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The Chemawa American

Printed at Chemawa, Oregon, and Devoted to the Interests of Indian Education

Vol. XXIII Wednesday, November 17, 1920 No. 7

INEXCUSABLE CARELESSNESS

The other day we read an article about habitual carelessness, which is prevalent on the part of so many people, and it occurred to us that this would prove a good subject for discussion in the columns of The American.

The history of the human race is full of the most horrible tragedies caused by the carelessness and inexcusable blunders of those who never formed the habit of being accurate, of thoroughness, of doing things right. We know of an instance where a most costly lifeboat sprung a leak, and while undergoing repairs a hammer was found in the bottom of the boat—left there by a careless builder. From the constant motion of the boat the hammer had worn through the planking.

Multitudes of people are hobbling around on one leg, have lost an eye or an arm, or otherwise maimed, because of some dishonest workman who slighted his work—covered up defects and weak places. How many have lost their lives because of dishonest, careless work, criminal blundering in the construction of houses and other things we use? Thousands lose their lives yearly through defective machinery on account of dishonest and careless labor.

Everywhere we see the tragic results of careless, batched work—somebody's blunder, somebody's habit of being inaccurate. The worst crimes are not punishable by law. Carelessness, lack of thoroughness, are crimes against self, against humanity, that often do more harm than the crimes which make the perpetrator an outcast from society. Where a tiny flaw or defect may cost a precious life carelessness is as much a crime as deliberate criminality.

If everybody put conscience into their work, did it thoroughly and completely, it would not only reduce the loss of human life, as well as save valuable property, but would give us a higher quality of manhood and womanhood. It takes honest work to make an honest character. The habit of doing poor, slovenly work, will, after awhile, make the worker dishonest in other things. The man, woman, boy or girl who habitually slights his work also slights his character, for our work is a part of us.

The majority of the people think too much of quantity and too little of quality. They often try to do too much and do not do it well. We wish to impress upon our students at Chemawa, in particular, and our readers in general, the great necessity of realizing that the education, the comfort, the satisfaction, the general improvement and bracing up of an individual comes from doing one thing absolutely right, and of continuing to follow the plan of doing whatever comes your way with precision; which will outweigh in character, in self-respect, the value that attaches to many thousands of poor, careless, batched jobs. The mental and moral effect of half doing, or carelessly doing things, its power to drag down, to demoralize, can hardly be estimated because the processes are so gradual, so subtle.

The habit of carelessness attaches so strongly to many of us here at Chemawa, and elsewhere, too, by the way, and is so reprehensible that we wish to impress upon you with all the force at our command to take heed, for the habit of doing things poorly will so demoralize your general character that you will unconsciously perform such a poor grade of work that will result in stultifying your sense of honor and finally make you unable to realize how worthless you have become—you will not know why you are such an ignominious failure.

A person who habitually does things wrongly will in time become really repulsive. His ideals are dulled, faculties palsied, ambition gone, and a deterioration occurs all along the line, for the human mechanism is so constituted that whatever goes wrong in one part affects the whole structure.

Students, watch your step. Be thorough and do not dodge nor slip in rotten hours nor rotten service. Nobody likes a "rotter!"

The boys in the drafting classes are working on some problems in carpentry and forging which they will finish in the shops. Here is another opportunity for the boys at Chemawa. We have more boys than room in these classes. If you are not interested don't be surprised to find your place filled by someone else as Mr. Iliff has applications almost every day for this branch of work.