
Farewell To Football (II).

Saturday Benny Sheridan had the happiness of playing before his mother, an invalid, whose car was drawn up on the field at the northeast end of the gridiron. When Benny broke away for his spectacular run, he scored in the northwest corner.

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After the game (so the story goes) someone asked Mrs. Sheridan how she liked Benny's touchdown. To which she replied: "Well, he might at least have come down my side of the field!" --- "Besides," she continued, "his stockings were hanging down like a little kid's."

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Right where Ben scored was Van Wallace, who brought his smile back to Notre Dame for the third home game this fall. Three out of four isn't bad for a Notre Dame "ex- '27" who hasn't moved an inch on his own power in fifteen years. Yet Van still laughs it off and he talks of the goodness and love of God more than many a man who has never had anything worse than a cold or sore throat to complain of.

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How do they do it? And why don't the rest of us do the same? --- They are too much occupied with God and their neighbor to be building a monument of self-pity. We are always too much concerned with ourselves, let the devil take care of the others. *** Self-forgetfulness and a bright sense of humor are virtues most people need badly.

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But perhaps the classic this football season is heroic Don Herring of Princeton whose leg was amputated after an injury. -- In response to a telegram of sympathy and promised prayers sent to Don by John Kelly, Don's father wrote one of the most inspiring letters a Notre Dame man has ever received. *** To quote parts of it: (the underscoring is ours)

PRAYERS: (operation) Mrs. Helen Connors (aunt of Walt Kristoff); aunt of J. Schroder; (seriously ill) Sister M. Antonio, F.V.I., Pres. Clarke College; (ruptured appendix) son of Chas. Haskell ('29, Denver); (deceased) brother of Fr. John McGinn, C.S.C.; I spent
IMMERSED IN A WORLD WHOSE MENTALITY IS PAGAN, YOU NEED TO MAKE THE NOVENA FOR CHASTITY.

"This is a belated but nonetheless sincere acknowledgement of your message of warm sympathy and cheer to my son. Don is permitted to write only a few letters a day, and he has chosen to answer personally the many letters from crippled children. He wishes me particularly to tell you how much your message meant to him, coming as it does from one of the outstanding representatives of the great fraternity of football players.

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"A great deal has been said about Don's courage. I have no desire to minimize it, as certainly I would not exaggerate it. I prefer to think of his behavior as just what we expect of decent young Americans, behavior we should take for granted of hundreds of thousands of his fellows if this great nation of ours were to become involved in war. To me the greater significance of this incident lies rather in the instantaneous, almost automatic reaction of a great section of the American people to that which touched their hearts. We may spew up into the headlines occasionally a few imitation Hitlers or Stalins. But after all they are only the scum that rises in the melting pot, the sound metal is underneath.

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"Now, will you let me, as an older man and a lay member of the Lutheran faith, say something to you, as a young layman of the Roman Catholic Church? My college training was in history. Every historian of necessity recognizes that during the long centuries of darkness, after the pagan barbarians of the north overthrew the Roman Empire, the only light in the darkness, the only institution which could have saved, and did save, learning and the Christian religion itself, was the great Church of Rome. That is something that all of us who live in these tolerant times, but especially perhaps the Protestants among our people, will do well always to remember." (Mr. Herring's letter will be concluded tomorrow.)