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A CHAPEL TALK

A week ago last Sunday evening Supt. Hall gave those assembled in chapel a talk which held all in perfect attention and was worthy of the most serious attention. We are now publishing it, as follows:

Discouragement is death to success. Though we cannot avoid occasional periods when our undertakings look dark and seem impossible, yet we can avoid yielding to them. By giving up we are sure to lose. Some of our students have but recently entered the school, and know too well the feeling of discouragement, and it is just now the time that they need to exert all their power to resist the feeling. It is true that many of you—nearly all, on account of the trying times we, in common with other communities, have had with the influenza—have worked under difficulties and discouraging conditions. You deserve and receive sympathy; but in giving up when the critical moment arrives you forfeit all that you have gained. He is, indeed, a weak, cowardly soldier who in times of peace enjoys the ease and comforts of barracks life, but deserts at the approach of a battle. How we despise such a character! Stay with the undertaking, whatever it may be, if worthy, until your last effort fails, and if it must end in defeat, take it bravely. Even then you will gain in character.

Battles won under the hardest and most discouraging circumstances have, according to the history of the world, meant the most for humanity, for progress. Those were battles where the victorious army entered the fray knowing that they were outnumbered and outclassed and knowing that their only hope was in a higher power which would cause right to prevail—and they, trusting that power, fought with unconquerable will. Will and determination, with faith that things will come right even against the greatest odds, is now your hope. Some of you have been sick, some have had to do double duty, some came to school late, your regular classwork has been seriously interrupted and many other things came in the way to prevent your advancement. Yes, it may look big. But what a glorious battle it would seem to an old fighter! Why, the very element of the impossible would be just the spur for him. Be a fighter.

One point of great importance which you may not realize, is that your feeling of hopeless discouragement not only hinders you, but is a detriment to others who have their own fight to make. One "blue," despondent pupil may hinder the entire class, while he or she has the power through bright hopefulness to

create the winning spirit, thereby saving the situation in the crisis. Now if you are one of those students facing discouragement, force that discouragement out of mind and put in its place the hope, the expectation of winning, and fight grimly to the last. In any event you will win in that which counts heavily—strong manhood or womanhood.

There is another matter of vital importance to which I wish to call your attention—it is personal responsibility on the part of each of you. Many do have it and strive under all circumstances to live up to it; but there are those who apparently go on from day to day eating, sleeping, and doing mechanically the tasks required of them, without thought of the purpose of it all. If they think of these tasks at all it is with the idea that by doing them they are benefiting somebody else. This shows an utter lack of responsibility. It is the duty of the school to correct these things for the students and leave nothing undone which will assist in developing their characters and making them self-reliant.

Instead of doing the thing at hand with spirit and enthusiasm, because it is right to do it, because it is for their own welfare or for the raising of the standards of the school, they enter into the matter, whether in the classrooms, shops, societies, or some of the special duties that are necessary for the right sort of school life and spirit, in a listless, don't-care manner that positively kills all the efforts of the instructor who labors and strains to pull them up to the point for which they ought to be striving. Such a state of affairs is most discouraging—for the students who feel responsibility, for the teachers, for the entire school.

Everything that is asked of a student is in some way an opportunity for growth. If he does it in a willing and interested spirit, he himself will notice a strength and self-reliance gained by the experience. True, he will probably find his duties increased; but where is the good, strong, noble, successful man or woman who does not have a multitude of duties and responsibilities? It is just these things that give to him or her strength and nobility of character.

Wherever and whenever we see an admirable character we shall find that he or she feels the obligation—the responsibility—to do every duty that comes up for the sake of the right, and not merely to oblige some-one else. By such observations the student will surely see that if his life is to count for anything he must arouse himself from listless indifference and go to meet the requirements and take upon himself responsibility in every demand made upon him in his school life.