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CONSTANT EFFORT

Young people, the great things of the world are not done by jerks—nor by single strokes. One of the most successful men we have ever known had no brilliancy whatever. He was just an average, ordinary young man. His success was due to his having resolved early in life that each day would find him just a little bit further along. This man never made any brilliant strokes in his achievement, but the constant effort to improve, to make each day's work better than the best that he had done the day before wrought marvels in his career. People could not understand how a young man of apparently ordinary ability could have achieved so much. The everlasting effort to do his best by sticking and plodding was the secret of it all.

There is no young person, be they ever so humble, but who can wonderfully improve their condition if they are constant in their work, no matter what their aim may be. The plodder who tries to do everything better each day, who is everlastingly trying to do his best, gets away ahead of the person who is waiting for the big opportunity, for a chance to do what he considers worth while.

Young people, it is simply amazing what a single year in school, or outside at work, will accomplish where this constant plodding and sticking policy is carried out. It is just a little more improvement here and a little better work there that will accomplish the things worth while. A little better work here and a little more painstaking work there, 365 days in the year, will effect what may appear as a miracle.

No matter what kind of work you take up the essential feature is that you perform your tasks a little better than the other fellow. Everybody is expected to do his duty, but the person who constantly does a little more is certain of promotion and advancement. The person who pushes the standard of excellence a little higher, who is original, resourceful, who is always alert for the slightest improvement in his way of doing things, is the one who forces his way to the front. All over the world there is a standing advertisement for this kind of a person. It is the capacity for doing your very best, for doing a little more than was expected, that enables people to stand out as leaders, not followers.

Students, always be on the lookout for ways of improving your work, and manage to attract the attention, not only of your immediate teacher, but of all those in authority. You can tell very quickly when going through any of our departments what are the principles of that place. If you find an employe who is not satisfied with what was done yesterday, or last week, who is always striving to make today a little better than any day before, who is always improving the service of that department, who is constantly striving for greater efficiency, you will have discovered a certain winner.

It is in every young man or woman here to be first-class in something if he or she so wills. There is absolutely no excuse for incompetence in this age of opportunity and efficiency; no excuse when really capable people are in demand. If our boys and girls take full advantage of their opportunities here, no matter what their condition or circumstances may be, no matter what their race or color, they will in time be in great demand. If they excel in their calling, no matter how humble it may be, nothing can keep them from success.

But excellence, superiority, costs something. You must sacrifice for it. You must keep your mind alert, you must be on your job every minute, trying constantly to improve day by day. Of course it seems much easier to slide along the line of least resistance, to be superficial, sloppy and slovenly in your daily duties, than to pay the price of excellence in a daily struggle for improvement. It rests practically entirely with each student at this school whether or not he will be an efficient, capable worker in his chosen vocation. You can all improve on yesterday's work if you will.

We believe that any young man or woman at this institution would resent it if we hinted that he or she would never do any better than at present. There is something in every one of us which tells us that we can do better, that we are capable of doing immeasurably more than we have yet done. We all know that we can improve on our past; we all know that we can do things better than we have ever done them before. We can put more energy, more life, more enthusiasm,

(Continued on page 4)