

The Rubyat Of a College Man

BY H. C. WITWER

XIV. FROM FATHER TO HIS SON TOM.

The Elite Garage & Repair Shop
3562 Eighth Avenue
Dear Tom: I got your letter, which was about as interesting as makin' out my annual income tax report in which I give the Eternal Revenue Department all of the jack I made each year on account of America winnin' the war and bein' gave the privilege of supportin' all Europe and the prohibition enforcement guys as a reward. It says on the application that if you have any kids over the ages of eighteen you do not get no deductions for 'em unless they happen to be mentally deficient. In case they are cuckoo, you are allowed \$300 off the bill for each maniac callin' you father. Well, Tom, I shall put in a claim next year for the deduction in your case and I shall pin your letter to my return to prove that I am entitled to the \$300 off. That's all I have got to say to you this afternoon.

Your lovin'ly father,
PATRICK FRANCIS CULLEN.

FROM SON TOM TO HIS FATHER.

XV.
Hoorah College.
Dear Dad: Well, pater, old dear and all that sort of rot, I suppose you have seen in the newspapers where we defeated Dumbell University in our first intercollegiate boxing contest by the decisive score of five broken noses and three black eyes to one torn ear and eight badly slip lips. The contest was replete (faculty stuff, pater) with knock-outs, at least one featuring each bout. I was entered in the 2,480-ounce class, or middleweight division to be technical, and fought once, finishing a bang-up second—not banged up, as some of the papers have it. True in some inexplicable manner I obtained a slightly torn ear, a rather discolored eye, and my nose has the appearance of having foundered, if you know what I mean, but as Nero was often heard to remark, "One can't make omelette without smashing some tomatoes!" eh, pater? I also notice in idly reading over the press accounts of the two-man Armageddon I personally took part in the following distortion of facts:
"In the fourth round MacEinstein (Dumbell University), after hitting Cullen (Hoorah College) with everything but the post and water bottle, tired of the sport and knocked his victim dead with a poisonous left swing to the stomach."
How perfectly absurd! I assure

you, pater, that I was not killed outright, as one or even two would think, from reading the above account. I admit that when MacEinstein's left thudded into my astonished mid-section and I slid gracefully to the mat amid the delighted applause of the witnesses, I did feel a bit ill. But there is quite a difference between the sick and the dead, pater, as, for instance, take Battle Creek and Philadelphia.

However, pater, you perfectly priceless old thing, although I went down to glorious defeat in the boxing debate, I met two of the most charming girls in the wide, wide world on the way back in the train. They are twins, pater, and, strangely enough, they are also sisters, and by a peculiar coincidence they were both born on the same day. Fancy that! Joe Heehaw, our baseball captain, introduced me, and to say the girls were delighted is putting it untruthfully. Oddly enough, pater, the twins both bear the same last name, viz., "Elkahall," their first names being Ethyl and Methy, respectively. Never in your life, pater, have you seen two people so identically alike in form and feature as these two girls. Why, it's so impossible to tell them apart that I'll wager if Ethyl died they'd bury Methy, and vice versa, whatever that is.

Anyhow, pater, the twins made room for Joe and I, or is it Joe and me? or I and—well, no matter, to continue—we sat in the seat facing them and I was favorably impressed at once by their demeanor. Both sat up stiffly and pulled their skirts down primly, covering their knees with maidenly modesty. They are twenty years old apiece, pater, and enterprising young business women, both being waitresses at Ptomaine Joe's Restaurant near the college, and where from now on you will be able to find me after classes, every day. I hope you will not hold their humble station against them, pater. Remember, Abraham Lincoln was once a rail-splitter, yet he afterwards became President of the United States. Of course, I do not expect the girls will ever become President, but—I mean to say, that if, for example, they ever get tired "deadlin' em off the arm," as they quaintly refer to their art, they will never starve to death as long as Flo Ziegfeld continues to stage his Follies every year. I will not attempt to tell you how beautiful they are, pater, but suffice it to say that either one of these girls would have made Solomon grit his teeth. The effect of them both together, is therefore, a bit eh—unnerving! In answer to Methy's enquiry re-

garding my somewhat disarranged features, the result of my recent boxing activities, I told her I had fallen down a flight of stairs, and she remarked that I must have tripped at the top floor of the Woolworth Building. This brought a merry laugh from one and all, and to change the subject from the personal I remarked on a small volume of Charles Lamb that Ethyl had in her lap.

"Do you like Lamb?" I inquired pleasantly.
"Oh, I ain't crazy about it," she answered, with a maddening smile. "Still and all, it makes a good stew, and—"

Joe Heehaw's raucous laughter interrupted her, and he turned his attention to Methy.
"No, no—you misunderstood me," I said. "I refer to the book of poetry you have!"

and believe me, that boy shakes a brutal pen and ink! He's what they call a Futurist poet, and every now and then he gets some of his poems printed in The Free Love Weekly, which is published down there. Here's his latest—it's called 'Post Mortem Reverie.' Ain't it nifty?"

With that, pater, this remarkable and ravishing young woman handed me a clipping, which I reproduce in full below:

I'm the merriest corpse in the morgue.
I leap from slab to slab;
The ice water trickles down my back
And there's nobody there to blab.

"Pick up the marbles, sister, you win!" I said, pater, handing back her cousin's weird couplet. Well, we drew into the station then and

to get a uniform, and you know how expensive gold lace is these days. Your affectionate son,
TOM.

From father to his son Tom

Dear Tom: Well, it was certainly a terrible blow to me, Tom, when I seen in the papers that you got knocked for a row of Chinese ash cans in the intercollegiate boxin' tourney. You bein' my son, I naturally figured you was unbeatable, with the results that I laid \$ to \$ on you up and down the length and breadth of Eighth Avenue, and now I am the laughin' stock of New York, and likewise I am four thousand fish in the hole. You big stiff, is they nothin' you can finish first at? If you have made up your mind to turn your attention to baseball up there, why, you had better simply give one-man exhibition games by yourself, as that seems to be about the only way you can win in any contest, unless maybe you can get somebody to play buttin' heads together with you. There is one game in which you couldst beat the world!

As for them twin Alcohol sisters, Ethyl and Methy, which you have just met, all I got to say is, look out for their twin brothers, Wood and Grain, which is still travellin' about the country now knockin' all-comers for a goal. Between you and the Blue Law guys, Tom, I am gettin' so disgusted that I wouldn't care if Prohibition really did come in tomorrow. As it is, they are commencing to enforce the dry laws right here in New York, and pretty soon a man will have to walk five or six blocks before he can get a shot! I suppose I am crazy to do this, as the guy said before jumpin' into Niagara Falls, but I am enclosed here the with a hundred berries. I expect this to last you till indefinitely at the least.

Your loving father,
PATRICK FRANCIS CULLEN.

P.S.—Don't write them biscuit-shooters no letters with a mention of the preposition "love" in it, as I will not under no circumstances pay off if you get sued.

CHRISTMAS WEATHER
TEN YEARS AGO
On the 14th of December,
1914, the first great war year,
one foot of snow fell at night,
giving the first sleighing of
the winter season. The thermometer dropped to eight degrees above zero. Christmas Day of 1914 was the coldest in many years and during the night the thermometer dropped to twenty degrees below zero. The harbor was frozen solid and navigation suddenly stopped.



thyl, who were Born on Same Day. The Elkahall Twins, Ethyl and Me

"Oh, this here stuff?" said Ethyl, curling her delicious lips scornfully. "Say, if this is poetry, I'm a Arabian duke! I tried to read some of it, but I don't know what it's all about. I found it on the train and that's where I'm gonna leave it! As a rule, though, I'm very partial to good poetry. I got a whole scrap-book full of, now, limericks home, like—eh—they was a young lady from Russia, who—well, you know how them things goes. But speakin' of poetry, it runs in our family. I got a cousin which lives in Greenwich Village, New York,



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"The White House," built by the Fairfield family in 1793, four miles beyond Collin's Bay. The Fairfields have lived in it all these 131 years.

Mistletoe Bough In Yorkshire

'Twas by chance that I came here
To wish you a Merry Christmas and
a Happy New Year.
A pocketfull of money, a cellar full
of beer,
And a good fat pig to last you all
the year.
Please will you give me a Christmas
gift?

So sing the Yorkshire children on
Christmas morning and on New
Year's Day they come again to bring
the same good wishes for future
prosperity.
Some weeks before Christmas the
"wassail cups" (i.e., wassail cups)
come round with their doll—to represent
the Virgin Mary lying in
box amidst cotton wool and ever-
greens. Some of these travel from
far and proclaim their arrival by
opening the door and singing:

God bless the master of this house
And the mis-ter-ess also
And all the little bonny bairns
That round the table go.

For it is at this time
Strangers travel far and near
So I wish you a Merry Christmas
And a Happy New Year.

It is considered very unlucky not
to give something to the first "ves-
sail cups."

On Christmas Eve the new Yule
Log must be lighted with a piece of
the old one kept over from last
year. The Yule candles (a present
from the grocer) should be lighted
by the master of the house in the
same way before the Frumenty is

eaten. Frumenty is made of creed
wheat boiled in milk and seasoned
with nutmeg, cloves and treacle,
enough of this is made for supper
on Christmas Eve and on the Eve
of the New Year. It is never eaten
at any other time and none must be
left on the plates. The master
scratches a rough cross on the
cheese before it is cut—a piece of
this cheese, a Yule cake and a glass
of mulled ale or elderberry wine
completes the repast.

The "Mistletoe Bough" is fash-
ioned out of two hoops decked with
holly, apples, oranges and nuts and
a large branch of the Mistletoe is
hung up in the room, and before
going to bed the wise ones look
round to watch their shadow, for if
only a head is shadowed on the wall
its owner will not see another
Christmas.

On Christmas or New Year morn-
ing the "first foot" or "lucky bird"
will knock at the door before any
innate can leave the house. This
must be a man, or a boy, with dark
hair—a light-haired person would
only bring misfortune. On Christ-
mas morning some pay a visit to
the cow byre, for then the cattle
kneel in adoration of the Saviour's
Birth.

At Christmas time Yorkshire hos-
pitality is boundless, every visitor
must taste the cake and cheese with
a piece of apple pie and a glass of
home-made wine. All through the
Christmas week the numbers pay
their visits to the houses round, and
hand-bell ringers and carol singers
do their best to let people know that
Christmas has really come.

Canary birds have been so great-
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that they are now imported into
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