

RELIGIOUS BULLETIN.

March 25, 1925.

Cases from the Survey.

"I have no ideal of the Notre Dame man; that was killed in my freshman year! That's modern sophistication. What a pity people know so much nowadays; it takes all the beauty out of life. But it doesn't seem possible that you can be so absolutely without an ideal, unless you are completely out of touch with university life. If anyone is entitled to such an attitude, it should be the confessor, who sees the seamiest side of the seamy life; yet the confessor's attitude is one of constant hope, because he sees so much that edifies him.

Look at the graph in the basement chapel. Last year's average is 785,--- and say what you will, the ups-and-downs of the Communion graph give very exactly the variations in study, decency, athletic endeavour and the rest of the things that go to make up student life. If you are a pessimist you will growl every time the line goes above the average; if you are an optimist you will thank God that it is still five or six hundred above the zero mark. Don't mind the crabbing of the Prefect of Religion; he has to do that for effect. As a matter of fact he is secretly quite pleased with the conduct of the students, but he has found that it doesn't pay to let them know it. They swell up and bust.

II.

"Fath er, my objection to your program of daily Communion is fundamental and sincere. What you have strived for is quantity, not quality, and it is my sincere and pious belief that a Communion a month is far more pleasing to Our Lord than all the Communions that are received every day at Notre Dame. I know of students who talk constantly of filthy things and do filthy things, and yet go daily to Communion merely to be in good standing." Your sincere and pious belief is a heresy, condemned by Pius X---Jansenism ---unless you are supposing (which God forbid) that all the Communions received every day here are sacrilegious. Tuesday's Bulletin answered part of your difficulty and suggested a course of action., which you should not be slow to take if you are sincere. You forget that Holy Communion is an aid to virtue, not a reward for virtue. You forget that when St. Peter made his First Communion Our Lord knew that he would be guilty of repeating mortal sins. St. Peter was in good faith. Presume as much for your friends.

Please be more specific in your contention that the Prefect of Religion has not striven for quality; he will be glad to receive suggestions on how to improve quality. Our Lord came to call not the just, but sinners, to repentance; the greatest instances of His mercy were the Prodigal Son, the woman taken in adultery, Magdalen, Zaccheus, Matthew, Peter, the Good Thief, and St. Paul. The Prefect of Religion is constantly on the lookout for just such saints among the throngs that come to Notre Dame: the good fellows he turns over to the books and pamphlets on virtue, and to the spiritual direction of priests more able than himself. Do not begrudge him his love for sinners---nor the quantity production of penitents from sinners.

And now for a bit of psychology that will help you in business. The average Catholic young man has a very tender conscience---much more tender than a woman's---but he looks upon a tender conscience as a weakness, and he tries to hide it by the gigantic bluff that he is hard-boiled. You lack discernment. If you think that frequent Communion will produce in your soul a contempt for the things of God, you are entitled to your belief; but until you humble yourself enough to take it on faith that it is not so, you lay yourself open to the charge of narrow-mindedness. Do this one thing: promise that when discernment comes through experience, say ten years from now, you will write a letter to the Religious Bulletin of that time and acknowledge that you were wrong.

Lenten Devotions Tonight

The Novena for exams begins tomorrow morning. Go to confession after Benediction.