

"Here's a scheme, Tom!" cried "Rusty" Brown, who had won his title by the passive virtue of possessing red hair. "Let's take a trip up to Chicago! The express makes the run in three hours, and we can catch the midnight train back so as to be in bed by 3:30. What do you say, boys?"

"What's the tariff?" asked a conservative.

"O, it won't much more than spoil a tenner. I say, boys, let's go in and have a time."

No one in that noisy group was more anxious for the trip than Tom Belden, but this was not just the kind of lark he meant. He was eager enough for the fun; it was the money that made him hesitate now. Something in his last letter from home had set him to thinking. How earnestly he had promised to work hard and to be saving if his parents would send him to college! He had undergone the usual evolution of a bright country lad in college. Unsophisticated, fresh and awkward upon arrival at Milton, development began at once. Natural ability gave him a good standing in class, muscular prowess made him prominent in athletics and college sport. In short, he became desirable fraternity material, and two or three of those Greek letter societies turned their attention toward him. Tom knew that he could not afford to join a fraternity, but he had sorely felt the chilly atmosphere that a "non-frat" or "barb" is so often made to feel in college, and the luxurious clubrooms of the chapter house, the music, the tennis and, above all, the persuasive manner which fraternity men know how to assume toward a man whom they "rush," overcame his opposition.

The attendant extravagances of his new life increased his expenses largely, but never had a complaint come. Little did Tom know the sacrifices that were made in that humble home while he enjoyed himself at college. Little did he suspect the prayer that went up as his mother, with a cheerful tenderness of which only mothers are capable, suffered hours of extra toil for the want of kitchen conveniences that a few shillings would buy. Tom had money to make the trip to Chicago, yes, the last letter from home had brought twenty-five dollars, but in that letter was a sentence which made him sad, for it was the first time that his mother had ever said a doubting word. "Dear Tom, please be careful, and make this go as far as it will." That was all, but it meant a great deal. However, Tom had never visited Chicago,