

EDITORIAL



Uniquely appropriate for our generation is a word from Carlyle: "Men do less than they ought, unless they do all that they can." Eagerness to conform has led too often and in too many areas to worship of the average. The average code of ethics, the average accomplishment, the average society seem attractive enough. This infatuation with the norm rather than the ideal takes its tragic toll in the undeveloped talent, the unattempted struggle for character, the unfulfilled friend, the unspoken truth, the unshared joy, the unexpressed love, the unspoken word, the unspoken deed, the unspoken thought, the unspoken feeling, the unspoken hope, the unspoken dream, the unspoken desire, the unspoken passion, the unspoken love, the unspoken life.

The allurements of mediocrity, always costly, could today be disastrous for our society. In the global struggle between communist totalitarianism and democracy, the future may well be decided by the individual decisions of this generation of Americans. Each man will use his magnificent material and spiritual resources. Unless a sense of stewardship is exercised, the choices we will surely forfeit our right to lead the world and perhaps our right to live. Our day does not allow the luxury of mediocre goals.

Average life purposes must be abandoned. High motivations commensurate with the demands of the conflict must be grasped. A worthy life-commitment must be made in the inner self where ambition and drive spring forth. At least three demands are obvious.

In the pursuit of knowledge, "Men do less than they ought, unless they do all that they can." Our Alma Mater has not the power to give us an education. It offers the skills that can be used effectively in a life-long search for truth. We determine the quality of our world by the diligence and the sustained effort of our search.

In the development of character, "Men do less than they ought, unless they do all that they can." The structure of our society needs to be undergirded by men of moral integrity. At this point Mars Hill states an ambitious purpose: "The purpose of the College is the development of character through knowledge and training. The emphasis is on spiritual values. It is the purpose of the College to send out men who are richer and fuller in life, enlarged and sanctified in vision, and Christ-controlled because they have studied here."

In the struggle for a vital and relevant faith, "Men do less than they ought, unless they do all that they can." If religious faith is to be one of life's dynamics, the struggle is inevitably involved. This makes the rewards all the more exciting and the sacrifices all the more meaningful. The sense we make of history in general and our own lives in particular are largely determined by the presence or absence of Christian faith. In all things we will be impoverished indeed if we do not learn to develop to some meaningful degree the contemplative life. We must grow spiritually; learning to think clearly and to make moral judgments; learning to give ourselves in active good-will.

There was a day when the colleges and universities were the incubators of dynamic movements. John Huss was awakened to action at the University of Prague; Martin Luther at the University of Bonn; John Wesley was deeply affected at Oxford. The modern movement in America was born at a haystack prayer meeting at Williams College.

It can still be so, of us and our campus. Forsaking worship of the average and the mediocre, we can strive for excellence.

The opposite of success and achievement is not failure—but conformity. Freighting, both stirring and disturbing, is Carlyle's word: "Men do less than they ought, unless they do all that they can."

—Robert