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Shall We Tear Down Sorin Hall?

Founder's Day, the feast of St. Edward, patron Saint of Father Sorin, founder of the University, seems a proper day for the discussion of this problem, which comes into prominence every once in a while.

The pro-destructionists argue that it seems a shame to give the choicest place on the campus to the oldest hall; that it would be an ideal place for this, that, and the other thing -- a union building, a parking place for the chewing gum of devout worshippers on their way to Benediction, a beauty parlor, and so forth. The contra-destructionists, on the other hand, maintain that disregard for sacred traditions and landmarks is a sign of the flippancy that precedes disintegration.

To get at the matter in a practical way we should go into the history of the building, and study the purpose of its founders. Our research department has unearthed from the Scholastic of January 12, 1889, the following information on this score:

"Sorin Hall, the home of the scholar, the resort of the student, was thrown open on New Year's Day, and the fortunate possessors of rooms, returning from their holiday vacation, found their new home ready for occupancy. With the erection of Sorin Hall the Faculty have entered on a new departure which will, let us hope, fulfill all their expectations and prove an enduring monument to science, letters, and art. Here the more advanced students, who have learned the necessity and value of a true education, find all the opportunities that could be desired to enable them to attain the object of their wishes. The circumstances that surround them and the rules that govern them are conducive to earnestness of purpose and energy in studies; conditions, surely, that will lead to higher and better results both in individual and class work."

The home of the scholar! Perhaps it is, but the midnight gab-fests that disturb the rest of the weary sound far from scholarly. The home of the student! Maybe so, but if there is a student in the hall he is leading the hidden life. ... who have learned the necessity and value of a true education! The value placed on it seems to be somewhat akin to zero. .... earnestness ~~in studies~~ of purpose and energy in studies..... earnestness in sleeping and energy in eating might better describe the present generation.

"Sorin Hall and the Collegiates" is the title of this precious heirloom in the Scholastic. "Collegiate" possibly meant something else in those days.

The point in this: One hundred and forty students who have had three years of life in the intensely spiritual atmosphere of Notre Dame, should, if they possessed earnestness of purpose and energy, be able to assemble more than twenty daily communicants. They regard themselves as the flower of the University. The flower has withered. They have the best spiritual opportunities of any hall on the campus, and they are making the worst record of the year -- and the worst record Sorin Hall has known for years.

Another Withered Flower.

From the Scholastic referred to above we cull the following item: "Master Eugene Gladstone O'Neill, son of Mr. James O'Neill, of Monte Cristo fame, is with his amiable mother visiting his brother Jamie of the Minim department. He is a beautiful child, and promises to do honor to his name." This is Eugene O'Neill, the playwright who has given to the American stage some of its filthiest dramas. Handsome is as handsome does. Premature praise may ruin a child's life. This is one of the reasons why the Bulletin would rather knock than boost.