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The

Ursinus College

Bulletin.

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THE GOSPEL OF THE TURNING OF THE YEARS.

IMMORTAL RENEWING OF STRENGTH.

At the sound of the ringing of New Year bells there comes to every mind one vivid picture. Here, again, on the well-worn threshold stand the same familiar figures: the sorrowful old man slowly and tremulously going forth into the night; the bright and comely child with joyful face turned toward the morning. One bent low beneath the pain of final parting, his temples pale at sight of the deepening gloom; and one with brow all aglow with the flush of daybreak and proudly erect in the thrill of a gladsome welcome. And the child says good-bye with merry, mocking laugh; and the old man, with silent tear and the bitter sigh of hopeless regret. For this one has a past behind him, and the other has none. Moreover, the child in the first fresh consciousness of living, knows naught of the pang and fever of experience, and having no portion in the thoughts and feelings of his uncongenial companion, so white with the winter's snow, is eager to get through the passing ceremony and be off on the pleasant path before him: while the old man's heart is full of the memories of a travelled way that ends at this place of parting, and many of them are precious to his spirit and he is loath to leave the sacred spot, at which, behold, they one and all appear to congregate for final muster.

But the fancy is trite and long-grown commonplace, perhaps, and after lingering over it indifferently a moment, we carelessly let it pass away before our gaze and turn our thoughts to things more tangible.

Yes, of course, we concede the beauty of the conception. And further, its correctness, too. Both have been granted generally from time immemorial. The picture has supplied the delicate lines of a cherished vision about unnumbered hearths; it has been the common heritage of generations widely distant. To question its real merit as a thing symmetrical in art, as an accurate embodiment in imaginative form of the fact of the transformation of the years, did it not appear absurd, would seem irreverent.

And yet have not some of you had your misgivings as to its faithfulness to truth? Have you not, when you come to consider a little, at some time felt an impulse prompting to resentment of this picture, as an entire misrepresentation of the true nature of that for which it stands? Have not we all, indeed, in an odd moment, discerned beneath the lines of our creed in this matter a new doctrine of undefined and shadowy form, telling that this fancy of the meeting and the parting of the young year and the old is a perversion of the legitimate gospel of our New Year time, a false translation and dishonest expression of its pure and literal meaning? In spite of the winsome loveliness of the child in the picture, have not our sympathies gone out rather to the old man? Has not the parting guest seemed much the dearer one, and have we not rebelled against the stern necessity (which the situation makes so prominent) of his giving way for-
ever to an impudent, little intruder? Our memories and our hopes, bound together inseparably, as we thought, by sacred, inviolable bands, were all entrusted as a common charge to the keeping of him that is leaving us; and by what right are we asked to tear them ruthlessly apart, that we may give the things that have to do with the future to the tender mercies of this youthful pretender, to the care of these untried hands, and watch the steadfast friend of the time that is past go forth with its treasures to his eternal grave and theirs? And thus, it may be our sentiments of tolerance for the picture have developed gradually into feelings of aversion.

And then, perhaps, there has come another experience. The vision fades and vanishes, and we forget it. The figure of the old year, that had such strong hold on our affection, is gone. His successor is with us, and we needs must follow in his footsteps. His company may be distasteful but it is unavoidable. We make a virtue of necessity and, condescending a little, get on speaking terms with our new-fledged companion. And then, opportunity offering, we take a good, fair look at him.

Whereupon, are we sharp-sighted, we have a sensation. For the form and features of the new-comer are identical with those, still vividly remembered, by which in the gladsome days of his youth we knew so well the one departed, save here there is a blemish gone, and there more rounded beauty, and here again a line of symmetry before unseen. And as we study the face more composedly, the evidence waxes conclusive to us and we reach complete conviction, and realize at last that our budding comrade Ninety-one is but our lamented associate Ninety returned to us in his brightest spring-time garb of yore and entirely transformed by a perfect revival of the strength of his pristine days.

Then joyous recognition follows, and we renew a cherished acquaintance ship now once again invested with all the nameless fascination of its earlier history, wondering the while at the magic touch of perennial juvenescence that has wrought so strange a metamorphosis. But as we meditate upon the thing our mental sight grows clearer, and the mists of our strange experience are lifted, and other visions greet our eyes of the beautiful flame of youth leaping up more beautiful from ashes of age than seemed its sepulchre; of the golden spring of a forgotten time renewing its songs and perfume within the very prison bars of silent winter; of yesterday’s splendid morning beams, so quickly dark-ened, ablaze again and bursting the gates of the night that hid their joy, to paint the hills and vales once more with sunshine.

A new picture of the turning of the years reveals itself: a scene of rehabilitation: of the old man shaking off the dead and blackening dross of the past and rising clothed anew in the spotless, childhood garb of its immortal excellence. And we see that the beauties of the hours gone by, the things we loved worthily in them, still live as of old in even purer forms than those which first endeared them to our hearts. Moreover we discern in what our traditional picture of the New Year time has lied and wherein it has deceived us, and in the revelation of the gospel of the renewing of the strength of the days of the past in the life of the days to come, we find and eagerly embrace, a better, happier faith.
And of a truth it is a right cheerful gospel, this message that our New Year seems to speak. And who among us, verily, would from inclination refuse to hear its tidings: that all the pure and goodly treasures of an honest life, ere they go forth from it and enter the portals of the tomb, are stamped with the living seal of perfect immortality; and that tho' the shorn soul may continue on the hither side without them, long after their departure, and even forgetful of them in the numbing effects of time and sorrow and the mists of the intervening years, they still live on in undiminished fulness awaiting a reunion in the realm beyond. There is an imperishability of matter: why not an immortality of the best things acquired by the faithful spirit while on earth? of every ennobling power, of every hallowed affection, of every unselfish joy and experience without blemish, that by its own essential perfection has proved itself full worthy of eternity.

The question proclaims its own unwavering answer, and with the response our gospel of the New Year time sounds forth in harmony. “The Christian soul is as a garner in which whatever is good is preserved; it hives the sweetness of life for future use, as bees hive honey for winter’s need. As a flower folds its beauty and perfume in the husk-clad seed and will produce them again, so these first excellences are hidden in the enfoldings of life, to reappear when the spiritual body shall blossom into its eternal existence.”

“The joys we lose are but forecast,
And we shall find them all once more;
We look behind us for the Past,
But lo! 'tis all before.”

Moreover, herein there lies a glorious universe of splendid hope. For the many who must see the bright possessions of their hearts all fade and pass away years before the physical machinery of existence runs down, this faith is life. Its power destroys the sting of vain regret and bountifully feeds with bread of patient trust the gnawing appetite of endless longing. To such a one each warmly cherished acquisition of the inner man, each gladdest association, each deepest, unsullied pleasure, each rarest, finest desire, as it slips from the grasp that fain would hold it fast and goes forth into the dark, speaks in most comfortable voice,

“Say not Good-night,—but in some brighter clime
Bid me Good-morning.”

Through the general course of the common human existence there runs a saddest story of blossoms blighted in the opening, of sheltering oaks all blasted at their prime and mellow harvest-fields made grim and desolate upon the very eve of fruitage.

“One little hour of almost perfect pleasure,
A foretaste of the happiness to come,
Then sudden frost—the garden yields its treasure,
And stands in sorrow, dumb.”

And “we mourn for earth's bright promise, just shown and then withdrawn,” and while we look only behind us for the past we see no ray of light. For the summons of mortality comes at every season of life-experience; in the bounteous hour of full-rounded prime, in the busy, achievement-earning period of growing
manhood, and in the time of the youthful days, when the things that must be
yielded up seem most tenderly and beautifully entwined with every sensate fibre
of being. And to the end of the volume the lessons of acquiescence and resigna-
tion, thus placed before the mind, are always hard and bitter, tho' the first and
earliest may take longest in the learning.

Buried to-day!
When the soft green buds are bursting out,
And up on the South-wind comes a shout
Of village boys and girls at play
In the mild spring evening gray.

The while the aching heart hears the breezes but in mocking of its sorrow and
grows hard at their lightsome song. To have winter come when June has
passed under skies serene, and August has borne its offspring and the summer
has peacefully breathed out its life to the winds of the autumn time, contains
enough of sadness. But winter in spring! In the thrilling blossom-days! And
the troubled spirit waxes stubborn and rebels; until it hears and heeds the tidings
of the gospel of the turning of the years. For here it reads a glowing promise
of restoration, resurrection and revival; and by this it knows, that, like the songs
of other ages which through the unwasting impetus of sound still live in distant
worlds, the melodies which childhood days gave forth are swelling softly on
the morning breezes beyond the flooding tide; and that one of these days when
the soul finds its wings of light, it will overtake and again rejoice in this music
that for the time has gone on before.

And this gospel gives its immortal breath to the good things of every other
stage of living. Somewhere there is a treasure-house of all these excellences,
and some day it will be opened for the faithful soul. If he by whom they are
begotten destroy not his right to claim them as his children, though they seem
to perish forever from the earth, no tomb shall be strong enough to keep them
hid when the time of re-union draws nigh.

"O, listen, heart! The flower may lose its glory
Beneath the touch of frost, but does not die;
In Spring it will repeat the old, sweet story
Of God's dear by-and-by."

For the higher Power has spoken, and out of the withering, trembling form of
the dying year springs forth a youth of bounding beauty; and the old has re-
newed its strength "like the eagles," and by regenerating influences of mightiest
power has become as a child again.

"So then were nothing lost to man;
So that still garden of the souls
In many a figured leaf enrolls
The total world since life began."

What a measureless inspiration this gospel contains for the winning of wealth
for the soul; for the laying up of the noblest things of life, if treasures such as
these shall last eternal! While in this faith there is no past, but only the lumin-
ous prospect of the unalienable possession of that future which the beauty of the
time gone by has formed.
Fellow teachers and students: In order to give to my appearance before you this morning a better and more worthy ground than the mere mechanical compliance with a tradition (fast dying out) of an opening address by one of the instructors, I have endeavored to be as practical as possible in the selection of my theme; to say something that might be directly or indirectly useful to us all. A subject requiring much deep study and affording scope for the display of much learning was, to me, not very tempting; for, in the first place, the newness and consequent heaviness of my last term’s work together with the labor of preparation for this term left me simply no time either during the session of the school or vacation to do any digging outside of my daily topics of teaching. And, in the second place, without long and hard work there is no subject on which I have any knowledge to show. I shall, therefore, present to you my reflections and convictions on a subject in which you may all be interested and with which you are all more or less familiar, “The Student.” And, to relieve your minds at once of the fear that this is intended as a lecture to, and castigation of, that interesting but mysterious being, the College Student, I assure you that it is not to you but to us, that is to you and me as students to whom I would like to speak. The subject may also be put in the form of this question. What ought you and I as students to be and to do?

The etymology of the word clearly tells us what a student is, and what we as students ought to be. Studere, in Latin, connected with the Greek speudein, to hasten, be eager, means, to be zealous, to desire, to long for, and, in its restricted application, to be zealous or long for knowledge. The Latin word for student is studiosus, (ous being the termination meaning full of,) one full of zeal for learning. A student is one who has this burning, eager desire for knowledge, a desire which is, in a greater or less degree, characteristic of the human soul in general. But that which is a common trait of the human mind, and which, in the case of so many, though strong in childhood, is, by themselves or their circumstances in life, permitted to die for want of nourishment has, in the true student, become an abiding and ruling disposition. In him this is the striking feature. By it he is distinctly characterized, as distinctly as the true Christian by his Christlike disposition. That which makes a person a student is a deep-seated affection of the soul. Hence we are students for life, and not for a term of months or years only. Studentship is not a garment which one assumes for a time and lays off again. It is not a term of apprenticeship for a trade or profession. Those who are students in this sense are not of us, though they may be among us and bear the name. They are hypocrites, that is, as the word implies, persons who play the part of another. Studentship is as permanent as character. If it is not first, it has, by persistent choice and habit, become second
nature, and so is permanent. Once a student always a student, is almost parallel with the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints.

If this is what it means to be a student, and it certainly is this zeal for learning which first drew to him the expressive appellative student, then not all are students whose names are enrolled on the books of our colleges and universities. And, on the other hand, there are many students whose names are not found in the catalogues of any institution of learning, but who are found in the various other walks of life. The lovers of knowledge or wisdom, the philosophers, are many; and, wherever found, are genuine students. But we are not students simply because, in accordance with the demands of a parent, or the requirements of our chosen profession, we have inflicted on ourselves and our teacher a four or five years sojourn in a college. A student, also, is not necessarily, if at all, a book worm. Often a good and genuine student seldom if ever sees a book of printed pages. He desires the knowledge of truth, and truth is often more easily missed than found in books. A truth-hungry soul will find all nature ready to minister to its wants.

A person thus burning with a desire to know—to know, we may say, God and all his works, to think the thoughts of God after him, would spend all his time and energy in the pursuit of knowledge. With him there is no such thing as finishing. The popular phrase of our Pennsylvania German friends who regard a graduate of any institution as a man *der angeleerten hut,* is to him ridiculous; and the idea expressed by it, when possessing, as it sometimes does, the brain of even a college graduate, is painfully ugly for situation. The student, whose soul longs to enclose in its embrace the universe of truth, finds, that as he ascends in his attainments, the view presented to his mental vision becomes ever wider and wider, as one *vista* after another is, in every direction, unveiled before him. As he gazes upon fields of learning never dreamed of before, his soul is filled with a rapture of joy and sadness—joy at the boundlessness of the ocean of divine truth,—sadness because such worlds of wealth must be left unexplored by him. But notwithstanding all his limitations his soul goes on enlarging its capacity and its contents.

But thus to go on satisfying one's own, though noble hunger, is after all selfish, and an unselfish person cannot and will not do this exclusively. He will in love to both his favorite pursuit and his fellowman seek to use what he has acquired for the good of others. This will necessitate the choice of a calling for life, in which he can both follow his favorite work, and at the same time be of service to mankind. There are open to him four principal lines of work, viz.: law, medicine, teaching, and the ministry, one of which he may, and even must, choose. He may choose according to his preference. If medicine is his preference he will decide to become a physician, proceed to investigate the mechanism of the human body, the ailments that flesh is heir to, the virtues of materia medica, and apply his knowledge to the relief of suffering humanity. If law is more attractive to him, he will follow its intricate windings, and use his knowledge to guide his client safety out of his legal difficulties. If he is drawn by that know-
ledge of God which is the salvation of this ruined world, he will choose the profession of the Christian ministry, drink deep of the cup of this divine knowledge, and reach it to the perishing millions in the world around him. Besides these three professions there is another, a fourth profession, that of teaching, which offers to the student a field of investigation and knowledge distinct even from the subject matter to be taught, namely, the mind of the learner, with a view of finding the best method or methods of educating it. Here is a line of work, lamentably neglected especially in collegiate instruction, where a true student, a man with native zeal for acquiring knowledge, could find plenty of room for work, and ample opportunity of doing higher education a good service. It is time that we get rid of the idea that to be a teacher nothing is needed but a mastery of the subject to be taught. There are some men, true students, who have made teaching in the right sense of the word the object and aim of life, but there are far too few of them. The public and normal schools are awake to his need. Shall we sleep away the day until the night comes when it is too late to work? For good, live, studious teachers there is room in the higher as well as in the lower institutions of learning.

A person possessing this zeal for knowledge may not only but, under present circumstances, must chose one or the other of the several lines of study; because investigation in all branches of learning has gone so far that he who would not be always treading old tracks, but do some little original work, or even keep fairly abreast with the times in anything, must leave lie hundreds of tracks on which he might go or like to go and narrow himself down to a single line of research. Intellectual omnibuses are becoming not only more and more impracticable but impossible. In Greek and Roman times it might with truth be said of a man that what he did not know was not worth knowing. To-day such words would be ridiculous even if applied to any one of our living prodigies of learning; for there is outside of the mind of even the most learned a great deal that is not only worth knowing but actually known by very humble students. We are living in a day of specialties in study and in teaching. Not very long ago, and in some out of the way places still, each teacher was expected to straddle the whole breath of a college curriculum. Now we believe in division of labor. In medicine, for instance, one man used to be doctor in general as well as in all particulars of human diseases; to-day, almost every member of the human body has a specialist or two to study and treat the ailments to which it alone is heir.

This exclusive attention paid by one man to a narrow line of study is no doubt not an unmixed good. For, in the first place, when each student runs along a narrow line, and when no single mind can any longer grasp the entire subject matter, we are in danger of losing that comprehensive grasp of the whole, which is so necessary to discern and appreciate the relative worth and position of each part; and thus we fail to understand not only the whole but also the parts, for no part can be understood out of relation to the whole. This underestimation of facts and truths in one's own line of study, and attachment of un-
due importance to those we meet in one's favorite pursuit, leads, and often has led, to distorted theories and false conclusions, which have done much mischief in the world. It is this exaggeration of the importance of one set of facts over all others, caused by too exclusive specialism, that brings about the various isms in science, philosophy and religion. Materialism looks on the material side of man—looks so long, intently, and exclusively, that it forgets that man is more than clay. So it is, on the other hand, with spiritualism, pantheism, and all the rest. The most striking modern example of exaggerated over-estimation, gendered by too exclusive a study of one set of facts, is destructive higher criticism of the Bible. The grammatical peculiarities and literary differences of the various books of the Bible have such an importance attached to them that other arguments weigh for little or nothing in the mind of the specialist; and, hence, relying solely on one class of facts, he condemns the Bible to a merciless tearing and displacing of parts on the rack of higher criticism. The specialist should remember that outside of his microscopic field of vision lie truths of at least equal weight with those at which he is looking and which, if seen in relation to his, might greatly change their weight and meaning.

Another danger in specializing may be that a student may begin to specialize before he is prepared to do so. It is one of the great questions of to-day, when a student should be allowed or encouraged to select for himself those branches of study to which he is personally inclined. The question is not easy to answer. Harvard opens the entire four years of its college to the choice of the students, of course after demanding about as much for entrance as smaller institutions require for entrance to the Junior Class. Yale, though demanding equal proficiency in candidates for admission to the Freshman Class, is more conservative and makes the studies of the first two years obligatory. Theoretically a broad foundation, a good thorough culture, is the best and necessary thing for a future special line of study; but, as a matter of fact, life is short, our energies finite, and the way to the accomplishment of anything satisfactory to ourselves and of service to the world is long, and it thus becomes painfully necessary not to linger too long in the general before going to the particular, not to scatter our energy in all directions, but concentrate our time and talent persistently on one or a few related subjects. The student who would study during his life all branches of learning would be like the young man who courted all the girls of the neighborhood without marrying any of them. He would be forever bachelor-of arts, indeed, but could never expect to be master of any. Search out a single line of study which you love, or can learn to love, then marry it and stick to it. You need not hate others, but this one is yours, and to it you should give your first and supreme attention. However much danger there may be in specialism, the simple fact is we can as little be jack of all trades in study as anywhere else. If it is impracticable, as it will be no doubt for most of us for a long time yet to come, to confine ourselves to a single line of study, we should at least endeavor to narrow our channel, as much as possible. Most of the professions offer very few positions, even in great cities,
where it is possible to do work as a specialist. Germany is above any other
country the home of the specialist, and America is in all haste following her
German sister. At present we can only specialize in groups of related branches.

But where our labor, though directed on a group of related studies, is
still too much scattered to do the work of a specialist, it is a good thing to have
a favorite among our many lines of work, one to which we can always turn with
pleasure and recreation. My advice would be: Have a hobby. Of course I
do not mean that we should become cranky on it, or be constantly riding it to
the annoyance of all around us. To have a favorite study or branch of learn­
ing to which we may retreat in hours of weary labor is a different thing from
always talking on that self-same subject to others. Others may not think as
much of our favorite as we do, and besides they too may have their hobby on
which they would like to ride, and in fairness we ought to give them a chance
to do so.

Nor do I think we should ride a hobby while in college, especially not to
the harm of other studies. We need considerable acquaintance with all the vari­
ous lines of work in order to make an intelligent choice. And in order to
have any acquaintance with a branch it requires considerable labor upon it.

In the choice of a favorite study for life we should be guided more by its
value than by our liking for it or its own superficial attractiveness. Our life is
real and earnest; it is a life of work, in which, according to the definition of our
Savior, he is greatest who serves his fellowmen most and best. We are not sent
into this world on a pleasure but on a business trip, and there is no use or man­
liness in choosing a hobby or being carried away by one which has no better
claim than pleasantness, often equivalent to worthlessness. The worth or value
of a study, it seems to me, should be measured by its effect upon us, our in­
tellectual, moral, and spiritual being; for what good does all our knowledge do
if it does not make us better men and women in the sight of God and man. I
would not, for instance, make novel-reading my favorite, and God forbid that it
should be newspaper politics. Some period of history, sacred or profane; some
language and its people; one of the sciences; some topic pertaining to man, as
psychology, ethics, or philosophy; any of these may furnish a line worthy of
our study. Whether the student's favorite should be closely connected with
his chosen profession, or as much as possible distinct from it, is an open
question. If the former, it will be directly useful in our daily work, will be a kind
of reserve force to draw upon in an emergency, or, by reason of its close rela­
tion to the professional work, will be a luminous centre to radiate its light on
the connected branches. And this aid, in these times of progress, would be a
great help to the accomplishment of good work. If we have a favorite outside
of our professional labor it will give the mind more real recreation to turn to a
subject distinct from the daily work and also prevent that narrowness into which
a person who has only one line of study is apt to fall.

An example of the latter, I think, is Gladstone, who, though a statesman of
greatest ability and of much work, has theology as a favorite study of his life.
It is said that he spends his Sundays, no doubt the only time his busy life affords, in this study, and has acquired a proficiency in it of which very many preachers might well be proud. Another example is that of a minister whose favorite was geology in which he gained great learning and recently published the results of his labor in a book on glaciers (if I mistake not)—a book spoken of with great praise.

Along with the study of a particular subject it is well if possible to gather together all the literature on it. Dr. Merrill, some years ago, strongly urged this upon persons having money and desiring to do the learned world service in the way of presenting books to college libraries. For instance, one man, whose favorite study was butterflies, had gathered around him copies of all books or papers on the subject that could be had in any language. Similar libraries on special topics might be gathered by their devotees, and these, when published to the world, would be of immense service, for any one wishing to study up a special subject would have a place to go to, where he could find all that could be found on it. And such a private library, instead of duplicating as many books as it contains, would be of real worth to the institution to which it would be donated.

The advantage to be gained from having a well-chosen hobby is that amid the vast multitude of subjects, all of which no man can master, there is one on which you can speak with some hope of saying something that is worth listening to. And having thus one subject on which you have planted yourself with firmness it will give backbone to your entire character as a student. One spot in the universe of studies where we feel at home will make us citizens at home somewhere instead of tramps at home nowhere.

Another advantage is that, when weary of work which is as much duty as pleasure, we have something to which we can retreat with joy, and thus, instead of idling, and so losing the desire to study, we will be able to sharpen our appetite for it. And when by reason of acquired wealth, or of failing strength, we no longer desire, or are able, to do the required work of our regular calling, we shall not be persons who had been students' houses from which the tenants have moved, but we shall go on working at something till death call us home to continue it in heaven.

Again, having a favorite study, into which one goes deeply and minutely, creates a taste and habit for thorough and accurate work which will be felt even in all other studies. One can at least appreciate and aim at that thoroughness in the other studies which has been attained in one's favorite pursuit. This appreciation of, and aim at, thoroughness and scholarship, greatly improves our work, and the lack of taste and inclination for them is the fault of most of us. The haste with which we are driven over the work begets a shiftlessness and superficiality which are very destructive to the quality of literary work.

That the so-called learned professions furnish the genuine student the best and widest field for doing his work of love does not say that any one needs to cease being a genuine student who is by any cause debarred from these. The
searching, investigating man or woman, is not out of place in any sphere of life. Indeed, it is these who are the leading spirits among the mechanics, farmers, business men, clerks, mothers, housewives, and even the most humble servants. That dull, unthinking, never-inquiring stupidity, never caring to learn more than it can help, which never gets out of the ruts of the past, the socket into which it was set by the force of circumstances, that contentment which is laziness, can nowhere and never be of any use. It keeps the possessor alway but one grade removed from the animal. A genuine student will always be above par in the labor market, and will rise, no matter where or at what he may be engaged.

If all persons engaged in, or preparing for, the learned professions, or if all, had always burning in their hearts that eager zeal for learning which characterizes the true student, there would be a constant and vigorous pressing forward in the pursuit of knowledge and the expansion of our faculties from an inward impulse without needing any stimulus from outside. As a matter of fact, however, none of us can do without an occasional spurring, and many young men and women join the ranks of the learned professions with not much native inclination to study, but with the hope of finding in these an easy, profitable, or, at least, more honorable way of gaining a livelihood. Young men often enter the ministry with the noble purpose of winning souls for Christ and building them up into holy Christ-like characters, but with no inclination to study and with no idea that such a profane performance as study is needed in so sacred a calling. If we would not be a total failure in our chosen calling, sacred or profane, and thus a disgrace to our friends and a burden to ourselves, we must realize and keep on realizing certain things that are evident to every thinking student.

The first is that we need always, as well after as before leaving the college, the most strenuous and constant application of all the energy within us. The reason of this is evident. The world is moving on at lightning speed. Men are rushing like hungry wolves for the best of the gifts of life, or rewards of labor, and he who loses any time, or wastes any energy, will fall short of his mark. To clay, in the civilized world, and especially in America, the struggle for existence is hotter than it ever was before, and it is every day becoming more intensely heated. Men are not only pushing their way forward for success but of necessity the success of the successful swallows up the smaller attainments of those who fail. The struggle is going on in the trades and occupations no less than in the professions. The farmer and mechanic cannot to-day live that thoughtless, easy, go-as-you-are-pushed life which he could live one hundred or even only fifty years ago. The merchant of to-day is not an ignorant and sluggish handler of wares, but a man of wide-awake intelligence, shrewd and close calculation, energy and perseverance, who feels the pulse of trade, discerns the signs of the times, and forecasts the future, that he may be the first to plunge in when the waters of opportunity are moved. The margin of profit for him is to-day very narrow, and he must not only closely calculate, and constantly watch, but energetically push his business in order to succeed. It is the same in the pro-
The successful physician, lawyer, teacher, or preacher, is the man of
tireless energy, whose life is a constant nip and tug. In this intensely heated
and merciless contest we as students must utilize all the energies of which we are
able.

Therefore, the student, whether he be such from native disposition or simply
such because of the profession he has chosen, dare not be lazy. Laziness is an
obstacle in every sphere of life, but in that of the student, in or out of college, it
is absolutely fatal. Farmers often think, and it seems often act upon the
thought, that the smart, industrious son or daughter ought to be kept on the
farm, while the one indisposed to hard work is a fit subject for a student. But
such become only college boarders, a drag to their class, and a thorn in the flesh
of their teachers. The truth is, that indisposition to work, or, in plain
words, laziness, can much more easily be overcome when manual labor is required than
when application of the mind is demanded. He that has not sufficient will-
power to follow the plow has certainly not enough to bend his mind on a train of
thought. The bodily activities of an occupation or trade make the energies
more vital and the body more inclined to act, while the necessary bodily inactiv-
ity of the man of thought predisposes his body and with it his mind to
sluggishness. A tired, sleepy body is a burden to the most studious and willing
mind; but let a person be previously disinclined to overcome the inertia, body or
mind will then be totally overwhelmed. Laziness is our great enemy, and the least
inclination toward it, the first symptoms of the disease, ought, yea must be as
vigorously treated as a case of poisoning by fatal gases. And I am fully con-
vinced that it is as much and more the duty of college authorities to remove
from the contact of healthy students the infectious, deadening influence of a
lazy boy or girl, to see to it that there is a healthy invigorating scholarly atmos-
phere in their institution, as it is to remove any cause of impurity from the phy-
sical atmosphere of the school-grounds. May we not hope that the students of
URSINUS COLLEGE will rise in their dignity and assist the authorities and teachers
in making this an unpleasant place, in making it hot, for any one dangerous to
the healthy activity of the students.

It is evident that the four or five years at College being in the formative
period of our life, and in the very beginning of our career as students, must
greatly determine, if not permanently settle, our habits of study. Habits are
not easily laid aside even if we desire; and seldom do we rise to that manly
vigor which enables us to grapple successfully with a bad habit, especially laz-
iness, formed in early youth. Neglecting to do our work, or doing it only by
half, or by means of a pony, so that we may spend the rest of our time in idle-
ness, will be our way of doing things after we have left College. We thus bring
upon the arena of active life, instead of a body and a mind inured and trained to
do and endure even what is unpleasant, a body and a mind ready to flinch from
every hard task, to take it easy unless compelled by dire necessity. Here in
College is the forge where we must temper the steel of our swords and sharpen
the edge; hereafter, when the battle of life has begun, it will be too late. Our
kind Alma Mater out of pity may stamp upon us, though untempered, the same
stamp of A. B., as upon the well-tempered steel, but the world will soon reveal
the stuff we are made of. This is a mistaken kindness. The greatest kindness
she can show us is to let us smell the smoke of battle, and while kindly hover­
ing over her nurslings she should train them to breast storms that they will meet
in the world as it now is. Even in the days of Rome Horace says:

"Qui studet optatam cursu contigere metam
Abstinuit venere et vino; qui Pythia cantat
Tibicen, didicit prius ex timuitque magistrum" Ars Poetica Ll. 412-15.

He who in the race course desires to reach the chosen goal, has abstained
from lust and wine; the flute-player that sings the Pythian victories has first
learned, and has feared the teacher, and to-day, when the attainments in every
profession, and in all the branches thereof, have made such immense progress be­
yond anything dreamed of by Horace, and when there are such hosts of active,
tireless students pursuing them, it is just as truly applicable to the successful
one as then. He who would succeed in life must, as a student, in college al­
ready be hard at work, and keep it up all along the course. Any coldness in
such a heated race is fatal to the competitor. Stopping anywhere along the
course is dangerous, near the end as well as at the beginning. For as soon as
one ceases to push forward with unabated zeal, he drops from the list, is dead
among the living. There is not a profession where this indisposition to con­
tinue the work of studying, gained perhaps at college, has not reaped its thou­
sands. When once they get into it they perish without resistance. Like a mule
in the quicksands, they complaisantly yield to its power, and go down to oblivion
without the slightest resistance. It is the besetting weakness of ministers, I am
sorry to say, as well as of physicians, lawyers, and teachers. To how many of
all the professions may not the parable of the foolish rich man be aptly applied.
"Soul," say these men, rich, as they think, in all learning, "Soul, thou hast much
goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, be merry." And, with
equal certainty, does God say to each and every one, "Thou fool, this night is
thy soul required of thee"—Luke 12: 19, 20,—for no sooner do they cease to
study than they become unfit for their positions, and then "whose shall they
be." You often hear the complaint against the godlessness of our times which
prefers young ministers to old ones. I believe that the complaint is to a great
extent unfounded, for, as a rule, good old preachers stay and may stay, and when
one is without a charge there is often a lack of something. But may not the
evil lie in the minister's disposition rather to go to the barrel of old ser­
moms than vigorously to continue his study? Aside from the fact that congre­
gations often engage a young preacher on the same principle as a man buys a
horse, not so much for what he is as for what he expects he will turn out to be.
I firmly believe that much of the complaint of shelving old ministers could be
avoided if all would keep up a vigorous study of the Bible, of humanity, es­
pecially as found in their charge, and of the ways and means of best serving
God and their people.
Besides laziness, which is an all-pervasive disease, there is another which is often the fault of the otherwise industrious student. It is wasting odd moments of time. If we need to apply all our energies in order to succeed, we need to apply them at all times. Students who work hard by pulls and spasms do not realize how much they lose by loitering or loafing a quarter or half hour at a time. If we need exercise, we should go and take it; if we need sleep, we should take it; but we should never let odd moments slip because, as we think, it is not worth the while to begin anything for so short a time. These odd moments during a day, week, year and life, make a great deal. An hour thus permitted to pass in fragments each day makes 365 a year. At 12 hours each it makes thirty days, or one month out of each year, an immense loss in a life time. If our assigned work does not demand it, we should demand it of ourselves, that all spare moments be well occupied. It is well to have something always ready at hand at which we can work by moments even. Small gains, each day, will, in a life-long race, make a great advancement, and where, as already said, we need all we can do to win or keep up, odd moments must be utilized.

As it is necessary to fill each flying moment with work, so it is necessary to avoid every waste of energy by so called small leakages, viz., bad habits. Anything that consumes vitality should from prudential if not from moral considerations be avoided. We need all the steam we have to push us up the steep grade of life to success, and if there are any escapes they may prove fatal. Horace, in the quotation already given, says that he who desired to reach the chosen goal abstained from lust and wine. Athletes that intend to enter a contest for a prize abstain from everything that lessens their bodily or mental vigor, and the student should no less abstain from injurious drinks, from the use of tobacco, glutinous eating, irregularities in hours of retirement, eating &c., because these and others are small if not great leakages which are fatal to the best success.

Another point that we as students should keep in mind to stir us on to work, is that in order to maintain the position for which our energy in the struggle has fitted us we must have competency and character. I say both, because the one can never take the place of the other. If the world as it now is demands hard work it no less demands in those whom it has in its positions of trust these combined qualities, competency and character. Competency in a physician, lawyer, teacher, or preacher, ability to do what belongs to each and to do it well, is what the public inevitably and persistently demands of us, and it is the first thing it expects us to show in our new position. We cannot and should never try to palm off inferior goods upon our patrons. We should never think of presuming on the ignorance or good nature of the people whom we serve. If we are not competent to do our work they will soon see it and cease to respect, though they may continue to endure us. Nowhere is this mistake more common than among clergymen, for as a rule they are without a rival in their field of labor; but let them never think that their incompetency is unnoticed. Even character, no matter how good, is never able to take the place of competency.
If my life is in danger, I shall send for a competent physician. If he be a Christian man I shall greatly prefer it, but if he be incompetent he may be ever so good a man morally I shall not entrust my life to his good intentions but bad skill. If I have an intricate lawsuit, an infidel, skilled in law, would be preferable to a man good as a Christian but a bungling lawyer. The same applies to teachers and ministers. The teacher who is incompetent loses the respect of his pupils or students. It is competency not character which first impresses them and it is the lack of competency rather than of character which quickest robs a man of the position he holds. Even in a minister, where character is of such supreme importance, it will never supply the want of competency. The congregation demands in a man besides his good character, competency to do the work of his office. In proof of the importance of what I here insist on, there come to my mind, and no doubt to yours also, teachers and preachers who were of irreproachable moral character but of no competency for the positions they occupied. Character did not save them. The people simply tolerated them for years and finally compelled them to withdraw.

But character, good manly Christian character, is just as necessary even though it cannot take the place of competency. Character is much slower in finding recognition but it takes surer and deeper hold in the hearts of men; and though you may be incompetent to fill your chosen calling to the satisfaction of the people you will not be altogether cast out, as you will surely sooner or later be if you have competency and no character. Competency will get you a position; character will retain it for you. Competency is the sharp edge of the sword; character the quality of its steel. The good steel without the keen edge is useless; the edge, however keen, without the temper of the steel does not last long. The two must go together.

Another thing which you and I ought to strive after is a manly independence, to stand on our own feet and use our own heads; for our heads were given us for use and not for show, at least those of the male portion of us. Let us quit ourselves as men, and not as slaves to a stolen master. To use what another mind has worked out for us, more and more enfeebles our own, and unfits it for its next performance. At first a subject may be difficult and dark, but if we put an honest amount of labor on it it must become clear and victory will be ours. It is a law of God that the laborer is not only worthy of his hire, but since God is just he is sure to get it. If we faithfully work at a subject, though it is dark and dreary, we shall one day find it cleared up even if it was still in the dark when last we left it. To those of us who may be called to public speaking as our lot in life, it is encouraging to remember that personal labor bestowed on a subject, though it bring not forth truths as weighty and as fine in themselves as trading in foreign goods, gives to our productions a ring, a soul, a fervor of conviction, which no plagiarism can give to them. It is this conviction begotten of faithful, conscientious study that enables a person to speak as one having authority and not as the pharisees. Let us be independent, honest, manly; let us take what others have to give, but always try it in the crucibles of our own souls.
In conclusion let me say that as students, and especially as faithful ministers we have a calling in which our daily work is our labor of love, and there is not that difference between hours of work and hours of leisure which makes the former hours of slavish toil and the latter hours of enjoyment in which pleasureable pursuits are followed; but all or nearly all our work may be work of love and its own reward. The whole life of the student, so far as work is concerned, can be made an enjoyment.

**BOOK AND LITERARY NOTICES.**

[In noticing Books the Bulletin is not limited to such only as are received for that purpose from the publishers. For sufficient reasons others may be mentioned favorably or unfavorably, according to the Bulletin’s estimate of their merits.]

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