

# Does Football's Reputed End Justify Means With the Game's Attendant Toll of Death?

(Continued from Sixth Page.)

The boy pleaded with his father. "Don't ask me to quit," he said. "It's the one game I can play well. I won't be hurt. If I stop, the fellows will think I'm a sissy."

He was so earnest in his plea that the grim but good-natured father yielded.

"I wish now I had been firm," he said the day after the funeral, as he brushed away a tear.

**Boy's Development**  
Pride of His Parents.

The development of Gene Byrne was a pride to his parents and a delight to his friends. His nature was sunny, his intellect, while not keen or brilliant, was founded on good sense and a persistence of character that brought success in everything for which he really tried.

Although he was not at the head of his class, he was one of the most popular cadets at the Point, both with the faculty and his fellow-students.

He became a candidate for the football eleven upon his entrance to the Academy, and although he was at that time rather light for a tackle, he made the team last year.

When a twisted knee and other injuries kept Captain Pulliam out of the games this year, Eugene Byrne was selected by the coaches as acting captain. He was acting in that capacity in the Harvard game.

## ARMY STOPS GAME.

The Army will play no more football this year. Byrne's death has made continuance of the game inadvisable. It has also caused a flood of letters to flow into this and other institutions of learning. These come from mothers who implore faculties to prohibit the game.

These appeals will be heard from when the intercollegiate committee on rules shall meet this winter to revise the game for next season.

Revision now seems assured, the only question being how far the game will be changed. In West Point, Annapolis, and the larger colleges generally, there is a strong feeling that, for the sake of the game itself as well as for the feelings of the parents, there should be such modification of the rules as will reduce the dangers.

**Coaches Oppose**  
**Suggestions For Change.**

Opposed to this sentiment is the opinion of a number of coaches that the game should be retained in virtually its present form.

The decision of this question will lie with the mothers of the students if they shall bestir themselves.

To all of these, the words of Eugene Byrne's mother come with pathetic insistence.

"What is my opinion of football? It has ended a life that only a few days ago was filled with joy and with promise of useful and noble manhood."

"There can be only one answer to the question—at least, only one answer from a mother. The game should be changed or abolished."

**More Than Hundred**  
**Killed In Past Nine Years.**

One hundred and twenty-six young men have laid down their lives on the country's gridiron within the past nine years. Thirteen hundred and forty-seven have left football fields after having sustained injuries of more or less serious nature. Many of these will bear to their

## What the Mothers Say

"Football has taken from me my dear, brave son, the pride of my life."

"There can be only one opinion of football, at least only one from a mother—the game should be changed or abolished."—Mrs. James A. Byrne.

"If my son's death leads to the cessation of football and saves the sons of other mothers, my own suffering will not have been in vain."—Mrs. Edward Burke.

dying day the crippling marks of these college day struggles for momentary supremacy and fleeting honors.

What is going to be done about it? Is the day approaching when there will be a "safe and sane" football game, just as is now apparent the oncoming era of a "safe and sane" Fourth of July?

## NIGHT OF TRAGEDY.

By PEGGY VAN BRAAM.

IF MY son's death leads to any cessation of football, and saves the sons of other mothers, my own suffering will not have been in vain."

All a woman's heroism echoed through the words, which wrung from the lips of Mrs. Edward Burke, of Shennandoah, Pa., whose son, Michael L. Burke, was killed during a football game between the Medical-Chirurgical College, at which he was a student, and the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy.

Michael was her youngest son. Her life was bound up in him. Bound up in his hopes, aims, and ambitions, and his tragic death has left her a broken-hearted woman, to whom life holds out little but sorrow. Yet her plea in the midst of it all is for other mothers.

Some dread intuition from the first made her strongly opposed to the game, but in the face of her son's enthusiasm and pleading she had not the heart to absolutely forbid him to play.

"I was afraid for him, every game he played," she cries over and over, "and now, when it is too late, I know I should have yielded to my fears. But he was proud of his position in the team, so full of enthusiasm over their victories that we all felt it would grieve him too much to ask him not to play."

**Death Affected**  
**Burke's Home Town.**

The death of the young lad, who would have been twenty-three years old next July, and who was a junior in college, hangs like a pall over the little mining town where he lived. On its rocky steeps the people gather in quiet groups sadly talking of his merits.

To the older ones he is still "Little Michael," while to the miners themselves, the strong-armed, coal-grimed men, among whom he had planned to spend his future, he is "Doc" Michael, the well-beloved.

All whom I passed as I climbed the uneven street to his home on Cherry road had a word to say about his talents, his brilliant prospects, and the "necessary" tragedy of his death.

In the house itself were gathered scores of friends and relatives, paying that last tribute to the silent figure lying so quietly 'neath the flare of the flickering candles.

His elder brothers, their voices husky with emotion, we gathered in the dining room about the white-haired father, and here it was that, one by one, they told me of his life.

That young life sacrificed upon the

altar of "sport," with all its promises unfulfilled.

## Relative Tells About Tragic Night.

It was a relative who had come from his home in Pittsburgh to visit who told me of the tragic night when word of Michael's death reached them.

"It was supper time," he said sadly, "when Martin came into the house, saying cheerily, 'Well, this was the day Mike's team played the College of Pharmacy. I wonder who won.'"

"We won't know till the late train brings the papers," spoke up one of his sisters, while, mother-like, Mrs. Burke said gently, "I hope Mike was not bruised up like he was in the last big game."

"Then—then—" the man's voice faltered a little, "then before the papers came, the telegram telling of the accident arrived. There was no train for Philadelphia before 2 a. m., and while the women-folk watched and waited and prayed at home, his father and eldest brother walked the station platform in the cold and dark, waiting for the cars. But—they got only as far as Pottsville when the news of his death was wired to them."

It fell to the lot of Father Burke, the priestly son, to tell his mother.

"It was like a dream, that night," he said to me, a dry sob in his voice. "It seemed as if we couldn't believe it was alive, so full of health and strength and the zest of living."

Then, shaking his head, he murmured sadly, "But in the midst of life we are in death."

**Price Paid**  
**For Gridiron Glory.**

These things are the price we pay for "Sport." Yet is it sport? The question kept repeating itself in my mind. Is it sport? I asked when the next morning I stood in the crowded church, watching a slender, little black-robed figure clinging pitifully to her white-haired husband.

Is it sport? I asked again, watching the twenty-five priests before the altar, chanting the solemn service.

"Is it sport?" I asked yet again, watching those grave-faced students—150 of them—who had been the dead lad's companions for three years. And still again I asked, "Is it sport?" when, with tears running unchecked down his cheeks, one of those classmates of Michael stood up and sang that mighty solo from the Messiah, "Oh, Grave, Where Is Thy Victory? Oh, Death, Where Is Thy Sting?"

There were young girls, whose friendship with "Mike" was one of the bright spots of existence in the little town. There were men who did homage to his undoubted cleverness, and there were women who had known and loved him, since he was a tiny lad, the youngest and best beloved of the many lovable Burkes.

And as I looked down on these, gathered in the church amid the flare of the candles and the scent of the incense, the thought came over me, with a sharpness that brought a sob to my throat, that this was only one, of like scenes. That that mother, kneeling, sobbing out her plea to God for comfort, was only one of the mother's pleading in that way.

**Pays His Life**  
**For College Victory.**

That that lad, lying in his quiet coffin, was only one of those who paid with their lives for the victory of their college. That all these sorrowing friends and relatives were but a small part of that mighty army of grief-stricken men and women, whose every tear is a plea against the game which has cost so dear this autumn.

"I saw the game," sobbed a girl kneeling next to me, as the priests chanted their solemn "Requiescat In Pace."

"I saw Mikey carried off the field. It was so awful, for just a minute before, everything had seemed so bright, and so sunny, and everybody was cheering and shouting," she paused with a sigh, "but when her words called up before my mind two pictures. One of a sunlit football field—grandstands filled with crowds, and the echoing sound of cheer after cheer—and the other of a desolated home, and the echo of a woman's sobs, and once again I asked myself: 'Is this sport?'"

"Is the first picture worth the second?"

## WILSON'S GAME FIGHT.

THE man who is both father and mother to Earl Wilson could not be seen for an interview upon his opinion of the game that has brought his son within the shadow of the Valley of Death.

He is ill in his room in the Officers' Club of the Naval Academy, at Annapolis. Only a short distance away in the hospital of the academy lies his son, the game quarterback of the Navy, whose back was broken in the game with Villanova.

Helpless from his neck down, but with his mind bright and clear, young Wilson spends his days in the Academy hospital each day declaring that he is better.

While the physicians and attendants refuse to hold out any hope, yet the members of the lad's family show encouragement that comes from faith.

**Father Believes**  
**His Son Will Recover.**

From the first day, when Earl was carried from the field, the father announced his belief that his boy would recover and in all the weeks when the change, if there has been any, has been so small that even a surgeon will not advance a ray of hope, Mr. Wilson has stuck to his first belief.

Since the father's illness the son has sent daily messages in reply to the cheering notes.

"Don't worry, Dad, I'll be well enough to play before long," he says.

He does not hope to play again this season, but he does believe he will be in the line-up for the Navy next year.

Though in the shadow of death his family do not attempt to dissuade him from the view, and their sole object is to make his final hours, if his recovery is not to come, happy with the idea that he will yet win the coveted "N."

There is no mother to mourn beside his bedside. She is dead. Two brothers are with the father and Earl constantly. These younger ones do not blame football for their brother's injury. To them he is a hero and the game a manly pastime.

## ALIENS ARE COMING WITH TAX ON EACH

During Week 4,000, at \$4 a Head.

Will Arrive in

Boston.

BOSTON, Mass., Nov. 7.—Fully 4,000 aliens, on whom a head tax of \$4 each will be levied, are expected to arrive in this port during the next few days according to the booking agents of the different steamship lines.

The immigration people have made all their plans to receive the aliens from the various ships, and the arrivals will be passed in record breaking time.

## CHILD IN TOLEDO BURNED TO DEATH

Plays With Matches and Is Roasted Before Mother Extinguishes Blaze.

guishes Blaze.

TOLEDO, Ohio, Nov. 7.—George Heller, aged three years, son of John Heller, of Camden street, was burned to death today.

Mrs. Heller was out in the yard, the child got matches and ignited paper, which set fire to his night clothes. The little body was roasted before the mother could put out the flames.



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**Notice to the Public**  
 The entire stock of the Goodyear Raincoat Company,  
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 Now being closed out by order of the creditors at 40c on the dollar.  
 J. H. GEVIN, Trustee.

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Write us now. When the treatment comes, try it—you'll be surprised to see how easy and pleasant it is to use—and then, if you are fully satisfied with the benefit received, send us One Dollar. If not, keep your money. You decide and we take your word.

Dr. Van Vleet's 3-fold Treatment has cured many thousands of pitiful cases, even cases of 30 and 40 years' standing, as well as all the milder stages. No knife, no pain, but quick and lasting relief and cure. The above offer means that we stand ready to convince any sufferer, at our own cost, that Dr. Van Vleet's is the long sought and true cure for one of the worst curses of the human race. Let us convince you.

There's Relief in Every Package. Write us now. When the treatment comes, try it—you'll be surprised to see how easy and pleasant it is to use—and then, if you are fully satisfied with the benefit received, send us One Dollar. If not, keep your money. You decide and we take your word.

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