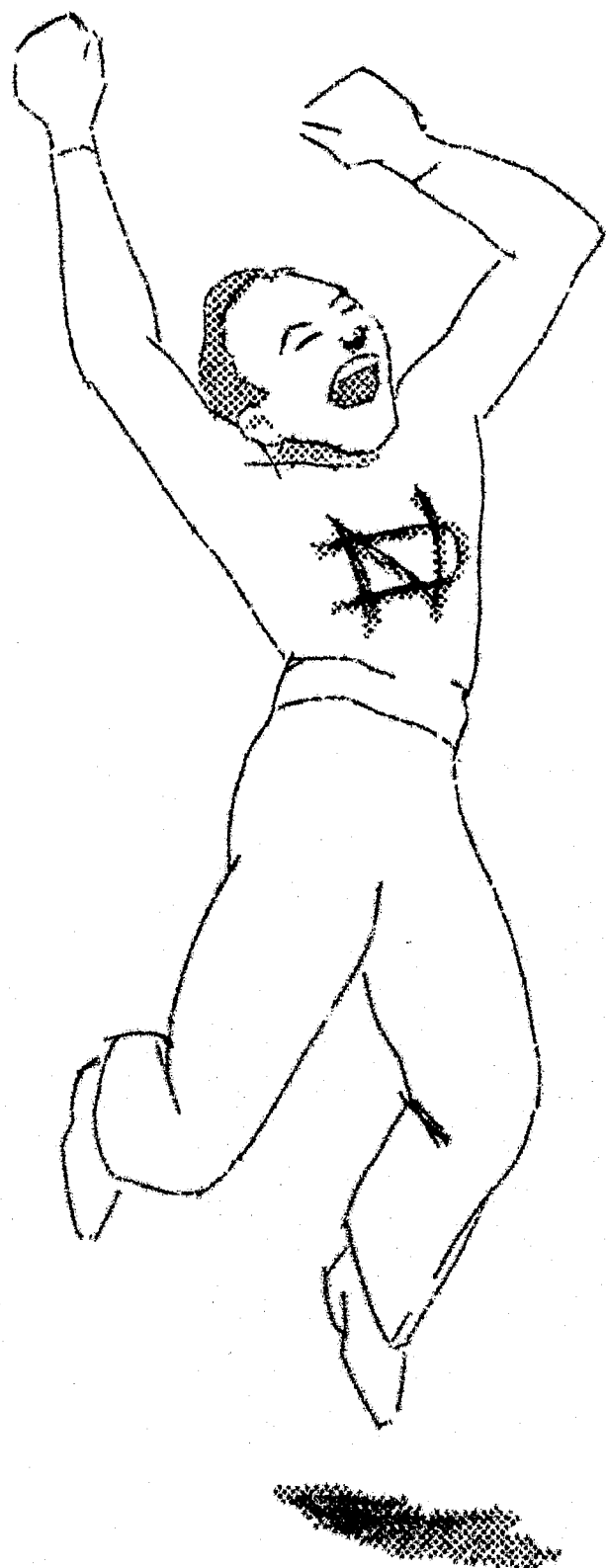


University of Notre Dame
Religious Bulletin
October 18, 1937

Up, Notre Dame!

Editor, Religious Bulletin:

You may not find a place for this letter, but not knowing anyone else to write it to out there, I'm sending it to you. This morning I did something I haven't done for years. I got up like a kid to see the boys home from Carnegie Tech and because the students received them out there I went all the way out. Was it loyalty on my part? Perhaps, some; but mostly curiosity. This old thought kept running through my head: Let me see how men react to defeat and, surer than prophet or clairvoyant, I will read their future.



I went to watch how the players themselves looked after it, what they would say, how they would feel, how the student body would receive them. Well, I saw, and what I saw got me to thinking. Fifteen years ago a defeated Notre Dame team came home from Iowa under the great Rockne. It, too, was a strong team, and it had tossed away plenty of chances to beat Iowa. Victory over Iowa was wanted badly, and that made defeat sting all the more.

How did those so-called 'Fighting Irish' take it? Did they alibi? Did you hear that the 'breaks' were against them. The newspapers talked that way about breaks, but not Notre Dame, nor Rockne. I remember well that an aroused Rockne shouted his lungs out at the next pep meeting. "Breaks! The alert, fighting team makes the breaks," he yelled. "From now on in we'll have to make them."

The next Saturday you saw a precise, alert, hard-driving, hard-fighting team mercilessly mow down Purdue 33-0. You saw them a week after take a much bigger and more heralded Nebraska team 7-0 in one of the fastest and hardest-fought games that ever took place on Cartier Field. I

never in all my born days saw such a quick transformation in a group of men. Elmer Layden was a freshman at Notre Dame that year and three years afterwards helped make up the famous backfield that, like apocalyptic horsemen, rode over all opposition. I have always thought that the fire which breathed from their nostrils was kindled in '21. That fire is still in Elmer's nostrils, I could see this morning.

Secretly I'm glad for what happened at Carnegie. Things before seemed to be too matter-of-fact at Notre Dame. Now the whole student body is changed, just as it was changed in '21. That 'something' has happened again out there. They are all on their own feet. The strong spirit of Notre Dame is turning furiously against defeat. From here on in we should see the finest football that a Notre Dame team has ever played.

You should be glad that Notre Dame spirit burns again as it burned in '21. I've just come through a depression and I know what I'm talking about. That spirit means much to your boys when they get out of school. Not defeatists but defeaters is what defeat must make of Notre Dame men.

An Admirer From South Bend.

Thanks very much. This observation seems always good out here: what Notre Dame men want badly they not only fight for but pray for. We have our eye on the chapels.

PRAYERS: (deceased) father of John Murrin (Al.); mother of Harry Weakley (Walsh); grandmother of V. Ruggiero (How.); grandmother of Bill Cook (Bro.). Ill, mother of Rev. O'Malley (Chicago); mother of Val O'Farrell ('39); friend of John Webster (ly.).