

# THE ELON COLLEGE WEEKLY

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### IMPORTANT.

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## Successful Men Who Have Had Their Failures.

"If at first you don't succeed, try, try again," is an old saying and a wise one, and there are times in the lives of all of us when we want to bear it in mind and act upon the advice which it communicates.

Most people are too easily discouraged. They start out well, but they soon get tired. They have the best of intentions and they propose to themselves a program which would carry them a long way up the summit of achievement. Unfortunately, for their arrival at the goal which they have set before them, the first failure is enough to chill the ardor of their enthusiasm and to turn the edge of their original purpose.

What all of us need to remember is that success is seldom attained without an antecedent failure. People are apt to think that the man who makes a great success is either a favorite of fortune or is endowed with faculties so much above the average that his career furnishes no example for the guidance or encouragement of others.

It is a mistake. The man who "gets there" seldom, if ever, does so at a single bound. He makes his failures so many rungs in the ladder of his ascent. He learns from experience. He climbs the obstacles by which he is confronted instead of lying down before them and bemoaning his bad luck. He keeps on trying and doesn't allow himself to be disheartened by a first or a second or even a third defeat. He turns his failures to good account. He just makes up his mind that he won't be beaten and in spite of misfortune and adversity he goes on pushing ahead. At last he reaches the goal of his ambition and people say, "What a lucky fellow!" No, not lucky. Just plucky and intelligent and determined.

Everything comes to those who know

how to wait and most things are within the reach of the man who knows exactly what he wants and has made up his mind to get it. Think of young Disraeli when the House of Commons hooted him down. "The time will come when you will hear me," he cried, and so it did, for that same Disraeli rose to be the most powerful Prime Minister of his generation, the favorite of his sovereign and one of the most influential men in Europe.

There is no royal road to success. Plenty of pluck and lots of hard work are what do the business, and every young man starting out in life may feel very sure that success will reward his efforts if he will only stick everlastingly at it. Nor need the man who has fallen behind in the race feel disheartened. While there is life there is hope. Few men have risen so high or done so much as General and President Grant, but at forty Grant's life looked like a hopeless failure and he seemed to have no future before him.

So if you are despondent and depressed, cheer up, take a fresh brace, and be sure that if you will only do your part you will win out in the end.

### The Hungry Man.

The term "hungry man" calls to mind, first of all, the physical man craving food for the body. Such a craving indicates a normal state of health, unless the hunger is insatiate and insatiable. The word "man" is used here, however, in its larger, inclusive meaning, and the term "hunger" also. It is pertinent, therefore, to consider hunger for learning, for scholarship, for literary and aesthetic culture, for religious meetings, and for the Great Spirit that makes and rules the land and sea and the vast starry heavens. It is, perhaps, an error for the young mind and heart to suppose that absence of hunger—intense, impelling hunger—for food, mental or spiritual, or both, is cause for alarm. The record in Bible history of the dead having been brought back to life on various occasions, and the general belief in the universal resurrection indicates that one may die physically and yet be alive mentally and spiritually. On the other hand, it seems that one may be alive physically and be dead mentally and spiritually. The Great Book speaks of men as being dead in trespasses and in sin. And as the Christ spoke of Lazarus's death as a sleep, so this mental and spiritual death which we stumble upon, now and then, may be a sleep of the same kind, the spell of which is to be broken only by the immediate action of miraculous, Divine power, or by the sounding of Gabriel's trumpet. Such dead weight bodies of death that a college community has to drag round with it ought to be buried, and a college burial of this kind is called "dismissal."

There is another class, however, in whom there are slight signs of mental and

spiritual life. These, if skillfully treated by faculty and literary societies, may be brought to relish the whole college menu, and actually have hunger for mental and spiritual diet. It is the opportunity, and, perhaps, the duty also of all members of the college to aid in nursing these feeble ones into a healthy state.

Then there is another class still, who have a normal hunger for this mind and soul food. They are the real strength of the college. They are those who would strive for the mastery and succeed in their striving by being temperate in all things. They are neither crazed athletes, gluttonous book-eaters, nor spiritual wine-bibbers.

Finally, there is the book-worm, and religious fanatic class. They have an abnormal, insatiable appetite for mental and spiritual things. They should be dieted, and it is the duty of the entire college to see that the remedy is wisely and faithfully administered.

### Is Our School Declining?

The question was raised some time ago as to the scholarship in Elon College. No definite conclusions were drawn by the writer, but we might conjecture from what was said that he could believe without so much sting of conscience that the scholarship was declining. Now don't let any one misunderstand scholarship as it is used here. We do not mean that the curriculum is less strong; the required work in Elon College is more than it has ever been and, besides, it is as much and as thorough as the required work of any college in the South. And this is no off-hand statement; you only have to compare catalogues to see that it is true. It is a pity that colleges have ever been measured by their money-power and age rather than by their merits. Elon had come into its own long ago if these were not the standards of institutions. But returning to the subject, is our scholarship declining?

This question has to do primarily with the students of a college; and as the term is comprehensive in its character

so it is in its meaning. To me, scholarship does not mean what A knows about Math., or B about Latin, or C about English, but the developed ability of A, B and C to carry on an intelligent conversation in either of these subjects. And scholarship means more than this; it means an all-round development that makes a man feel at home in the world of average thought; it is a general appreciation of literature; Latin and English, German and French and Greek; and finally scholarship means a certain degree of common sense.

Now you will think there are few scholars anywhere—won't you, reader? Well, there are many, and we have lots of them in Elon College. Of course they have not learned all yet, and we must distinguish between the scholarship of a Freshman class and that of the Junior class. But we might see how our scholarship is standing by a study of the Junior class.

Not long ago a class rated as Juniors was asked to name three of Tennyson's poems. Not but a few could name three and a smaller number could give the thought contained in one of his poems. The same test was made as to Longfellow and Poe, with about the same result. In the Bible classes not a few can name a dozen sacred writers or give ten familiar passages from the Scriptures. Now, undoubtedly, such persons are poor scholars. But we will not believe that Elon graduates men that can not show familiarity with the Bible, with the other great literature, and with men in general.

And while there may be a few in all the college classes that are not up to what the standard scholarship of their respective classes should be, yet we would hesitate to level the whole to a few. I am inclined to think that if the scholarship of any institution is declining it is because the college students are declining in that inherent ability to do and become. I do not think the scholarship of Elon is declining any, but I would not say it is advancing. We have no intellectual prodigies or young geniuses, but we do have many energetic, moral men and women, and the majority of these maintain a high standard of scholarship. A. C. H.

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