

Here Was A Fighter

Prize-fighters come and go, but every now and then you come across the name of one whose memory will never die. There was Ernie Schaaf, for instance. One of the leading heavy-weight contenders a few years ago, who fought his last fight against Primo Carnera. Schaaf received a killing blow on the head that night and it sent him to the hospital. As the doctors worked in vain over the unconscious, dying Schaaf, his manager Johnny Buckley, with tears in his eyes, nervously paced the hospital corridor. An alert reporter jotted down Buckley's comments about the career of his fighter.

"Schaaf was one tough baby," he said between sobs, "and none of his fights were push-overs. But Ernie was just as tough in the daily fight of life. He was clean, decent. I never heard the rotten story from his lips; never an unmanly pass at any woman from him. Ernie was always on the up and up. He was one of the cleanest, finest young fellows I ever associated with."

Similar chapters can be related from the lives of other great athletes. No man ever reached the top in boxing or baseball or football without knowing and following the law of discipline and self-control. On the other hand the most cowardly, the most spineless muttonhead on earth is the impure man. Impurity stamps a man as a quitter, without guts, yellow, because he is weak-willed. The man who spends his time and strength in the gutter sooner or later becomes a beaten, flabby coward, unable to control his passions, he is a disgrace to his family, to his country, to his associates.

It is a matter of record that the strength that came from decency was a great asset to the servicemen in the last war. It gave them physical strength which some men dissipated by night-owling and beering. Men like Barney Ross, Gene Tunney, Commander Callaghan--all of them servicemen, proved to a sceptical, pagan world that lust and fortitude are as far apart as A and Z. They realized from their own lives that a clean conscience engendered fortitude and the soldier or sailor or marine without fortitude was a dead cookie! The man with the clean conscience was prepared to meet his eternal judge on the battlefield or off the battlefield, knowing that he kept God's temple undefiled. Such a man feared neither bullets nor men nor devil nor God.

Today in our colleges, in our cantonments, in our offices and factories and places of business, on all fronts, there are hundreds of thousands of clean, upright men who are not yielding to the filth and obscenity thrown into their faces by a few low-class morons with whom through no choice of their own they are enforced to live. They are not foxed into a life of shame by the plea "you can't suppress lower instincts" uttered by the rakes who wallow in the mud and rottenness and filth and who in uttering such a plea reveal their own lack of manliness.

We take our hats off to all of you: Protestants, Jews, Catholics--you men from decent families who are withstanding the attacks of the moral saboteurs in your midst. Our hats off to you men who are controlling yourselves in order that you might bring to your wife-to-be a sound body, fit to bring into the world monuments to yourselves--living monuments of your own flesh and blood--beautiful little children destined for the kingdom of Heaven.

You men are winning just as important a victory in this war against indecency as any soldier or sailor or marine ever won in any war of shot and shrapnel and bombs. You men never make headlines, never receive any medals or bars or material trinkets in recognition of your great effort, but never do your mothers or fathers or sisters or wives or wives-to-be. God bless you.

Prayer: (Dec) Friend of J. Enright (F); Uncle of John Neis (W); uncle of T. King (CV); friend of Jim Beymer (Dil); friend of Don Carbone (F); Ill; grandmother of P.Green(V-V)fr.. of ... White(CV); father of Jerry Terhaar '50; brother of E. Noonan (CV); grandmother of Bob Butler (CV);