

Another Letter to the Old Boys.

Dear boys:

Notre Dame was in mourning last year when you were back. At Homecoming, Jimmie Powers had just died; a week later, when you came back for the Northwestern game you heard that Edwin Rowley had met with a fatal accident on his way home from the Sophomore Cotillion. That game was played on the 21st last year, so Tomorrow is the anniversary of Edwin Rowley's death, and the 8:30 Mass tomorrow will be offered for the repose of his soul. You can help the boys pray for him.

We have been more fortunate this year. Eight of last year's registrants have already answered the final roll call; four of them had by this time last year. Thus far this year has been without tragedy; and we are thanking God for it and asking Him in fervent prayer to keep it so all year, as it was two years ago.

You were asking about the youngsters who are here now, these collegiate cake-eaters who have none of the hardihood of the tough men of days gone by; you have said some mean things about them in your gatherings here and there; you cast an eye of suspicion on this modern youth and fear for the future of Notre Dame. You would like to believe that the old school has not fallen into evil ways, but after a look at the new quadrangle in the Far West, and a review of the LaSalle mezzanine and the Cliver lobby, you turn up your noses and go into executive session with some of your old cronies to wallop the shieks.

Suspend your hammers for just a minute. If you saw the Army game last week you saw what these shieks are coming to. You saw these lily-livered mollycoddles tear holes as wide as a wagon in an Army line praised before the game as one of the best the East has ever seen; you saw our shieks outlast Sprague and outclass Wilson and Hewitt; if you wish, you may compare Flanagan and Paepnell, Boeringer and Daly. Hewitt and Daly were handicapped, of course, because Harry O'Boyle and Bud Boeringer were full of birthday cake, and on account of their reaching their majority that day Rock had allowed each of them an extra gelunk sundae before the game.

Now, what you are scorning as two-tone corduroys are not such in reality; they are tone and overtone. There is a basic tone to them, generally light, and then there is a dark overtone, which they call democracy and we call dirt. And if you look closely you will observe that these pants are a bit baggy at the knees, not from crap-shooting, as in the old days, but from praying for the Poor Souls. (You know, we have just finished a Novena for the Poor Souls, and the Holy Communions kept up above the thousand mark every day, even when the boys started for town in the rain at five o'clock last Monday morning to welcome home the team and the Army goal post.

It is true that we haven't any "Skunk" or "Swamp rat" or some of the less lovely monikers of other days, but "Scrapiron" and "Spike" live up to their names in their respective lines of sport. And you will find almost as much moral courage among the shieks as you used to find physical courage among the roughnecks.

This generation is honest, frank, open, even though sophisticated beyond the dreams of your days. And while it is hard for Notre Dame to absorb a thousand new boys each year and give them all a thorough grounding in Notre Dame spirit, the school is still plugging away the process and clipping the wings of the high-fliers. And these boys are learning to love God. You must remember that the Religious Survey is their contribution to modern education. Give them a chance.

The weather? An honest old Hossier lady once observed that she wouldn't live in any climate where it wouldn't get cold enough to freeze up the bugs once a year. There was an over-supply of cooties at last Homecoming, of the kind that never went to college. This sort of weather thins their ranks.