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**Billy Atwood's Degree**  
It Was at Least Honorably Earned  
By DWIGHT NORWOOD

"Billy," said John Atwood to his son, "I have something of great importance to say to you before your departure for college. You are going to receive what I have always regretted not having received myself—a university education. It depends upon you whether you take advantage of this great benefit I am going to give you or throw it away. If I were in your place I would study hard in order that I might take an intellectual stand in the world. I would eschew everything but my books, try to take all the prizes."  
"Father," the boy broke in, "I'm going to college to please you. I'd rather go into a machine shop and amuse myself with tools than worry over books. I never could learn anything by studying hard to do it; I must do it. And when I've done it once I can do it again and the second time better than the first and go on improving on what I have done. However, I doubt if a college education will hurt me, and if I can get through honorably I'll do so, but I won't go through by doing what I hear so many do—passing examinations by illegitimate means."  
"You needn't resort to illegitimate means if you'll give your time and attention to your studies."  
"Well, goodbye, father. I'll do the best I can."  
William Atwood while a freshman strove to please his father by attending to his studies. But when he came to the examinations at the end of the first year he ran up against certain subjects upon which he must be examined that he had no taste for and upon which he was as stupid as any dunce. There was small chance of his passing an examination in any of them. He had been picked out for one of the mainstays of the college in its athletic contests, and the college did not wish to lose him. Some of the best students in his class offered surreptitiously to help him with his examination papers, but since he was obliged to sign a statement that he had not received such help he declined the offer. They argued that receiving such help was a common practice among the students, but they did not move Billy. However, he was such a favorite with the professors that those passing on his examination papers gave him the benefit of sundry doubts and cleared him by a small fraction.  
When the spring opened Billy was called upon for twirler of the university baseball team and won largely by his own efforts the championship for his college for that season. Again the faculty treated his examination papers elastically and scraped him through the final examination for the year.  
Billy was as successful at football as at twirling. He was a husky fellow and as spry as a hawk. When in November the game between his college and its principal rival was played a run he made—celebrated at the time—won the championship for his team, and he was carried off the field with the usual eclat. Again he was aided over his exams by the professors, for he resolutely refused to be helped by his classmates.  
After this it became an axiom—a self-evident truth—among both faculty and students that Billy Atwood must, by hook or by crook, be boosted through college. It didn't make any difference to Billy how it was done provided he was not called upon to sign a false statement. The faculty were interested in keeping a man who by winning champion athletic games was attracting attention to the college, and the students were interested in the glory attending the winning of the games.  
And so it was that in one way or another Billy, like a waterlogged scow in a shallow stream, repete with obstructions, was floated on till he approached the final examinations for his degree. His father went on to see him graduate, arriving the day after the exams had been finished. Crossing the campus, he met the president, who the moment he saw him rushed forward, seized his hand and exclaimed:  
"We've got him through."  
"Who?"  
"Your son. The examiners in metaphysics declared they couldn't possibly pass him on that subject. I called for the papers, found an ambiguous answer to a question, interpreted it favorably and made the mark three hundredths above the minimum. We're all delighted."  
Mr. Atwood tried to look pleased, but failed. He left the president much disappointed that Billy had barely scraped through college. He inquired of a student he met who was the valedictorian of the graduating class and was surprised to receive for answer "Billy Atwood." Upon expressing his astonishment the young man added, "Oh, I was thinking of the man who won the game for us the other day."  
"Great heavens!" muttered Billy's father. "Can it be that in college the man who kicks has taken the place of the man who thinks?"  
The next day Mr. Atwood took his son home, and the athlete was escorted to the station by most of the students and a number of the faculty. The valedictorian went to the train alone.  
Billy Atwood had inherited his strength from his mother's family, his father being rather a delicate man and, at the time his son was graduated with a diploma which should have read instead of "bachelor of arts," "bachelor of athletics," was in poor health. He nursed his disappointment at his son's poor intellectual showing in secret, but did not reproach him. One thing to Billy's college career he was proud of—the boy had not achieved his diploma by dishonorable means. And this matter set the father to thinking. After all, was it wise to place a temptation before mere boys such as in all his own career had never been imposed upon himself? He thought much on this matter, but did not arrive at any solution of the problem.  
John Atwood, soon after Billy's return from the university, found it necessary to close out his business and seek a salaried position. He attributed his ill success to his want of education and, finally, to having spent so much money on putting his son through college. Being well liked, it was suggested to him by friends that if he would run for a lucrative office they would give him their support. He consented and was nominated by the best men in the town on an independent ticket to run against a man supported by a corrupt gang of scoundrels as ever remained out of jail. From the moment of his nomination the opposition managers decided that if he could not be defeated by fair means he must be by foul. Certain of Atwood's supporters were let into this decision. Some of them were disposed to expect a failure.  
Billy Atwood at a conference with the manager of a daily newspaper agreed that if given the use of its columns during the campaign he would not only show up the methods of the opposition, but would take the responsibility for doing so upon his own shoulders. He was assigned a desk in a room by himself, which was used for a reception room by the editor, no one being able to get at that functionary without passing through Billy's sanctum. Here he wrote sundry articles, accusing his father's opponent of such rascally proceedings that the town was shocked.  
The managers of the attacked candidate held a meeting, at which ways and means for stopping the accusations were discussed. Since they were true and could be proved, it was decided to compel the accuser to withdraw them by an overawing process. Jim Donally, one of the most powerful of the henchmen, was selected to go to the editor of the paper publishing the charges and demand a retraction. Jim chose 11 o'clock in the morning for the purpose and found Billy in his sanctum writing the second article of the campaign. He had decorated the room with trophies he had taken during his college course. There were five champion bats of rare wood and exquisite finish, several silver cups, a wire mask, and on each corner of his desk was a baseball.  
"Where's the editor?" asked Mr. Donally.  
"What do you want to see him about?" was Billy's reply.  
"I want him to retract them lies he wrote about the election."  
"I wrote them."  
"Well, you've got to publish a retraction tomorrow morning or I'll take one out of your hide."  
"You get out of here."  
Billy rose, and each stood looking the other over and sizing up his chances of victory, for it was evident that the matter between them would be settled by force. Billy took mental account of his munitions, consisting of sporting prizes, his enemy showing his own resources by pushing back his coat and fumbling at his hip. But since his enemy made no motion to use any weapon except such as nature had provided him Donally did not go into his pocket. It is a pretty low grade of politics where politicians dare to use firearms.  
"You have no right here, and I give you warning that if you don't vacate the place I'll throw you downstairs."  
"I'll vacate the place when I have had satisfaction," said Mr. Donally doggedly.  
Billy took a step forward, and his enemy put his hand into his hip pocket, at the same time taking a step backward, which carried him to the doorway and very near the landing.  
Billy sprang for the man and, showing him through the open door, sent him down the stairway. Donally returned, holding a revolver. It was knocked out of his hand by one of the baseballs that had decorated Billy's desk. Then Billy jumped for him and sent him downstairs again. A second time the henchman returned with another revolver in the other hand, which Billy eliminated with a prize bat and for the third time tackled his opponent.  
This time Donally made a better fight, grasping Billy, and the two struggled toward the landing. There Billy carried his man over, and both went down the stairs. But Billy's football practice enabled him to keep on top, and when they reached the bottom Donally's senses had been knocked out of him.  
This ended the fight. The next morning an account of it appeared in all the papers. The opposition concluded to remain dormant till the reform movement had been forgotten, and the election was a landslide for John Atwood.  
"Billy," he said to his son when the triumph was announced, "you needn't mind about not being a scholar. You're good enough for me as you are. My salary will be \$8,000. You can have half of it with which to enter upon any career you like."  
"Don't want a cent, father. I've decided to go into railroading. I shall begin tomorrow by string on a locomotive."  
Billy the next morning before daylight put on overalls and began his career. After passing through every position from fireman to superintendent he became president of the road.

**A Presidential Proclamation**  
by Woodrow Wilson

It has long been the honored custom of our people to turn in the fruitful autumn of the year in praise and thanksgiving to Almighty God for his many blessings and mercies to us as a nation.

NEVER before have the people of the United States been so situated for their own advantage or the advantage of their neighbors or so equipped to serve themselves and mankind.

NOW, therefore, I, Woodrow Wilson, president of the United States of America, do hereby designate the last Thursday of November next as a day of thanksgiving and prayer and invite the people throughout the land to cease from their wonted occupations and in their several homes and places of worship render thanks to Almighty God.

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The instrument board, which contains all switches, speedometer, oil gauge, etc., is handsomely finished in black enamel and nickel, and illuminated at night.

**Byron J. Stevens**  
Agent  
TELEPHONE 104

**Dancing Classes** Ruth Coffin Collins will hold classes in the Kindergarten room at the Elm Place School commencing Monday October 18th. Children's Class in Ballroom Dancing 3:30 to 5 p. m. Girl's Class in aesthetic and interpretative Dancing 5 to 6 p. m. Junior Class in Modern Dances every alternative Friday night 7:30 to 9:00 p. m. commencing October 22nd. Beginners in the Children's Ball room Class will receive special attention between 3:30 and 4 p. m. Collins School of Rhythmic Art, 721 Lincoln Parkway Chicago.