The Yale Scholarship

The light in the office burned low. The boy seated behind the table in a corner of the room looked up wearily from the political economy examination book that he was grading, then glanced at the untouched pile before him.

"One o'clock tonight again, before I can get through," he said to himself.

The footsteps of some one coming along the corridor outside sounded loud in the stillness. They paused at the door; there was a knock.

"Come in," called the boy.

A tall, dark, athletic-looking man entered.

"Why, 'Curley Byrd'!" the boy exclaimed. "You are the last person I expected to see."

The coach smiled, "I've been wanting to have a talk with you all day, Gordon," he answered,"but couldn't get round to it before. How goes the work?"

"Well, between getting ready for the examination for the Yale scholarship, and what I'm carrying besides, I'm nearly buried alive," Gorden replied. "I've worked till somewhere between twelve and two every night for the last two weeks.

Dark circles showed under the boy's eyes; his mouth looked tired and a little drawn.

"You must be careful not to overdo, Gordon," Byrd said. "That kind of thing doesn't pay at all. Are you taking any exercise?"

"Not very much, I'm afraid. How are things going with the hockey team?"

The head-coach settled back in his chair. "Clancy and Davis quit tonight," he said.

"Quit!" exclaimed Gordon "Why?"

"They say they are overburdened with work and can't give up the time needed for the hockey team. Of course everybody knows that Clancy never did a hard day's work in his life; and all Davis wants is to be free to go to the junior prom and his fraternity party. With you, Clancy and Davis out, the team is badly weakened and there's a growing sentiment among the men that the game with Hopkins had better be called off."

"Can't Burton do anything?" Gordon asked.

"Burton's all right, but he isn't a good captain. He hasn't much influence over the men. They are showing a disposition to loaf and call the indoor training a bore."

"It's the Clancy-Davis influence."

"Yes," said Byrd. "Clancy and Davis have great natural ability; but they haven't the Maryland spirit."

"If I should see them—" Gordon began.

"It would do no good. They spoke of you—they said they had as good reasons as you have for stopping the game. Isn't there any possibility of your getting out again—just till after the Hopkins game? Your example and influence would pull the men together."

There was a moment's silence. "I'm sorry, but I can't do it," Gordon said at last. "I simply must have every minute I can spare to study for the examination, and the work in the office here is getting heavier as the semester draws to an end."

"All right, Gordon; I don't want to press you. I hope you get the scholarship. Take care of yourself now, and if I were you I'd take some exercise. Good night!"

Gordon once more turned to his work, but soon he rose and began to pace the floor.

Byrd had not appealed to him without hope. He knew Clancy and Davis would have to come out for the team if he did. But how could he? His work as assistant in the department of political economy was unusually heavy now, and would be heavier after the final tests for the semester. He had his own senior studies and above all, he had the Yale scholarship examination to prepare for.

Yet what the coach said about the importance of exercise was true; he could probably do better mental work if he was playing on the hockey team. The difficulty was in the training. He had not had a good night's sleep for a month—he would need eight hours sleep each night to get into condition, and how could he allow himself so much? True, the scholarship examination came a week before the close of the semester. He could devote less time to his college studies till then, and make them up in the last few days; again, after the examinations were over, there would be four or five days rest before the game.

I'll do it!" he exclaimed. "Now for some sleep." He thrust the remaining books and papers into the desk.

The whole college was jubilant over Wallace Gordon's return to the team. It was generally known what a sacrifice it meant. Gordon had worked his way for three years, had taken part in athletics, and had declined this year's captaincy in order to take a position as assistant in political economy and to prepare for the Yale scholarship examination.

The day after Gordon announced his decision the college paper predicted victory over Hopkins in this winter's meet. The influence of his reappearance soon became very evident. At a "pep meeting"—held a few days later, there was great enthusiasm. The men of the squad talked no more of the grind of winter training. Clancy and Davis returned to practice. "Curly" Byrd began to look cheerful again.

At first things went well with Gordon. Pleasure in playing the game and the change to vigorous physical exercise stimulated his spirits.

One thing alone bothered him; he could not get enough sleep. The work in his department kept piling up; the approaching examination compelled him to spend midnight hours over Greek and Latin.

As the day of the qualifying test for the scholarship approached, he became nervous; he lost his enjoyment in the game of hockey and had to force himself to it.

After the ordeal he felt tired. It had been harder than he had expected. He had not acquitted himself well, he knew that the standing of the candidates in this examination would count for much in the final selection. He knew, too, that Brown of the University of Virginia was a strong candidates in this examination would athlete, popular and prominent in student activities.

Contrary to his hopes, there was no time for resting after the examination. Extra duties in the political economy department and the making up of work he had slighted filled his hours.

He received an announcement that he had passed the qualifying examination for the scholarship, but on the same day he learned that Brown had also passed with a higher grade. The next week he was to go before the committee of selection.

Somehow he got through the week of the college examinations. He was not sleeping well now; hockey practice was becoming more and more of a task. Still, he would not give up. He believed that he could go through with what he had set himself to do.

He met the committee of selection. They questioned him closely as to his scholarship, the part he had taken in student affairs, his plans for the future. He was diffident, embarrassed; he felt that his presence was poor, his appearance haggard. Brown was self-possessed, attractive. He talked well, had been class president and prize oration man and had done ever so many more things than Gordon.

Gordon came away without much doubt as to the result. Perhaps it would have been different if he had had more time to put upon the examination, and if he had not been so worn-out when he went before the committee; but he did not regret it.

That night he couldn't go to sleep. His legs and arms were tired enough, but his brain wanted to keep on playing hockey. It persisted in tossing him, willy-nilly, into the midst of a game, and then yanking him out again just at the most exciting moment.

His imagination worked something like a dream. He would find himself blocking a pass. He would cuddle the puck in the crook of the hockey stick and start racing it down the ice, with a clear field and a sure goal at the end. Then, from a kind of blur ahead, the whole opposing team would come crashing straight at him. . . . .

That was all. His brain seemd to snap off short at this point, and after he had threshed impatiently about the bed he would picture himself blocking another pass and beginning all over. Never once could he hold the thread of the vision long enough to score. Always, at the exact moment he lifted his stick for the final drive, his brain seemed to pick him up bodily and whisk him to the opposite end of the icy playing field.

When this happened for about the hundredth time, the sheer monotony of it dulled his senses. It was like imagining a long line of sheep jumping, one after another, over a stile, till the task of waiting for the last one became too hopeless. So finally he fell into a troubled doze. But it was not a refreshing sleep; and the next afternoon, when he reported on the frozen lake for the game against Hopkins the Maryland University coach eyed him doubtfully.

"You don't look quite fit, Gordon," he said. "Feel right?"

Gordon nodded shortly, "Oh sure!" he told the coach. "Watch me after I warm up!"

Perhaps twenty minutes later, in the midst of the game, Gordon whipped out and snared the flying puck. He cuddled it in the crook of his stick, started racing it down the ice. So far, the play was exactly as he had pictured it the night before; and when he glimpsed the foreguard of Hopkins' team converging toward him, on ahead, he wondered nervously what would happen next. There were only three of them, to be sure, but they were coming like a cyclone. Two would probably try to body block him and the third recover the puck. Gordon lifted his stick for the final drive—

When his brain cleared he could himself flat on his back. His breath came back in long convulsive quivers; sharp pains ran through his legs. He had been carried into the dressing room where the trainer was now working over him solicitously. There was a smell of ammonia in the air. Byrd came up, and said, "Plucky game, too much nervous strain," and more that Gordon did not hear.

After a time he was left alone. A desire to get away seized him.

Wearily he dressed himself. Just as he was ready to go, the team came rushing in, bearing one of the new men on their shoulders.

"Curtis for Maryland! Maryland for Curtis!" they were shouting.

Curtis had won the game in reality, but Gordon shared the honor with him for if he had not denied himself and gone out for the hockey team, the team would have lost its "pep" as well as at least Clancy and Davis. However, this fact did not entirely comfort Gordon as he was practically sure he had forfeited his chances on the Yale scholarship by going out for the hockey team.

Silently he made his way to his room and upon arriving there found a letter on his table. He opened it and read:

Mr. Wallace Gordon,

Dear Sir:

As secretary of the committee of selection, I am glad to announce that the Yale scholarship for which the examination was recently held has been awarded to you.

The task of choosing among the candidates has been difficult, but the committee feels that the college particularly intended that the scholarship should be awarded to young men who show attributes, such as will be likely to lead them in after-life to esteem the performance of public duties as their highest duty. It is because of the way in which you have shown these qualities that the scholarship has been awarded to you.

Yours very truly,
WILLIAM J. KENDALL,
Sec'y of the Committee of Selection

A smile finally broke through the dazed expression of Gordon's face.

"That's different," he said.

M. B. '24

CONTROLS A BIG VOTE



Koppel Bier of Hoboken, N. J., wh celebrated his one hundred and fourt birthday by going to Washington t meet President Coolidge. Mr. Bier i the owner of a Hoboken meat marke and attends to business every day. Hi message to the President was that he is the head of a family of 142 voters, all Republican.



A GOOD ANSWER.

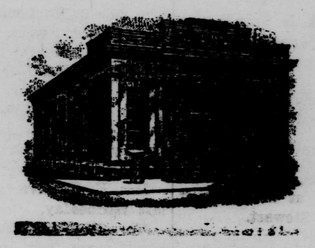
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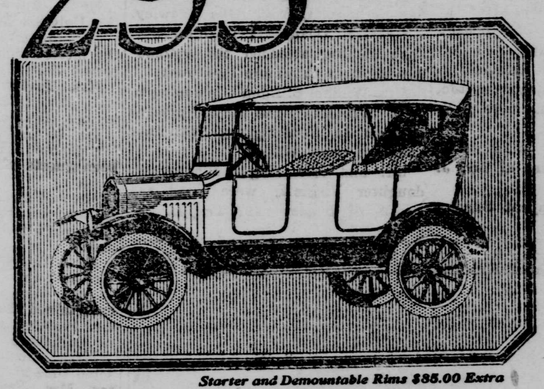
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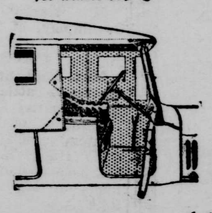
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