

Religious Bulletin.  
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Setting a Freshman Right.

"Dear Father: I think it a pretty bad state of affairs when 90% of the students here will drink the way they do. Fellows who never took a drink in their lives before they came here will make perfect fools of themselves, although they normally seem to have brains. I've done it myself, and I don't know why? Can you tell me? -- '27."

I.

In the first place your figures need revision. You don't know what 90% of the students here do. If you know what 10% of the students do, you know more than the average student does about the habits of his schoolmates.

II.

In the second place, it would be perfectly fine if 90% or 100% of the students knew how to drink and would govern themselves accordingly: would drink good liquor in virtuous moderation when the occasion demanded it and would abstain from all liquor from a motive of virtue, "in memory of the Sacred Passion of Our Blessed Lord." The trouble is that one can't learn to drink in this country nowadays. Good liquor is not to be had.

III.

"Say not such a one is a drunkard because you have seen him drink .... ,... for one act alone is not sufficient to constitute a vice....To acquire the name of a vice or a virtue, the action must be habitual -- one must have made some progress in it." -- St. Francis de Sales, Introduction to a Devout Life. You probably can't name six drunkards in your hall -- and six would mean from three to five per cent. according to your hall.

IV.

Although drink is an evil at Notre Dame, our students are lily-white when compared with those of certain other schools whose statistics have reached our ears. Last year it was determined from various independent sources that the number of steady drunks among the off-campus students was about a dozen. Twelve out of six hundred is two per cent. -- not even good beer. The census hasn't been taken this year -- but it will be.

V.

Why did you do it? you ask. Because you lacked character. Another fool asked you to be a darn fool, and you drank something you knew nothing about until the next morning. So many people won't take advice. So many people are darned fools one time or other, if not all the time.

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