

"Do as you like, old man," was his answer; "it's your supper, but," he added, "are the men all straight?"

I ran them over in my mind.

"Yes; I think so."

"If not, don't you help them down; and anyway, you can't be too careful. But don't mind me; I am quit of the whole business from this out." So I ventured wines, for the last time, as it happened.

We were a quaint combination. Old "Beetles," whose nickname was prophetic of his future fame as a bugman, as the fellows irreverently said; "Stumpy" Smith, a demon bowler; Polly Lindsay, slow as ever and as sure as when he held the half back line with Graeme, and used to make my heart stand still with terror at his cool deliberation. But he was never known to fumble nor to funk, and somehow he always got us out safe enough. Then there was Rattray—"Rat" for short—who, from a swell, had developed into a cynic with a sneer, awfully clever and a good enough fellow at heart. Little "Wig" Martin, the sharpest quarter ever seen, and big Barney Lundy, centre scrimmage, whose terrific roar and rush had often struck terror to the enemy's heart, and who was Graeme's slave. Such was the party.

As the supper went on my fears began to vanish, for if Graeme did not "roar," he did the next best thing—ate and talked quite up to his old form. Now we played our matches over again, bitterly lamenting the "ifs" that had lost us the championships, and wildly approving the tackles that had saved, and the runs that had made the 'Varsity crowd go mad with delight and had won for us. And as their names came up in talk, we learned how life had gone with those who had been our comrades of ten years ago. Some, success had lifted to high places;