

It Might Have Happened Here.

Yesterday's press dispatches carried the story of a pitiful tragedy -- the death, apparently from self-administered poison, of a student at a Catholic university, who, according to the first reports, was engaged in a liquor party with other students and girls. The circumstances surrounding such tragedies are usually exaggerated in first reports, it is true, but while corrections may console the parents they cannot bring their boy back to life.

It is just another of those awful things that happen daily, and might happen at Notre Dame. The spirit of the world is strong. The grace of God is strong enough to aid you to resist the spirit of the world -- but there are those who resist the grace of God. Pray for this unfortunate boy and for his family; pray also that such a tragedy will never happen here.

All Idols Have Feet of Clay.

An idol is a creature that is given the worship due to God alone. In a loose sense the term is applied to creatures who are taken as ideals because it is assumed that they possess desirable qualities in an extraordinary degree. In this sense, George Gipp was the idol of football fans, our football team is the idol of a great many small boys and large boys, our school is the idol of a great many Catholics.

Now every idol, because it is a creature, has imperfections. The prophet Daniel, recalling and interpreting the dream of Nabuchodonosor, described a statue as having a head of fine gold, breasts and arms of silver, belly and thighs of brass, legs of iron, and feet of iron and clay mixed. In like manner, every man who is idolized by his fellow-man, has, in addition to the fine gold of his better qualities, the clay of imperfections. (This is the work of spiritual alchemy.)

But the man who is idolized by his fellow-creatures differs from the statue of Daniel, which was not the master of its own destiny, not the chooser of its gold and silver and clay. A man, since he has intelligence and free will, has the power to substitute sterner metals for base clay; and since he can do this, he has a duty in charity to his neighbor to hide his feet of clay from those who believe in him and to change his imperfections into perfections as fast as his weak human nature will allow.

St. Gregory the Great (Ninth Homily on the Gospels) warns us: "take good heed lest we, who seem in this world to have received more than others, should thereby bring ourselves into greater condemnation from the Maker of this world. To whom much is given, of the same much is required. Therefore, let him that receiveth much, strive to be all the more lowly, and all the more ready to do God service, for his very gifts' sake, knowing that he will be obliged to give an account thereof."

There is not a man at Notre Dame who is not the idol of some one -- perhaps a young brother, a mother, a sweetheart, perhaps a legion of lovers of clean sport. His eminence in the eyes of his worshipper, lowly though it may be in reality, imposes upon him the obligation not to shock the sensibilities of the worshipper. Every Notre Dame man has a very special obligation to fulfill the expectations of those who know what the school stands for. If he finds this obligation too great to bear, let him depart.

Prayers.

Ed England's mother and Chas. Kane's father died on All Souls' Day. John Barrett's father died Sunday night, the eve of All Souls' Day. Bill Cleary's father is quite ill, so is Don Kihan's father. Mr. Hunter asks prayers for a relative who is very ill. Six special intentions.