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THE VALUE OF GOOD HABITS

Young people, if a high purpose at Chemawa is your starting point and the all-conquering motive, no time must be lost in adopting it. Now is the time—right now. The decisive time with every-one is when the ambition is fired and the will takes command. Until then impulses, freaks, indifference, perhaps laziness, rules. Must we admit that with the great majority of young people the higher ambition is never fired at all? We will admit that soft surroundings stifle motive and paralyze effort.

It is said with some truth that our Indian schools do not require sufficient self-denial and sustained effort on the part of a student because everything comes so easily; that a good many of those who attend drift; only a comparative few with the manhood or womanhood of the highest type realize their opportunities and take full advantage of them. Laziness is easy; labor is hard.

Candidly, now, do you think the application of industry and persistence required to fit you for something in life worth while is effort lost? High character costs something. If it was money, and if the school and father or friends would pay for it, by all means it would be the thing to have. But suppose it means hard, unflinching intellectual work and denial of a lot of the things that one likes—why, of course that comes too high! The greater number reject the terms. They will not pay the price.

Here and there a strong boy or girl with faith in themselves and in their undeveloped powers set the high aim before them, summon their will to their command and march forward. After the aim, or main purpose of using every opportunity to advance, character begins to build.

If the purpose is a high one the ambitious student will attain his end much more quickly by knowing how best to use the means at his command. There is one powerful aid that should be seized at the very outset. It will work for you early and late, never tiring, never varying, and stops only when life ceases. It is easy to enlist it in your behalf, either for good or evil, and it is hard to shake it off if you conclude at any time you have had enough of it. What is it? Habit. It is very easy to form or prevent a habit—very hard

to break one when formed. If you doubt this try for yourself on that habit which you can "stop at any time."

It is positively vital that you form correct habits and crush bad ones right at the start, and right now, at the beginning of a new year, is the time to make good resolutions. The longer a bad habit is tolerated the more hopeless is the uprooting of it. Here are some things that should be formulated into habit: Think carefully on every subject in connection with your class and industrial work; assimilate the knowledge that comes from observation, study and reading; be as correct as you know how in conversation and manners; keep regular hours; have physical exercise; apply industry and economy; use method in work of every kind.

It is needless to say that the opposite of these habits—slipshod thinking, careless observation and reading, lack of physical exercise and regular hours, laziness, etc., is far easier to crystalize than the right and helpful way. So it behooves the young man or woman who desires this potent influence of habit to work for them in the struggle to reach the top to stop every bad habit, to rally the full force of will and crush it out. In like manner let them patiently, persistently plant, cultivate, and nourish the habits that help until they are unalterably fixed and become sure companions for life.

It has been said that "time is the stuff of which life is made." Every young person here or elsewhere has the same amount of it in a year. One improves it and harvests great results—another wastes and gathers failure. The first are called lucky, the second unfortunate, and the unfortunate form the mass of mankind everywhere it should be noted.

Hence, use your time rightly, shape everything to it, and then make things go that way. This scheme will go to pieces quickly unless backed by a persistent purpose and determination that wins. When you work, work—put your whole mind and heart into it; know nothing else; do everything the very best; distance everybody about you. This will not be hard, for the other fellows are not trying much. Be always ready for the next step up. If a vocational farmer, be an expert. If a machinist, try to know as soon as possible

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