteen—

but to be accused of telling alibis! He abruptly walked into the club house.

It was opening day in the junior state tennis championship and all the boys in the district who had any interest in the game were on hand. Bob was convinced he would clean up the event. He was always convinced of this at every tournament. The licking by Miles was but another in his already long string of unexpected defeats. In fact, he had never progressed beyond the first round of any tournament. However, he felt that it was always owing to some outside influence that he met defeat, and he was long and loud in his explanation of each one. He was so sure this was the cause that he firmly believed his own story.

The group of boys on the porch discussed various topics with the freedom of speech so beloved by the press and the young.

"Aw, gee! Bob is just the original alibi boy. I'll bet he originated the Forty Thieves story or whatever it was that has Alibi in." This from Miles.

"Come off, kid," came from Harry Cole, a seventeen-year-old lad who was favoured to win the tournament; "that guy wasn't Alibi—that was Ali Baba."

The boys laughed in chorus, so loudly and with such enjoyment that Miles only regained his own position in good standing by rushing at Harry and quite ineffectually attempting to silence him by force.

"Say, fellows, I've got an idea," Dick announced seriously.

"Gee, give him air!"

"Don't let it escape!"

"Got a cage for it?"

"Aw, cut it out. Listen! Aw, say, can't you listen? Let's form an alibi club. Everybody that joins promises to tell no alibis for any lickings he gets."

"Great!"

"Fine!"

"I'm president!"

"Only president you are, Miles, is president of the Goopher Club."

"Cut it out," Dick protested, "I'm in earnest. Will you do it? How many of you will join?"

"I will!"

"Let's go!"

"When do we meet?"

"I'm treasurer!"

"Not with my money, kid."

"Shut up, will you!" Again Dick got a hearing. "Let's organize now."

They went into the executive session as a body on the spot. About the time the meeting was at the height of its fever Bob came out on the porch.

Miles saw him and with one howl grabbed him.

"Join our new club!"

"Sure, Midie. What is it?"

"The Alibi Club. Every member faithfully swears to tell no alibi tales after he is licked. No excuses and no reasons, not even if a tree falls down on the next court."

"Sure. Why, I never tell alibis."

"Listen, fellows." Dick grew impassioned and rather breathless with his own importance. "I started this club, so I'm going to tell you fellows my idea. We all swear that if any member gets caught telling an alibi, he must get out the day of the finals of the tournament and act as ball-boy, and must send to our club a written copy of his alibi. We'll meet once a month and read the alibi and decide what other punishment to inflict."

"Sounds easy."

"Don't cost nothing, so I'm agreeable."

"All in favour say 'Aye'!" Dick insisted on formality in the matter.

There was no question of the motion not being carried. Its acceptance could be heard a mile.

"Well, let's go."

"One minute." Dick was again seized with an idea. "Every member must warn any other member if he hears him starting to alibi." A little vague but it got over.

During the remainder of the week the memories of the club members felt the terrible, unaccustomed strain, but as their imagination was given a much-needed rest in consequence, the result was, in the main, beneficial.

Once Harry Cole started an explanation, not to say alibi, of how he came to drop six games to Miles in two sets, but a gentle reminder in the form of a swiftly thrown tennis ball in the ribs, followed by a frightful face from Dick, stopped short his flight of fancy. Dick hovered on the edge of alibi when he found himself unaccountably on the short end of the semi-final match, but he triumphed with nothing more incriminating than "Gee, I was rotten!"

The following week the interscholastic jun-

ior championship in the district was held and among the entries the Alibi Club members were prominent, in fact, almost predominant. The event was congested with them.

Bob Martin and Dick Gillespie met in the first round. Bob was in far more confidence than tennis form. In fact, he was very poor. Dick, who always outclassed him, was primed for this tournament, as his unexpected defeat the week before still rankled; no soothing words of his own had stilled the inner voice that continuously told him it had been his own fault, so he went after Bob with added energy.

Bob ran until his tongue hung out. He chased the ball from corner to corner of the court, but for some reason he never seemed able to win off his return. Dick was reaping an awful revenge on an innocent victim.

"Game. Set. Match. Gillespie, 6–0, 6–0!"

Bob was stunned!

Something must be done. He could not face the crowd of boys with no explanation for that score. Forgotten was the Alibi Club and its infinite possibilities of punishment. Bob arrived at the club house to find Dick the centre of an admiring group.

"Well played, Dickie!"

"Gee, twelve straight games! That's an awful lickin'!"

"Say, Dick, howdya get that way?"

Bob opened his mouth, protest written on every line of his wet, dirty face. Dick looked up and saw him. He knew Bob was about to offer a real big alibi, yet he felt that since Bob was his own victim he could not openly attempt to shut him up.

Words were useless. He would try action. He suddenly shoved the boy next to him directly into Bob.

"Wow! Gee! Whatdya think you're doin'? Walking all over my feet?"

"I didn't, anyway. Dick pushed me."

Bob felt this was the crowning insult. He turned savagely at Dick but Dick had flown. Verily the young are wise in their day and generation.

Bob felt aggrieved. Haughtily he resumed his expression of lofty superiority, acquired at great effort on the way off the court and worn until lost in the press of emotion roused by Dick's popularity and his own outraged toe.

"Aw, say, I'd have beaten him if I hadn't

drunk so much water before I started. I was water-logged and couldn't run."

"Don't let water get in the way. You couldn't run if you had a motor inside of you."

"What do you do the hundred in, Bob? Ten flat? Minutes, of course."

"Say, look at our little greyhound—only he's water-logged."

Dick suddenly appeared at the door of the dressing room.

"Say, fellows, meeting of the Alibi Club called at once to consider the case of one Robert Martin, accused of offering alibi for defeat in present tournament. Will the defendant——" Dick suddenly got stuck with his legal phraseology and wound up hastily—"Bob, you've got to come and tell us about it and we will decide the punishment."

The Alibi Club went into formal and secret session at once. The offence against its code of honour was so public that the club dispensed with hearing evidence and did not even demand the written statement of the alibi offered by Bob. They convicted him with no discussion and perfect unity of thought. The scrap arose out of the form

of punishment. The majority were undecided. A few unruly spirits were for chucking him out of the club. Dick pointed out carefully that this would be no punishment. He said he feared Bob would think it a reward.

The boys discussed the matter at some length and many extraneous matters at great length. Finally, Dick grew restive. He felt the call of food. He arose and addressed the meeting. Rather, he tried three times to arise only to sit down forcibly as his coat tails received a violent tug from the rear. Eventually he gave up rising and merely addressed the meeting.

"Shut up, you fellows!" Formality of order and language had long since flown. "Listen! I've got a hunch. You know Bob must act as ball-boy for the finals anyway, so let's have him tell his alibi to all the crowd there."

"Gee, that's great! Some idea!"

"How much water do you want, Bob, to give you an alibi for not talking?"

"Don't get water-logged from the slush you'll spill around."

"All right, that's settled." Dick finally reached his feet, this time assisted forcibly

by Harry Cole. "You'll come, Bob. You can't get out of it."

The germ of a great idea was slowly developing in Bob's head. He'd show them.

"Huh, sure I'll come!"

The secret session of the Alibi Club broke up as the boys scattered far and near for lunch.

The tournament progressed rapidly and as expected, except for the unexplained defeat of Harry Cole by Dick. A second victim of too much talk was nearly added to the speaking programme for the finals, but Harry choked back his own views of his defeat and took it in silence.

Saturday dawned fair, and all the boys, knowing of the added attraction of Bob's alibi explanation, were on hand for the finals. Dick and Miles were to meet in the match for the interscholastic title. Bob, true to his word, was on hand.

The chairman of the tennis committee had been sworn to secrecy by Dick and then informed of the Alibi Club and its work. He was a man who understood boys and their ideas and he willingly promised to keep his hands off the alibi side-show, as he termed it. He arrived at the club accompanied by

a visitor from New York. The match was about to start and the visitor settled himself comfortably on the porch to await the battle. He enjoyed junior tennis. It was so clean and sportsmanlike.

Dick, dressed to play, stepped to the centre of the court and beckoned Bob. Bob came forward willingly.

Dick faced the small crowd of boys, possibly fifty, who ranged along the benches. He grinned.

"Here's Bob," he said. "He has something to say."

With this long and formal introduction Dick withdrew.

Bob raised his head. He had not seen the man on the porch. He saw only the boys and they all knew his real alibi, so he was going to put up such an alibi that it would give them something to talk about.

"Fellows, I've been asked to tell you why I lost 6–0, 6–0 to Dick. Gee, why shouldn't I, with the kind of a game the fellows put up on me! They fixed it up beforehand. Listen: first of all, Dick there, kidded me all the way through so I got laughin' and couldn't see. Miles was scoring and he always called the

score wrong and Harry Cole on the lines called all my shots out and all Dick's in. I was sick and my racquet was busted, and anyway, that's how it was."

The smallest boy turned to his side kick: "Gee! That's tough prattle."

The New York man on the porch arose and strode down to the court. The club tennis chairman had disappeared. It was in his agreement with Dick not to interfere.

"What's all this, boy? What's all this you are saying about a put-up job? I'm the head of the Umpires' Association of the National Tennis Association. Are you sure about all this?"

Bob cast a helpless glance around. Where had this man come from? What did he mean? Still stunned, Bob merely wagged his head aimlessly. The New Yorker took it for assent.

"I'll see about this. I'll have this tournament played over—the whole thing. They can't put up jobs on me. I'll fix it. I'll see your tennis chairman."

He strode off.

Bob stood petrified as if he had taken root to the court. Miles and Dick were horror-struck. This joke was going to be on them.

The remainder of the boys were bewildered. They did not quite realize what was happening.

Suddenly Dick rushed to Bob. "Well, why didn't you tell him? Why didn't you tell him it was all a joke? Why didn't you tell him about the club? Why did you tell this lie anyway? Why——" He lost his breath.

Bob still stood and gaped after the man. Finally, he roused himself.

"Gosh! Much chance I had to tell him anything. Howdya get that way? Tell him about the club! It's your club, not mine," and Bob walked to the porch.

Discussing, arguing, wondering, the boys trooped in. What would happen? Was the man really the head of the Umpires' Association, and if he was, what was it, and what could he do?

Suddenly the tennis chairman appeared at the door of the club.

"Dick and Bob, come here!"

The two boys arose and walked toward him. The funeral march was a jazz compared to them.

"Boys, this is Mr. Condon, head of the Umpires' Association of America."

A shadowy figure awaited them in the hall, and with feelings akin to those of a condemned murderer the boys passed through the door into the club house.

What transpired within the waiting boys never knew. Truth will out, and it is certain that a full, accurate, and impartial account of the Alibi Club was poured into the ears of Mr. Condon. Certainly enough was told him to convince him that justice had not been outraged and that the tournament might go on. The waiting boys sat what seemed hours, awaiting the verdict.

Finally, the door opened. Mr. Condon walked out accompanied by Bob and Dick. He motioned to Miles. The four walked out together to the court. Mr. Condon mounted the umpire's chair.

"Linesmen out! Gillespie—Burton, match!"

As the boys took their places at the lines and the players warmed up, the club chairman sauntered out to the umpire's chair.

"Pretty live boys, eh, Condon?"

The umpire settled himself comfortably on the big stand. Then he looked at his friend:

"Young Dick is some little alibi-buster!"

BYE-BYE, ALIBI

THE Alibi Club had passed away. Rather, let it be said, it had changed its activities and its name. The personnel was still intact while its leading members still held office in a new organization.

Its demise and reincarnation took place through a twofold motive. There came a split among the junior members of the big Tennis Club to which all the boys of the district belonged, over the untoward incident of the punishment of Bob Martin by the Alibi Club earlier that year.

It was not Bob Martin who felt aggrieved. Far from it. He spent many an hour in happy contemplation over the fact that the men members of the Tennis Club enjoyed a hearty laugh at the Alibi Club's expense. The story of that unhappy incident became a standing joke at the club, and Dick Gillespie, the president of the Alibis, was addressed by

the men solely as Alibi Buster. Dick was fourteen and this ill became his dignity, he felt. In fact, Bob's only regret was that Mr. Condon, the head of the Umpires' Association of America, had not insisted on the tournament being replayed as he had threatened.

This state of things at the Tennis Club was getting on the nerves of the boys of the Alibi Club. It grated on them to be hailed by the players who were their idols with "Hello, young Alibi," or "Who won the replayed tournament?" or worse yet, "Hello, Alibi Ike." This last remark proved too much for Dick Gillespie. Unfortunately, he was the too-frequent victim of the men's pleasantries.

Saturday always proved a bad day for Dick, for all the men were at the club and the youngster, who was really a great favourite, came in for a great deal of kidding. One particular Saturday proved to be the last straw for, while Dick was playing with his special idol, Robert Brown, a visiting player from another club, the tennis chairman came out to the court.

"Hello, Bob." Then to the boy, "Why, hello, there's Alibi Buster."

Bob Brown turned quickly. "Alibi Buster? What's the joke, kid?"

Dick turned and fled. He stood not upon the manner of his going, but went.

However, the story came out and to make matters worse, Dick saw Bob Martin laughing at him from the club porch as the men grinned and called, "Alibi Buster" after him.

This decided Dick. He would take action. He set out on a quest for friends. In time he found Miles Burton, the little eleven-year-old tennis wonder of the Alibi Club, Harry Cole, its worthy vice-president, and various and sundry other loyal members. To each he announced, "Meeting of the Alibi Club at my house after dinner." To all inquiries he turned a deaf ear and hurried home.

Arriving at his domicile he scanned the immediate surroundings anxiously. Behind the garage was a dirt tennis court, once fair to gaze upon, but now a mass of weeds and débris. It was the family bonfire site. Dick considered the situation for a few moments, hands thrust deep in his pockets. At last, with a final hitch at his sagging trousers, he bolstered up both them and his courage and strode into the house.

Grim intent was written upon every line of Dick's face. He marched directly to the library, where his father, a kindly, portly, though somewhat severe-looking gentleman, was reading his paper.

Dick strode up, words almost bursting from his lips as he crossed the threshold. He opened his mouth. All that came out was a faint whistle. It fell on deaf ears. His father never saw him or knew of his presence. Dick hastily withdrew. From a point of vantage in the hall he considered the matter and finally decided on another frontal attack. He started toward the room, gathering momentum and determination as he reached the door.

"Father."

At that moment the rug which rested in front of the threshold treacherously slid from under his feet and Dick arrived in front of his father seated, not gently, but very firmly, on the floor.

At least he attained the desired effect. He gained Mr. Gillespie's attention. That gentleman sprang to his feet and gazed at the small figure occupying so much floor space.

"Dick, my son! Are you hurt?"

"Father"—Dick cared nothing for his material body until his soul was relieved—"Father, I want our tennis court—can I have it?"

"Yes, son, yes, but are you hurt?"

"Father, promise me I can have it."

Dick sounded pitiful in his earnestness. His father feared it was pain that caused the quiver in his voice.

"Yes, I promise; but are you hurt? Answer me at once."

Dick crawled to his feet. "No, Father, not at all." And with shy mien and silent steps Dick stole from the room.

Dinner proved a long and wearisome meal to Dick that night. The final course stretched its interminable length, eternity long at least to Dick, while Miles Burton, Harry Cole, and several other boys made his life miserable and the night hideous with howls of laughter and catcalls outside the window.

At last he was free, and Dick rushed from the room. A parting "Where are you going?" from Mother, and "Be in early" from Father made no impression.

"Hey, fellas!"

Dick burst from the door.

"Yo, Dicky!"

"Say, thought you were dead. Gee, you're some little eater, kid."

"Shut up, Harry." Dick was in no mood for disparaging remarks on his appetite. "Come back here with me. I've something to show you."

And with the air of a conjurer about to produce something from nothing, Dick led the group of boys around to the mass of weeds and rubbish behind the garage. Majestically he waved a hand. "There," he propounded.

"Great little junk heap, Dick, but what's the idea?" Harry Cole voiced the sentiments of the crowd.

"Junk heap! Gosh, boy, that's a great tennis court."

"Tennis court? Say, kid, you're crazy."

"Aw, whaddya givin' us?"

"What kind of tennis? Deck tennis?"

A feeling of skepticism seemed to prevail. Dick met the attack boldly.

"Come here, Harry. Look! See that dirt between the weeds, and see the backstops and where the posts used to be? It's a tennis court, all right, and my father says we can

have it to put in shape. Now, my idea is to change the Alibi Club to a tennis club and play here where there won't be any one to yell Alibi Buster and Alibi Ike at us. For one, I can't stand it and won't, anyway, if I could. And let's not let Bob Martin in this club. He got us in wrong at the big club. Let's have our own team and challenge the big club, whaddya say?"

"Great!"

"Sure!"

"I'm all for it!"

"What will we call it?"

"When do we start?"

"I'm president."

"Shut up, Miles, you are not! You know I got this up and I am still president." Dick was out for his own rights.

Harry Cole raised his hand. Harry was seventeen, and the natural court of appeal.

"Shut up. Dick's right. He's president and I'm still vice-president and Miles is secretary and treasurer, just as we were in the Alibi Club. Let's all come over tomorrow and start getting the court in order. What shall we call the club?"

"Gillespie Tennis Club."

"No."

"Nothing doing."

"The Alibi Tennis Club." This from Harry.

A pause. "Then, No more Alibi stuff for me," announced Dick, sadly.

Suddenly he looked up with a sparkling eye.

"I have it," he said. "We'll call ourselves the R. V. T. C. Re Venge Tennis Club."

Silence reigned.

"Well, whaddya say?" Dick asked, eagerly.

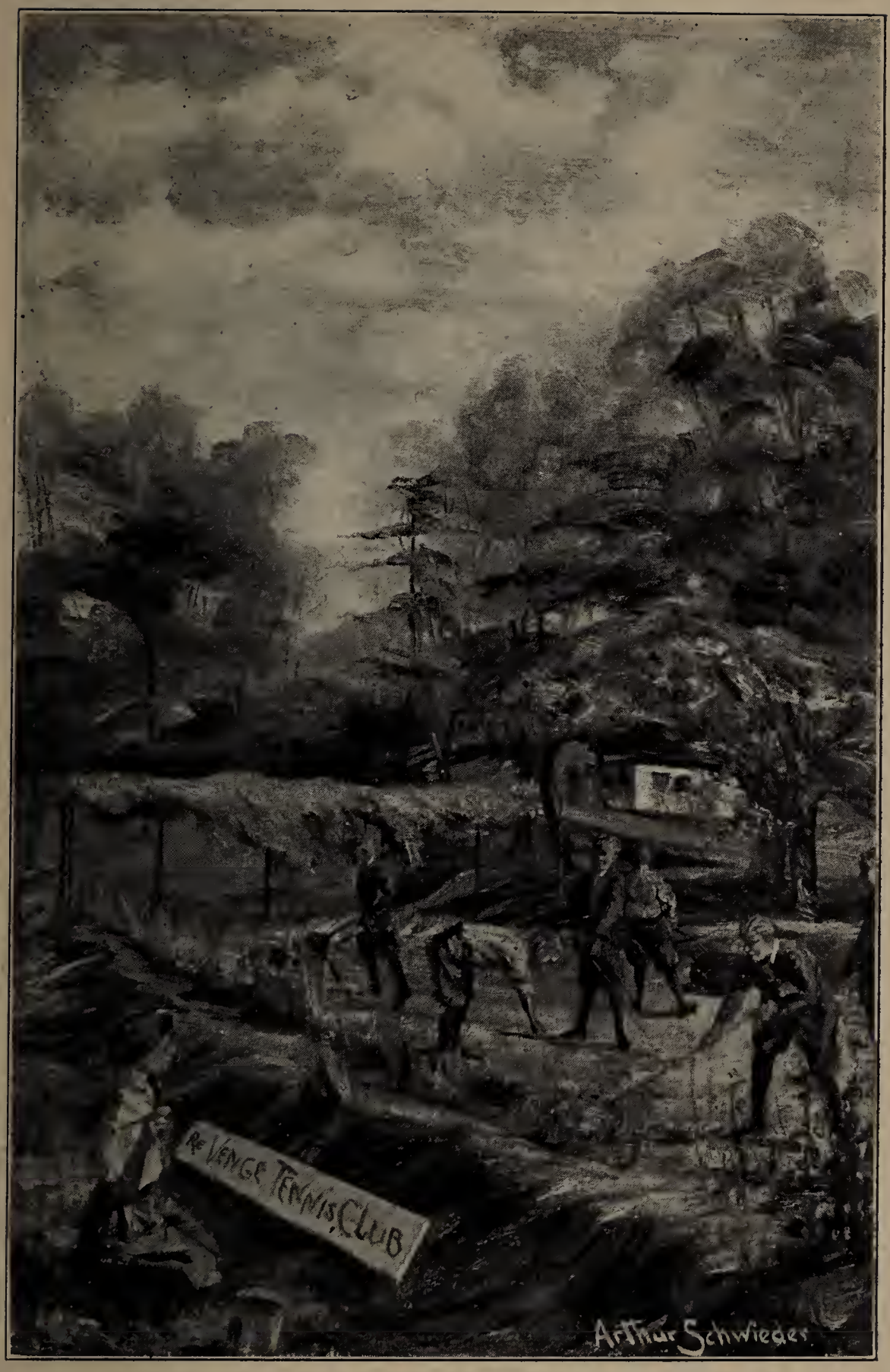
Harry Cole pondered seriously. "Re Venge. Revenge—not bad! Say, kid, that's pretty good."

Dick assumed an official air, "All in favour say 'Aye.'"

"Aye," rang far and wide over the surrounding neighbourhood.

The Re Venge Tennis Club was born, and at its birth the Alibi Club took flight. The king is dead. Long live the king!

During the days and the weeks that followed the boys laboured on the court. There were little fights that delayed the progress. Small obstacles such as large pieces of wood that were almost buried in the soil must needs be dug



"Re Venge Tennis Club"

up and carried away, after which the holes must be filled in by dint of much protest and bodily labour.

Mr. Gillespie aided the good work by lending them his gardener for one whole day and incidentally he presented the R. V. T. C. with a roller that could be pulled by the boys. An early evening raid on the big Tennis Club itself produced an old marker and a goodly quantity of lime for marking the court. The day, a Wednesday, that the court was completed, marked, and rolled, and the boys played on it for the first time, Dick called a meeting of the Re Venge Tennis Club in the club house, otherwise known as the garage for that night. A full attendance was recorded.

Dick solemnly rose to his feet. His solemnity was partially marred by a large and somewhat juicy spit ball that took him just under the eye as he reached his feet.

"Cut it out. This is serious."

Dick nursed his injured face and glared in the general direction of the offender.

"Listen, fellas. The court is all ready and so is the club; so let's send a challenge to Bob Martin for a match here Saturday.

I saw Bob yesterday. He's pretty sore about being left out of this club. I told him he could never get in until he said he was sorry for getting us in wrong at the big club and until he promised to cut out calling us 'Alibi Buster' and 'Alibi Ike.' He just snorted at that and sorta laughed. Anyway, he told me there are two or three new boys in the big club who are fine players. Let's find out. Let's challenge them to a match Saturday. Two singles and a double played here. Whaddya say?"

"Great!"

"Fine!"

"Let's go!"

"I'll play!"

"Yes, you will, Mike. You'll play ball-boy. I can beat you with my hands tied."

Dick raised a hand for silence and obtained a little of it.

"Let's let Harry Cole pick his own team."

"Right!"

"Good stuff!"

Harry rose. "I'll take Dick, Miles, and Jack Edwards there. Dick and I will play singles, and Miles and Jack doubles. We ought to beat them with that team."

It was so ordered, and a challenge was forthwith sent off to Bob Martin by messenger, one Miles Burton, who returned shortly with an acceptance and the names of the other team.

Bob Martin was named as second single with three new boys in the other positions; Bill McIntire for first single, and Morgan Allen and Roy Dudley as doubles. The match was scheduled to start at ten o'clock Saturday morning, a singles followed by the doubles in the morning and the second singles in the afternoon.

Great was the practicing by both teams during the next few days. Scouts of the rival camps skulked around the courts. It was reported that the new boys looked good and that Bob Martin was showing great improvement.

Saturday broke fair and warm. By nine o'clock the Re Venge Tennis Club court was crowded with club members and loyal adherents of the rival team. Mrs. Gillespie shut all windows in a vain attempt to obtain quiet.

The big Tennis Club's team arrived. Bob Martin, wearing a superior air, made all necessary introductions.

Bill McIntire and Harry Cole took the court. After a warm-up the match began. Harry was in fine form and while Bill showed a good game he was not quite in Harry's class. Re Venge T. C. scored the first point when Harry won two sets 7–5, 6–3.

Bill ran up to the net to shake hands.

"You're too darn good, Harry," he said, sincerely.

The R. V. T. C. members decided that Bill was a good scout after all.

The doubles proved a bitter blow to the Re Venge Club. Miles and Jack never had a chance against the two older boys, Morgan and Roy.

Morgan and Roy took the offensive from the beginning and simply swamped the opposing pair. The younger boys struggled gamely but went down to the tune of 6–1, 6–2. The score was tied. One match all. The morning was still young, so it was decided by joint agreement of the two captains, Harry Cole and Bob Martin, to play the last match at once.

Dick and Bob, old rivals, stacked up, with the honour of the new club on Dick's hands.

Dick was nervous, very nervous, and he

quickly found Bob had improved greatly. Dick had always beaten Bob easily before. In fact, in the famous Alibi episode he had walloped him 6–0, 6–0.

To-day was a different story. Nothing worked right for Dick. His confidence was gone and his shots would not go in. Bob was playing well and missing little. The first set was his at 6–3.

The loss of this set upset Dick. He worried and grew worse and worse. Game after game went to Bob. At 40 love Bob turned to Bill McIntire and proclaimed loudly, "Bye-bye, Alibi Buster. I wonder what alibi Alibi Ike will have."

Bill glared at him. "Oh, be a sport, Bob, can't you?" he muttered.

Dick heard only Bob's remark and he saw red. Forgotten was his nervousness. Gone was his uncertainty. He went at Bob with all the fury in his little body. His drives whipped over the net past the other boy as Bob tried to rally. His service, excellent for so small a boy, left Bob flat-footed. Dick was rabid. He was wild-eyed and panting but nothing stopped him. Six sequence games were his for the set, 6–4, but still he battled on.

"Alibi Ike!" he muttered. "He will call me 'Alibi Buster,' will he?"

The tide still carried Dick. Bob could not stop him. The little fighter was off in a flash that many a better player than Bob would have fallen before, and Bob's nerve broke under the strain and he quit cold. Six more games and the match was over, 3–6, 6–4, 6–0.

Dick pranced to the net. Bob slouched up.

"You will call me 'Alibi Buster,' will you? Re Venge is sweet," and he held out a grubby hand with a grin.

Bob took it and suddenly something he had been wanting to say for a long while got away from him. "Dick," he said, "you're a darn good little sport. I'm sorry I put you fellows in wrong at the club and I'll never call any of you 'Alibi Ike' or 'Alibi Buster' again. This licking served me right for my rotten remark to Bill about you. I'm sorry."

Dick pumped his hand up and down. "Thanks, Bob! Say, would you fellows join our club?"

"You bet!"

Dick turned and faced the group of boys.

"Meeting of the Re Venge T. C. im-

mediately to take in four new members. Bill McIntire, Morgan Allen, Roy Dudley, and"—a slight pause—"Bob Martin. Also to decide on a new name for our organization."

Just as the club members were wending their way to the club house in the Gillespie garage Mrs. Gillespie appeared at the window.

"Dick," she called, "lunch is ready."

"Gee! Eats!" cried the president of the R. V. T. C. "Meeting indefinitely postponed for food."

And he disappeared within the portals of the Gillespie mansion.

MIXED TROUBLES

"DEAREST, you are wrong. Really for once you are. The man is the one to direct the team." Jack Edwards, the famous tennis star, smiled down at his fiancée, Marion Davison, as he issued his declaration.

The small group of young people on the porch of the Meadow Club, Southampton, laughed in huge enjoyment at the disgust with which Marion greeted the remark.

She made a distinctly aggravating face at Jack and laughed.

"Well, boy, dear, I know who will run our team on and off the court when we're married," she replied. "Anyway, give me a cigarette and let's play a rubber of bridge to quiet my troubled nerves. I never could abide these lovers' quarrels."

The discussion had arisen from an incident that came up in the mixed doubles match that afternoon. Edwards, who was one of

the leading tennis players in the East, had been playing with his fiancée, Marion Davison, against Miss Eleanor Sayres and Robert Murney. Marion, who was one of the most promising players among the younger women, had distinct views on the part a girl should play in mixed doubles. Throughout the match she insisted on violating the usual method of procedure by repeatedly spoiling returns for her partner by encroaching on his territory. Finally, at match point Jack called "Mine" for a lob over Marion's head, to which the young lady replied by deliberately backing into the ball and missing her return. The match ended on the spot. The argument as to the relative merits of men and women in tennis and particularly mixed doubles ensued.

Jack had met Marion the year before at Newport, during the invitation tournament at the famous Casino. It was all over with him from the first day he had gazed into her sparkling blue eyes and watched her trim little figure flashing about the tennis court or seated at the wheel of her little racing car. Marion had not been averse to Jack's company from the day of their first meeting but it took a

full winter of a very ardent courtship before her royal highness decided to say "Yes."

Even before their engagement Marion ruled Jack with a rod of iron and bossed him with somewhat the methods of a gang foreman or an animal trainer. It was the first time in all his life that Jack had been ordered around, to say nothing of doing what he was told, and both he and his many friends obtained much secret amusement over it, not unmixed with surprise on Jack's part.

On the tennis court only Jack tried to assert himself. He insisted on certain methods of play or thought he did. In reality, Marion did as she was told when she felt like it. In other words, one word from him and she did as she pleased.

Inside the club house the argument still raged. This time it happened to be bridge.

"Jack, you know I never want you to bid originally without an ace or king."

"Marion, darling, I had seven hearts, a single spade, and the ace of diamonds."

"I don't care. You didn't have the ace or king of hearts, so you should not bid originally."

"But, honey, I made five over."

"Yes, because I had the ace of hearts."

"Good lord, you're the whole damn suit of hearts as far as I go. I'm wrong, as usual," and Jack gave up the fight and offered his now famous imitation of a jellyfish.

Weeks passed. Marion came up to New York and saw Jack play through to the semi-final round of the national singles. During all that period she trained him according to her ideas. It amused her to see him squirm and make violent efforts to assert himself only to capitulate before her will or grovel to her sweetest smile.

Marion adored Jack. She loved every inch of his great frame and idolized each and every hair on his well-covered head, yet to save herself she could not curb her desire to irritate him, just to see him finally surrender in a burst of contrite affection. Somehow he always reminded her of her big St. Bernard dog just after a severe spanking.

Marion and Jack were to play the national mixed doubles together in the annual tournament held at Philadelphia Cricket Club, Philadelphia, two weeks after the men's national singles.

The draw of the mixed doubles brought

most of the strength in the upper half where Mrs. George Whitman and H. T. Johns, Margaret Zimmerman and Richard Vincey, Mrs. Mollie Mahoney and W. F. Jenkinson were bunched.

Jack and Marion had easy matches until the semi-final when they met Miss Eleanore Gossen and Nathan W. Miles.

All went well during the early rounds. The peace and quiet of the team was seldom disrupted, for Marion's invasions of her partner's court were too infrequent to matter against easy teams.

The unexpected happened in the semi-final round. Margaret Zimmerman and Richard Vincey defeated Mrs. George Whitman and H. T. Johns who had previously eliminated Mrs. Mollie Mahoney and W. F. Jenkinson.

Marion and Jack, who played Miss Gossen and Miles after this match, sat together on the club-house porch.

"There you are, Marion," said Jack, "it's always the woman who loses, for only the man can kill. See! Both women are the weak links."

"O foolish one," the girl laughed, "you

can't impress me with all your talk. I'll play my own game as I see fit."

"Not when you're playing mixed doubles with me," cut in Jack sharply.

Marion's quick little temper flashed. "I will, no matter who I play with." The mere matter of grammar never worried Marion in the least.

Jack rose and forced a smile. "All right, dearest," he said. "It's time to dress for our match."

Marion was not pacified by Jack's evasion. She wanted a complete surrender. Not having received it, she determined to show that young gentleman just how mixed doubles should be played.

Miss Gossen and Miles were a dangerous team but hardly in the class with Marion and Jack. The latter pair should have won easily but Marion was perverse to the point of stubbornness. She wanted the national mixed doubles title more than anything she could think of, but it never entered her mind that she might be endangering their chances by the stand she was taking. So from the opening of the match she deliberately invaded Jack's court at every opportunity.

As often as Marion would poach across, Miles would beat her with a well-placed ground stroke down her side line that Jack would ineffectually chase to the backstop.

Miss Gossen and Miles finally won the first set 8–6. Marion, still refusing to learn discretion, and Jack took the next, 7–5, owing to Jack's brilliant recovery of the many shots Marion allowed to go by her.

Jack was rapidly losing the little hold he still had on his temper. The games advanced to four all in the final set.

Jack was serving with the score 40–30. Miles lobbed high to the centre of the court.

"Mine!" called Jack.

Marion deliberately stepped in and swung at the ball. She netted her smash.

Jack turned to the base line without a word.

Crash! A service ace.

Smash! Another.

"Game, Miss Davison and Mr. Edwards. They lead 5–4 final set!"

The first four points on Miss Gossen's service were divided. Then Marion hit deep to the other girl and she and Jack came into the net. Up went the return in a lob down the centre.

"Mine!" called Jack.

Marion again stepped in.

Suddenly she felt herself pushed violently to one side.

Smash!

Jack killed the ball for match point.

Marion was furious. The idea of Jack's humiliating her before all that crowd. She would throw a good scare into him for that trick. She would make him pay in full. Still, she was glad he had won the point.

A moment more and Jack's drive beat Miles down the side line and the match ended.

"Well played, dearest," Jack whispered to Marion as the four players left the court.

She walked deliberately away from him and entered the club house without saying a word.

"Gee, the little girl's a bit peeved," he muttered to himself as he trotted in to dress.

Jack emerged spick and span in clean white flannels, feeling at home with the world and inclined to be proud of himself. He had played well and they had won that match mainly by his own efforts. He felt they could beat Miss Zimmerman and young Vincey. He sauntered over to the ladies' club house.

Marion was awaiting him on the porch, looking cool and collected in a dainty little blue dress.

"Well, little girl, how about a bit of supper and a spin in the car in preparation for the match to-morrow?"

"Just a moment, Jack." Marion spoke seriously. "You owe me an apology for deliberately humiliating me before that crowd to-day."

"Why, dearest one, I didn't humiliate you at all and the Lord knows I didn't do it intentionally."

"Now, Jack, what's the use of talking that way. You know you did."

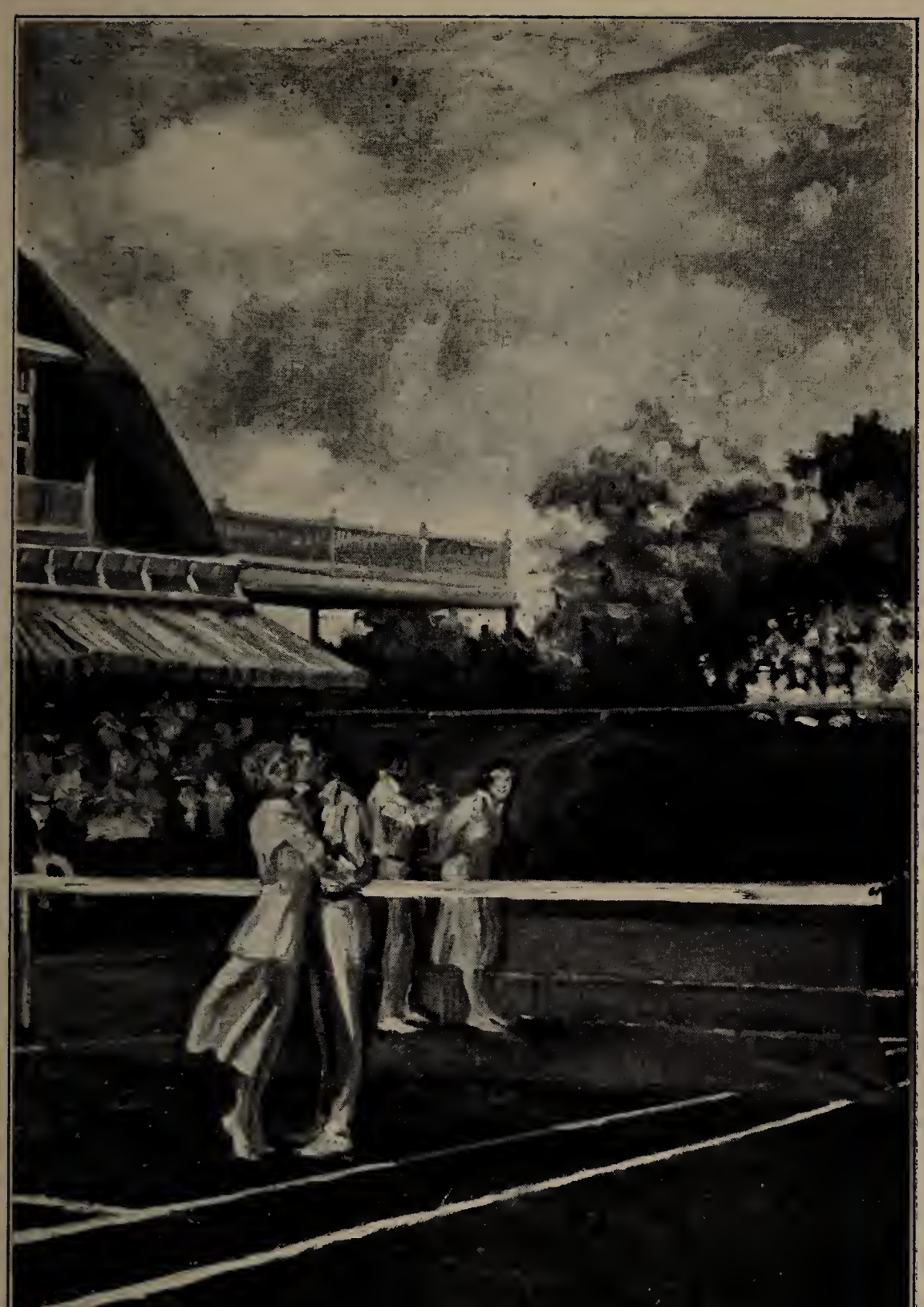
"I didn't at all. I merely intended to kill that ball and you were in the way."

"Oh, I was in the way. You know you did it intentionally and you owe me an apology."

"I tell you I didn't. If I had, you deserved it, for you needed it." Jack was really angry at her injustice.

The girl laughed a low, cool laugh. "Well, Mr. Edwards, if that is so, here is something I think you need more than I."

He held out his hand in protest toward her and she dropped something on the palm.



"To the astonishment of five thousand people, a young gentleman and a young lady met in one of the long, lingering embraces that end all movies."

For a moment he gazed at it uncomprehendingly. It was her engagement ring.

"Marion."

She was gone. Not a word more. Nothing. He stood holding the ring in his fingers, looking at it with unseeing eyes.

Suddenly he realized where he was. Savagely he turned on his heel and strode into the club house, the ring still in his hand.

He remembered little about how he spent the evening. The only clear thing that stood out in his mind, other than the fact of Marion's injustice, was the question that flashed into his brain just as he was crawling into bed.

What about the match to-morrow? Would she play? No, of course, she wouldn't. Idiot! to even think she might. Still, she wanted the title so much. Maybe if she played and they won she would listen to him. No! He didn't care if she never listened to him again. She was so unjust to him. And so forth, over and over again, until sleep crept on him unawares.

Morning found Jack fresh and hopeful. He would see Marion and fix it up. He would apologize and admit he was wrong. No, he

wouldn't. He'd be damned if he would! He wasn't wrong and he wasn't going to stand for it.

So with a healthy anger and healthier appetite he sallied forth in search of breakfast.

The breakfast room was deserted or so he thought when he entered. He glanced around as he came into the room and then discovered his mistake. Marion was seated at the window by the door.

He strode up to her table.

"Marion," he said, appealingly.

"Oh, good morning, Mr. Edwards," she replied, frostily.

"Oh—good morning—Miss Davison."

She ate peacefully on as if entirely unconscious of his presence. He stood silent, awkwardly playing with the morning paper in his hand. Why didn't she say something, he asked himself furiously.

"Er—aw—that is——" He was twisted, hopelessly twisted.

She raised her head as if just aware of his existence.

"Yes, Mr. Edwards? What were you saying?"

"Er—aw—that is—well—I mean are we playing the match to-day?"

"Naturally, why not?" She coolly raised her eyes to his.

He started to speak—then suddenly plunged blindly to the other end of the room.

She was going to play!

All morning Jack kept a discreet lookout for Marion but she was invisible. He took it for granted she would appear in time for the match.

He dressed in his own room in the club. As he completed his toilet he noticed her engagement ring lying on the bureau. He picked it up, wondering if she would ever wear it again.

"Ready, Edwards? We're waiting."

The voice of the referee of the tournament floated up the stairs.

"Coming."

Jack stuck the ring in his trouser pocket unthinkingly and, grabbing his racquets, ran down the stairs.

Marion was standing by the club house porch as he came out.

"I want it more than anything else," she was saying.

"The match," Jack told himself. Well, he'd get it for her if he could.

Play started. Miss Zimmerman and Richard Vincey were in great form. Jack was nervous and anxious. Marion had not spoken to him since he came on the court. He was upset and worried. Marion looked cool and collected but under her calm exterior her nerves were a riot.

The first set was Miss Zimmerman's and Vincey's 6-1. It wasn't a match; it was a "fizz bang," a regular flivver.

The second set went the same general direction to 4-1.

As the players changed courts Marion came up to Jack.

"Oh, Jack, we must win. I want it so!"

Jack turned directly to her.

"Will you promise to do just what I tell you while we are on this court?" he said, fiercely.

"Yes," she said, faintly. "I promise." It seemed to break the spell that held him. He started after the ball like a madman. To every shot that came anywhere within his reach he cried "Mine" and Marion, true to her promise, left it for him. More than that

she fought valiantly and well. It was but a little while before the umpire called: "Game. Set. Miss Davison and Mr. Edwards, 6-4."

Between the sets Jack, hunting for a handkerchief he had left safely on his own bureau, stuffed his hand in his trouser pocket. His fingers came in contact with the ring.

"If we win——" he muttered, "if we win——"

The final set was a bitter battle. Game after game the two teams fought on.

"Five all."

"Six all."

"Seven all"

Finally, Jack won the odd game at 8-7 on the service of Miss Zimmerman by virtue of thrice poaching directly in front of Marion for the kill.

Her quiet, "Good shot, boy," was ample reward for his effort.

It was Jack's service to follow. The first five points went three to Jack and Marion, two to the opposing team.

"40-30."

Match point.

The championship was theirs if they took the next point.

Jack stuffed his hand in his pocket and fingered the ring. Somehow he felt it would bring him the needed luck.

Crash! A beautiful service.

Young Vincey lobbed short over Marion's head.

"Mine," called Jack.

For a moment Marion hesitated and her racquet started its upward swing. Then she turned and ducked sideways.

Crash! Jack met the ball with a terrific smash.

"Game. Set. Match. Championship, Miss Davison and Mr. Edwards."

The four players shook hands and started off the court.

Jack silently drew the ring from his pocket.

"Marion," he said, sternly. She stopped and turned to him. "You promised to do anything on this court I told you to?"

"I didn't," she said rebelliously.

"You promised, Marion?" he asked again.

"Yes," she murmured.

He handed over the ring.

"Put that on your finger at once and kiss me," he said.

And to the vast astonishment of some 5,000

people assembled about the court a young gentleman and young lady met in one of the long, lingering embraces that end all movies.

"Oh, boy, I love to be bossed."

"Dearest, I know who will run our team now and forever. Gosh, I love mixed troubles."

THE END