
CORPORAL CAMERON

CHAPTER I

THE QUITTER

“O H-H-H-H, Cam-er-on!” Agony, reproach, entreaty, vibrated in the clear young voice that rang out over the Inverleith grounds. The Scottish line was sagging!—that line invincible in two years of International conflict, the line upon which Ireland and England had broken their pride. Sagging! And because Cameron was weakening! Cameron, the brilliant half-back, the fierce-fighting, erratic young Highlander, disciplined, steadied by the great Dunn into an instrument of Scotland’s glory! Cameron going back! A hush fell on the thronged seats and packed inner-circle,—a breathless, dreadful hush of foreboding. High over the hushed silence that vibrant cry rang; and Cameron heard it. The voice he knew. It was young Rob Dunn’s, the captain’s young brother, whose soul knew but two passions, one for the captain and one for the half-back of the Scottish International.

And Cameron responded. The enemy’s next high punt found him rock-like in steadiness. And rock-like he tossed high over his shoulders the tow-headed Welshman rushing joyously at him, and delivered his ball far down the line safe into touch. But after his kick he was observed to limp back into his place. The fierce pace of the Welsh forwards was drinking the life of the Scottish backline.

An hour; then a half; then another half, without a score. And now the final quarter was searching, searching the weak spots in their line. The final quarter it is that finds a man’s history and habits; the clean of blood and of life defy its pitiless probe, but the rotten fibre