

Notre Dame: Debt to the Blessed Virgin.

"Either I must learn to be selfish or I must leave the world," writes a recent graduate whose disillusionment has come with a rush. This city is the coldest, the cruellest, the most bloodthirsty taskmaster the human mind can conceive. I can't think of giving up all the ideals Notre Dame has implanted in me, all the hopes she has raised in my heart; life means more to me than making money, but I have to make money to live. I am in a quandary; I don't know where to turn."

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It was a good heart but a confused mind that dictated this letter. When too many things happen at once the mind may easily be confused. Since the heart is good it will seek refuge where it has been taught to seek it; it will turn to the Mother of all Notre Dame men and say:

"Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that any one who fled to thy protection, implored thy help and sought thy intercession was left unaided."

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With peace of heart will come peace of mind, and lingering memories will bring inspiring pictures to console and encourage and rouse to new efforts, and this man will keep his ideals and will fight the world as other Notre Dame men have done. Before the mind will come the picture of the Log Chapel, where Father Sorin and six Brothers began to fight the world in the interests of the ideals this young man cherishes today; alongside the Log Chapel will appear the Old College, the first home of these same ideals.

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In fancy the mind will recall the cholera of the fifties, the Civil War of the sixties, and the fire of seventy-nine, crushing blows that would have wiped out a merely human institution -- for Father Sorin had not the tangible reserve forces known to modern business enterprise. All he had was faith; and when he worked, after the fire, with his fellow-religious at the lowly task of cleaning brick, he would lay aside his trowel now and again and go back to fingering his beads.

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And if the boy's heart is not lightened by the remembrance of the heroic fortitude of the Founders, it cannot remain sluggish when he surveys their accomplishment. Father Sorin's dream has come true. Out of the wilderness of 1842 has arisen a worthy throne for the golden statue of the Queen of Heaven; and before that throne thousands of young men have bent the knee in reverence to pure manhood and womanhood; and the world, that will have none of these things, wonders at the force behind Notre Dame.

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Notre Dame has a debt to the Blessed Virgin, a debt that can never be paid. Interest on that debt is met by her sons when they pay her homage, and when they lead lives she would approve. A heavy payment falls due tomorrow. It is the greatest of the feasts of the Blessed Virgin. In Holy Communion tomorrow we thank her for what she has made her school.

Andrew Boyle has been called home by the grave illness of his mother. Three other students ask prayers for sick relatives.