

RELIGIOUS BULLETIN.

October 21, 1924.

The Sophomore Mind.

It is with us again---the Sophomore Mind: coarse, rebellious, blase, materialistic.

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There is no need to get into another analysis of the sophomore swagger. It was done twice last year, and the memory of it lingers in the minds of the present generation of sophomores. It was stated then that the great fear of the average sophomore seems to be that someone will discover that his mother was a lady.

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This Bulletin is not written for the average sophomore. If he is curable, the element of time must enter largely into his cure, and it is more than a waste of words to address him so early in the year. It is written for the above-the-average sophomore who is exposed to the temptation to be an average sophomore.

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The above-the-average sophomore has sense, but he hasn't the sense to see that he has. Hidden down in the dark interior of his soul are all those nicer instincts that go with good breeding, that show the care of a lovely trinity of mothers, the mother of flesh and blood, the Holy Mother received in baptism, and the Blessed Mother who was willed to us at the foot of the Cross. Those instincts rebel against what is ignoble, coarse, mean, base, unfit for a mother to know; they cherish what is noble, uplifting, godly, Christ-like.

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The common sense of the above-the-average sophomore inclines him to a frank and free development of the beautiful soul God has given him; his environment and his temptations tend to make him secretive, shy, timid, if not openly vulgar,---for vulgarity, after all, is usually only the brave front of a coward who is afraid of his emotions.

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The sophomore with courage enough to let common sense rule will be able to note on the religious survey this year that his sophomore year in college has been his most profitable year spiritually. If he lacks moral courage but has a good heart, courage may come back to him in his junior or senior year. If cowardice is allowed too strong a sway, darkness will settle down upon his soul, and the only light that will flicker there will be the hazy, now-unintelligible memory of a happy freshman year.

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Light is needed to guide courage; and light, spiritual light, warms the heart. Spiritual guidance is absolutely essential to the soul that would make progress. Reading is a great help, but it is not all, and reading chosen without guidance may hinder rather than help. A guide of flesh and blood is needed, one who understands and wants to help.

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If you want to be an average sophomore, settle down to a life of vulgarity and irresponsible baseness: if you want to be an above-the-average sophomore, choose a spiritual director and be absolutely frank with him.

John F. O'Hara, C.S.C.,
Prefect of Religion.