

RELIGIOUS BULLETIN.

April 23, 1925.

Fighting the Enemies to Perseverance -II.

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(Synopsis of preceding installments. The enemies to perseverance are: Comfort, haste, Procrastination, Diversion, Disorder, Atrophy of the will, Tolerance of venial sin, Stagnation of the mind, Prosperity, The power of habit, Sensuality, Cowardice, Overtraining, and Overconfidence. The spiritual arms against these enemies are; Prayer, The Sacraments, Spiritual Reading, and Mortification.)

2. Prayer (Continued). A comfortable position should be assume in meditating, and an uncomfortable position in vocal prayer. Sitting is comfortable; kneeling upright is uncomfortable. (There is a horrid position between these two which is neither elegant nor prayerfull.) Prayer needs variety to a certain extent, especially such prayer as is half-meditation, such as the thanks given after Holy Communion and the Visit to the Blessed Sacrament.

Too much vocal prayer is tiring, and is not particularly helpful at times. Vocal prayer wisely mixed with mental prayer does not tire. Your spiritual director can help you distribute your time between these two forms of prayer in such fashion that they will always grow in interest and profit.

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Note; If there is sufficient demand for it, a series of instructions on meditation will be given in the Sorin chapel at five o'clock every evening next week.

3. Spiritual Reading. We are so constituted by nature that we cannot make progress without ideals; and ideals are presented to us by the imagination with the aid of the intellect and the lesser faculties. Contact with the world tarnishes ideals and wears down our resolves. To build up ideals and to improve them we must retire from the world, and expose our imaginations to the fire of noble minds.

The written word annihilates time and space, and the art of reading can transport us in a moment from the mad blare of the world into the heart of the monastery or the desert, and set us down at the feet of Aquinas or Newman or Paul of the Cross. What a pity it is that young men who love Notre Dame or its high-minded associations on the campus will close their minds to the magnificent spiritual environment which the library offers.

You have constant need of new ideas, clear ideas, clean ideas, old ideas in new dress, beautiful ideas of men who see God clearly, love Him deeply, cherish His friendship, cling to Him desperately, see in Him the fulfillment of every good desire. Spiritual reading will give you all of this.

4. Mortification, or self-denial, is as much natural as it is supernatural in the aid it gives in perseverance. The pagans not only knew it, but they practiced it at times to a degree that puts us to shame; "and they," as St. Paul says, "For an incorruptible crown, but we for an incorruptible one," (St. Paul is speaking of the runners, wrestlers and boxers who "abstained from all things" while in training.) The modern pagans, typified by William James, lay the greatest stress on the natural value of self-denial in will training.

RELIGIOUS BULLETIN I

April 23, 1925 (Con't)

Natural selfdenial is made supernatural when it is done for the love of God. It may be applied to the senses, to the lower faculties of the imagination, the passions and the memory, and to the higher faculties of intellect and will.

You need to deny your palate the right to dictate what food and drink you use; your eyes their wandering, even to innocent sights; your ears even lawful conversation and music; your tongue its many vagaries, licit and illicit; your senses of smell and touch their proper objects; your stomach its heavy demands; your system its jazz; your imagination its wanderlust; your mind its curiosity; your will its wilfulness.

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