

Religious Bulletin

September 17, 1925

The Spiritual Value of Cross Country Work.

The cross-country season has opened, and the runners ask a share in your prayers that they may have a good year. Readers of "Perseverance" will do well to give this ancient sport their attention. Lots of punishment and very modest glory are the elements of the game. As a drill in will power it is superb; and like every other activity that brings Notre Dame into competition with other schools, it is an act of homage to Our Blessed Lady.

Tomorrow is an Ember Day.

Friday and Saturday of this week are Ember days. As announced yesterday, the fast and the Saturday abstinence are dispensed at meals taken on the campus; at meals off-campus the general law of the Church holds: you must not eat meat, and you must fast if you are over twenty-one. Your confessor can dispense you from the fast, but not from the abstinence.

A Student Asks Questions.

~~In a commentary on the pamphlet, "Perseverance", a student asks some questions. They are answered here.~~

I.

"I wonder if it always is true that lack of restraint in eating, drinking, and dancing leads inevitably to impurity."

It is true in normal cases. The psychology of the process is described on pages 27 and 28 of the pamphlet.

II.

"I don't think it is true that comfort has taken the fight out of many an Irishman at Notre Dame."

Then what is it that throws Irishmen at Notre Dame into spiritual lethargy; makes them go on in sin; makes them miss Mass on Sunday; makes them give up the struggle against bad habits? Thank God, the majority of them fight well; but Notre Dame has harbored many an Irishman who turned out to be a bad Catholic. What did it?

III.

"I wonder why patience is one of the hardest virtues for a young person to learn."

Because patience comes more generally from experience than from reason, and it takes a lot of experience to develop it.

IV.

"How could you start an accounting system for your merits and demerits?"

Many methods are suggested by spiritual writers. One is to keep a little book containing a list of virtues on which to grade yourself, by plus or minus percentages, once a week, or once a month. A help to this is given on page 24: "Daily examination of conscience, with systematic endeavor to root out venial sins one at a time."

V.

"How can we overcome the venial sins listed on pages 24 and 25?"

Use the means given on page 24. Place a copy of the list on your table in front of you; struggle for wisdom, which comes through "prayer, fasting and counsel;" watch yourself.

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