

# The Prospector

## A TALE OF THE CROW'S NEST PASS.

BY  
**RALPH CONNOR**

Author of "The Sky Pilot," "Black Rock," "The Man From Glengarry," "Glengarry School Days," Etc.

A new spirit seizes the men. Savage-ly they press the enemy. The fate never off the ball, but follow it as hounds a hare, and they fling themselves so fiercely at their foe that in every tackle a McGill man goes down to earth.

But try as they may it seems impossible to get the ball to The Don. The McGill men have realized their danger and have men specially detached to block the great "Varsity" half. Again and again The Don recovers the ball, but before he can get away these men are upon him.

At length, however, the opportunity comes. By a low, swift pass from Brown, Martin receives the ball and immediately transfers it to The Don. Straight into the midst of a crowd of McGill men he plunges, knocking off the hands reaching for him, slipping through impossible apertures, till he emerges at the McGill line with little Carroll hanging on to his shoulders, and staggering across falls fairly into the arms of big Mooney.

Down they go all three together, with hands on the ball.

"What is it? Oh, what is it?" shrieks Betty, springing upon the scene. "If an thinking it is what they will be calling a maul in goal, and it is a peevy we cannot be seeing," replies the dauntless old lady.

"Oh, it's The Don," exclaims Betty anxiously. "What are they doing to him? Run, oh, run and see!" and Lloyds runs off.

"It's a maul sure enough. Two of them have The Don down," he announces, "but he'll hold all right," he adds quickly, glancing keenly at Betty. "Let me go," cried Betty. "I must go."

"Betty," says Helen, in a low voice, "be quiet."

"Oh, I don't care," cries Betty passionately. "He'll hold all right," says Lloyds confidently, and Betty grows suddenly quiet.

"Ay, that he will, you chap," agrees Mrs. Macgregor, standing up and trying to see what is going on.

"If The Don can hold for three minutes it will count two for his side; if Mooney and Carroll can get the ball it will only count one," explained Lloyds.

About the three players struggling on the ground the crowd pours itself, yelling, urging, imploring, shrieking directions. Campbell stoops down over the Don and shouts into his ear, "Hold on, Don. It means the game," and The Don, lying on his back, winds his arms round the ball and sets himself to resist the efforts of Mooney and Carroll to get it away.

In vain the police and field censors try to keep back the crowd. The men are swept helplessly into the centre. Mad and wilder grows the tumult, while the referee stands, watch in hand, over "Stop that choking, Carroll," says Shock to the little quarter, who is gripping The Don hard about the throat.

"Get off, Mooney," cries Campbell. "Get off his chest with your knees. Get off, I say, or I'll knock your head off."

But Mooney persists in boring into The Don's stomach with his knees, tugging viciously at the ball. With a curse Campbell springs at him. But as he springs a dozen hands reach for him. There is a wild rush of twenty men for each other's throats. Two close to strike they can only choke and scum and hack each other fiercely. The policemen push in, threatening with their batons, and there is a prospect of a general fight when the referee's whistle goes. Time is up. The maul is over. Varsity has its two points. The score now stand even, four to four, with two minutes to play.

They lift The Don from the ground. His breath is coming in gasps and he is trembling with the tremendous exertions of the last three minutes.

"Time there!" calls out Shock, who has Balfour in his arms.

The smile is all gone from Shock's face. As he watches The Don struggling in deep gasps to recover, his breath, for the first time in his football life he loses himself. He hands his friend to a couple of men standing near, strides over to Mooney, and catching him by the throat begins to shove him back through the crowd.

"You brute, you," he roars, "What kind of a game do you call that? Jumping on a man when he is down, with your knees! For very little," he continues, struggling to get his arm free from the men who are hanging on it, "I would knock your face off."

Men from both sides throw themselves upon Shock and his foe and tear them apart.

"That's all right, Shock," cries The Don, laughing between his gasps, and Shock, suddenly coming to himself, blinks shamefacedly into the crowd.

"It is not often Hamish forgets himself in fun fashion," says his mother, shaking her head. "He must be sorely tried indeed," she adds confidently. "I am quite sure of it," replies Helen. "He always comes out smiling," and the old lady looks at her approvingly and

moment, and says, "Indeed, and you are right, lassie." The Don is in a few minutes The Don is as fit as ever, and slapping Shock on the back says pleasantly, "Come along, old fellow. We've got to win this game yet," and Shock goes off with him, still looking much ashamed.

McGill kicks from the twenty-five yard line, and the scrimmage that follows is over time is called, with an even score.

The crowd streams on the field tumultuously enthusiastic over a game such as has never been seen on that campus. Both sides are eager to go on, and it is arranged that the time be extended half an hour.

Old Balfour gets Campbell aside and gets up, "Take ten minutes off and get your men into quarters," Campbell takes his advice and the rubbers get through impossible apertures, till he emerges at the McGill line with little Carroll hanging on to his shoulders, and staggering across falls fairly into the arms of big Mooney.

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to the cry and fall in behind Campbell and Shock, who, lacking arms about the Don, are showing him through for dear life.

There are two minutes of fierce struggle. Twenty men in a mass, kicking, scrambling, fighting, but slowly moving toward the McGill line, while behind them and around them the excited spectators wildly, madly yelling, leaping, imploring, and doing all kinds of weird oaths to "shove" or to "hold."

In vain the McGill men throw themselves in the way of the advancing mass. Steadily, irresistibly the movement goes on. They are being beaten and they know it.

"Down! down!" yells big Huntingdon, dropping on his knees the line in front of the tramping, kicking "Varsity" phalanx.

A moment's pause, and there is a mass of mingling arms, legs, heads and bodies, piled on the goal line.

"Held! held!" yell the McGill men and their supporters.

But before the referee can respond Shock strikes The Don below the waist, lifts him clear of the mob, and tramping on friend and foe alike, projects him over the struggling mass beyond the enemy's line, where he is immediately buried beneath a swarm of McGill men, who savagely jump upon him and jam his head and body into the turf.

"He's in! he's in!" shrieks Betty, wildly waving her hand.

"Will it be a win, thank ye?" anxiously inquires Shock's mother. "It will hardly be that, I doubt. But, eh-h, yon's the lad."

"Down! down!" cries the "Varsity" captain. "Get back, you hoodlums! Let him lie up, there!"

But the McGill men are slow to move. "Get up!" roars Shock, picking them off one by one.

"Get up, men! Get up! That ball is down!" yells the referee through the din, into the ears of those who are holding the Don in their arms.

With difficulty they are persuaded to allow him to rise. When he stands up, breathless, bleeding at the mouth, but bravely, he looks at the crowd of McGill admirers got into a riot of rapture, throwing up caps, hugging each other in ecstatic war dances, while the team wildly cheers and sings.

"Not a bit," says the Don. "It didn't bother me at all. I was winded, you see, before I fell."

"Well," says Campbell, "we're going to give you a chance now. There's only one thing to do, men. Rush 'em. They play best in attack, and our defence is a bit weak."

"I entirely agree. But begin steady. I should use your whole half back line, and your three-quarter backs, and your wing backs, and your full backs, and your Balfour there."

"That's right," says the captain. "Begin steady and pass to Martin and Lloyds. Get back, first while, and then everyone give The Don a kick."

"And Shock," calls out little Brown, "don't be a fool, and stop fighting." "I don't care," says Campbell, "we're going to give you a chance now. There's only one thing to do, men. Rush 'em. They play best in attack, and our defence is a bit weak."

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lowers his head, and with a yell drops the ball in front of Shock. In the whirl of the screw the ball slips out to Brown, who tips it to The Don, but a dozen men are upon him and he is shoved back a couple of feet.

"Man, man," ejaculates the old lady, "will you not be careful!"

"I say!" exclaims old Black to a McGill man, "McLean, McDougall, and Robertson were holding him the light that fell upon prairie and foot-hill, mountain peak and canyon, where speculators, adventurers, broken men, men with shamed names seeking hiding, and human wolves seeking their prey were pouring in.

Discouraged with the results of his work in the Eastern colleges, the superintendent arrived at Knox, and to-night he stood facing the crowd of students and their friends that filled the long dining hall to overflowing.

With heart hot from disappointment and voice strident with intensity of emotion, he said the things he had seen and heard in these great new lands. Descriptions of scenery, statistics, tales humorous and pathetic, patriotic appeals, and prophetic vision came pouring forth in an overwhelming flood from the great man, tall, shrewd, form swayed and rocked in his passion, whose Scotch voice burst through his sonorous periods.

"For your church, for your fellowmen, for Canada," rang out his last appeal, and then he turned to the crowd, and toward the entrance hall, silent or conversing in low, earnest tones. There was none of the usual chaffing or larking, they had been thinking of the great thoughts and seeing great visions.

"I want to thank you for asking me to-night, Lloyd," said The Don. His voice was quiet and his fine eyes were lustrous with light.

"That man ought to be in parliament. I shall see that country soon, I hope. What a master he is! What a grasp! What handling of words! There's a great Canadian, I say, and he ought to be in parliament."

The men gathered round, for the great "Varsity" half back was well known and well liked in that company; but they all knew him as the gay "Varsity" set, and some of the older men knew, too, that in his early college career was passages that neither he nor his friends cared to remember. Hence all of them, but especially Shock, whom he loved, and Lloyd, whom he greatly admired, listened with surprise to The Don's enthusiastic words, and had played to ward him the brother's part. The men waited in silence for Lloyd's reply.

They knew him to be by far the strongest man in the college, the readiest in debate, as well as the most popular in the pulpit, but with the sure instinct of college men, they had come to recognize his ambitious spirit, and, indeed, to be more influenced by it than they would have cared to acknowledge.

"Yes," said Lloyd, "it was certainly a statesman-like address. It contained all the elements of a great speech. But he—of course—he sees only one thing—the West."

"That's right," said little Brown, who had come in at Shock's earnest invitation, and because he was anxious to hear about the new country from one who was coming to be recognized as an authority, "he sees one thing and one thing only. He sees the West."

"The ball is down!" cries the referee, and almost immediately time is called. The great match is over. By four points Varsity holds the championship of the Dominion.

"The greatest match ever played on this ground," cries old Black, pushing through the crowd, and shaking both hands outstretched.

After him comes the Montreal captain, "I congratulate you most heartily," he says, in a voice that breaks in spite of all he can do.

"Thanks, old man," says Campbell quietly. "It was a case of shock and awe, and a bit of it."

"Not a bit of it," replies Huntingdon, recovering himself. "You have a great team. I never saw a better."

"Well, I was shoving all the time," says Campbell heartily. "I have just seen as good, and there's none we would rather win from than McGill."

"And none," replies Huntingdon. "McGill would rather lick than Varsity."

Meantime Shock, breaking from a crowd of admirers who are bound to carry him in on their shoulders, makes for the Fairbanks carriage, and greets his mother quietly.

"Well, mother, it's over at last," he says. "Ay, it is. Poor fellows, they will be feeling bad. But come along, laddie. You will be needing your supper, I think."

"Come in. Let us have the glory of driving you home," cries Betty.

In this garb? laughs Shock.

"That's the Don's position while Lloyd, Helen, her fine eyes lustrous with excitement.

"Come, Hamish, man, you will get your things and we will be waiting for you."

"Very well," he replies, turning away. "I'll be only a minute."

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continental railway, and even those who favored the scheme based their support on all too evident impatience, upon economic grounds. It was all so far away and all so unreal that men who prided themselves upon being governed by shrewd business sense held aloof from western enterprises, waiting in calm assurance for their certain collapse. Still, here and there men like Bonpas, McLean, McDougall, and Robertson were holding him the light that fell upon prairie and foot-hill, mountain peak and canyon, where speculators, adventurers, broken men, men with shamed names seeking hiding, and human wolves seeking their prey were pouring in.

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none more than Shock himself.

But Brown, resenting the laugh and the all too evident impatience, replied indignantly: "You bet Shock's the man for the West, or any place else where solid men are wanted, and where Shock goes there will be something doing! And," striking an attitude, "the country will be better for it! Oh, I am a Canadian!" he continued, smiting