

Their First (and Last?) Appearance.

They appear today in cap and gown, the seniors. The procession is imposing, impressive. You wonder what a senior thinks about? He thinks about the fact that it won't be long now. He thinks that Notre Dame isn't such a bad place after all. He thinks that he is pretty good to have escaped the academic and disciplinary shipwrecks that have engulfed more than sixty per cent of the freshmen who started out with him four years ago. And, if he belongs to a certain group in the class, he congratulates himself that he has not fallen for any of this "religious dope around here." (Poor goose!)

Will it be the last appearance of some of these seniors in cap and gown? Undoubtedly. History repeats itself. Many a man in that line today knows full well that it is only by the grace of God that he is still at Notre Dame. Many a man in that line thinks that his partner in the procession has an awful crust to be asking a degree from Notre Dame when the principles on which he acts are diametrically opposed to her principles.

The Gospel of today's Lenten Mass has a lesson for seniors: "At that time there was a festival day of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is at Jerusalem a pond called Probatica, which in Hebrew is named Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of sick, of blind, of lame, of withered, waiting for the moving of the water. And an angel of the Lord descended at certain times into the pond, and the water was moved. And he that went down first into the pond after the motion of the water was made whole of whatsoever infirmity he lay under.

"And there was a certain man there that had been eight and thirty years under his infirmity. Him when Jesus had seen lying, and knew that he had been now a long time, He saith to him: Wilt thou be made whole? The infirm man answered Him: Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pond; for whilst I am coming, another goeth down before me. Jesus saith to him: Arise, take up thy bed and walk. And immediately the man was made whole, and he took up his bed and walked.

"And it was the sabbath that day. The Jews therefore said to him that was healed: It is the sabbath, it is not lawful for thee to take up thy bed. He answered them: He that made me whole, He said to me: Take up thy bed and walk. They asked him therefore: Who is that man who said to thee, Take up thy bed and walk? But he who was healed knew not who it was. For Jesus went aside from the multitude standing in the place.

"Afterwards Jesus findeth him in the temple, and saith to him: Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more lest some worse thing happen to thee. The man went his way and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him whole." -- John, v, 1-15.

Yesterday's mail brought a letter from one of last year's seniors who had just read his copy of the new Survey. It had moved him to "pour out his tale of woe." He finds the "Cold, cruel world a darn sight tougher than the Army Game." His big regret is that he misses the place where "a man could go to confession in the middle of the night if he wanted to -- and if he did do some pretty mean tricks, he didn't get his head cut off (although he was told a few things) and he invariably came out of the confessional penitent and determined to watch himself more closely." He adds: "I went over to your room a couple of times last year, but you were out, and my courage would die out before I could get back again."

These are honest, full-hearted regrets; you can forestall them if you use your head.

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PRAYERS: Henry Frye, Stanley Dayton, John and Philip DeRoulet, and Robert Joyce ask prayers for their mothers who are very ill. Leopold Melian will have a sinus operation today. The widow of Sam Murdock, '90, is quite ill. Don'O'Brien's grandmother died Wednesday.