

Tonight: Fisher and
Alumni halls represent
us at the public Novena

University of Notre Dame
Religious Bulletin
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Tomorrow evening: It will be
Sorin and Walsh representing
the 5300 of us.

Discipline And Education

Ever meet anyone who liked discipline? You can be sure he is in the minority -- here anyway. Why? Because we are all part-anarchistic at heart. We want to do as we please -- retire and get up when the whim hits us; work when "inspired," loaf when lazy. Rules seem petty, needless, irksome. They hem you in; they cramp your style. The reaction is not peculiar to this campus; it is universally true of human nature. If you don't like discipline, don't worry -- you're still normal.

Dr. Alexis Carrell, famous author of the best seller a decade ago entitled, Man, The Unknown, makes this pertinent observation about human nature.

"Man naturally tends toward the satisfaction of his appetites, such as a craving for alcohol, speed, and ceaseless change. But he degenerates when he satisfies these appetites... He must, then, accustom himself to dominate his hunger, sexual impulses, laziness, fondness for alcohol, and need of sleep.

"Cinemas, concerts, radios, automobiles, and athletics are no substitute for intelligent work. Two essential conditions for the progress of the individual are relative isolation and discipline... One has the power of refusing to go to certain cinemas, to listen to radio programs, to read certain newspapers and books. But it is chiefly through the intellectual and moral discipline, and the rejection of the habits of the herd, that we can reconstruct ourselves... All physiological and mental functions are improved by work. The more the muscle works, the more it develops. Activity strengthens it, instead of wearing it out. Like muscles and organs, intelligence and moral sense atrophy for want of exercise..."

It all amounts to the very important truth that discipline is part of the education you are seeking at Notre Dame. Without discipline there could be no true education. And so, it should not come as a great surprise to you that Notre Dame insists upon a certain amount of discipline -- it's part of the education you ask for, and pay for. You're entitled to it. You need it to help you help yourselves. You would not be an educated man without it. And the local portions are generous, aren't they?

Be patient! Discipline values are perceived in retrospect. You'll spot its necessity later -- not today or next week. Right now, it's obvious to you that local rules and regulations are for the birds; they're petty and juvenile; they're unfair; they'll never make a man of you -- you're sure of that. You'd much prefer Podunk U. which, you've been told, has no restrictions -- and so that's the place for you; where men are men, and they have neither check, nor prefect; and the few classes taught are not compulsory.

25 years ago, your fathers said the same thing about Notre Dame discipline. They damned it thoroughly -- just as many of you do -- but they were louder and funnier, and very sure of their evaluations. Then came marriage, and you, and responsibilities, and experience in many years of human nature. They changed their view, concluded it was the best thing in the world for them -- and just what you need, if you are to grow up and amount to anything. If they didn't believe in Notre Dame values, you wouldn't be here. When Notre Dame relaxed some regulations after the war, many Alumni thought it a great mistake to do so. In some future day you may take the same attitude. Yes, today's loudest protest may be tomorrow's firmest advocate of discipline. Education here is for life -- not for undergraduate days only.

Hence, if anyone wonders at the education you're getting here, along with the discipline, just tell them it's difficult to explain; but that you're 20 years ahead of your time!

Correction: Friday's Bulletin listed Tom Laboe (Lyons) deceased. Not so; he's only ill.