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From the Student's Point of View

Spirited Protest against Faculty Opinions on Student Diligence

"Why don't you give the students' side of this?" inquired a junior of the Nebraskan reporter, as he pointed to the heading, "Do Uni Students Work Too Hard?" "We tried to," was the response, "but the students were all too busy to indulge in opinions on the subject." But out of this conversation grew this summary of student sentiment upon what is really, in spite of some scoffing assertions to the contrary, something more than a "mere academic question."

The junior mentioned above favored "strenuous work" for the student, but was not in favor of neglecting the social side of University life. His opinion:

"Students as a rule do not work too hard; probably a few do, but the large majority do not work hard enough. No student in the last three or four years has gone home because of failing health that could be attributed at all to over study. But a serious objection can be raised to comparing student life and business life. The latter's hours are seldom longer than from eight in the morning till seven in the evening, and frequently much shorter. Few student can carry seventeen hours of general work without ordinarily plugging away until 10 o'clock and frequently burning midnight oil, especially if they desire to be classed with the "upper ten." While a student is putting in this extra time, the business man is resting, enjoying a social, friends, or something of that sort. The more successful, generally speaking, the less number of hours he is required to put in. To be sure, his work is strenuous, but not so very much more so than student frequently find theirs. There is a class in the University, however, who would do better if they would cut some of the social functions. They excuse themselves by saying that there are many really valuable things not obtained from books. The statement is legitimate enough, but they overestimate the value of social training, to the neglect of their supposed purpose in being here. Such persons should strike a mean and then do themselves justice in their University course. Because a few who are able to win a P. B. K. are not practical, is no argument against being a thorough student. To be sure the P. B. K.'s that are most popular and who are soonest able to secure and competently fill good positions are those who have not neglected the social side of life. The attempt should be made to properly harmonize the different factors entering into college life towards the development of a well rounded man."

A law student was asked, "What do you think of the matter—does the average University student work too hard, or does he merely think that he is over worked?" "A large majority really work too hard," he answered. "When we see students follow the same course, day after day, with only three points of interest in their circuit—namely, their room, the boarding house, and the University,—we can not draw any other conclusion. To be sure, some do give too much time to social functions, but that class is small, not nearly so large as may appear to an outsider who sees the student in his 'hour off' that comes perhaps once a day, or that must be finally taken in order to preserve a nervous equilibrium.

There are three sides to one's life—social, intellectual and physical. Each should be developed according to its importance, which depends entirely upon the character and condition of the student himself and the life which he intends to live."

A senior took a rather philosophical view of the matter, and contributed the following to the discussion:

"Whether or not University studies demand too much of the student's time and energies depends largely upon one's point of view. If it is consistent with the true purpose of an education that one enter the University and choose in his course a large number of elective snaps, then there can certainly be no doubt that there is not too great demand upon a student's time and energy, or if the purpose of an education is fulfilled by following the usual course outlined, and giving one's best time and energies to securing high grades in these, then the student ought to be able to meet these demands. The student certainly has the opportunity to either carry a snap course or make out of himself a noser of books. But if the point of view is taken that the University course is a period of formation in the life of the student, during which he is fitting himself to get more out of life for himself and to be better able to serve the commonwealth, then, it might be questioned if there are too great demands upon the student. While it is true that the University course should require that the student give sufficient time to get training of mind, a fund of information and a spirit of investigation, yet this is not all that is necessary for the welfare of the student. He needs time for recreation, for social relations, and for general reading, that he may keep in touch with the world, and secure that sympathy and breadth of mind that is vitally essential to his success. An ax, to cut deep, must have weight as well as sharpness. Some of our brainiest students have not the personal temperaments to give pleasure to themselves or power to society simply because they have become 'grinds,' and lack that weight that comes from sympathetic reflection and a catholic spirit. It is said that the student has no more strain than the business man. But one of the deplorable facts of business is that the strain there is far too great for a man to live the most effective life. Furthermore, a man can spend more time in business and not feel the strain as does a student. Business soon becomes routine and a large part of it is done automatically, thus lessening the strain on the individual, but the student has little routine work, the course always demands his best time and energies. Thus his physical energy is likely to be weakened and he is compelled to neglect those social and other relations that bring him in

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