

MENTAL LOAFING.

IT is considered a disgrace to be lazy. He who is too indolent to work for his own living becomes a by-word and reproach. But there is a very common form of laziness which is not always noticed. It is that of mind. We first become conscious of it in our young days, when we "don't feel like study." We dawdle over our thoughts half asleep, and, as a result, give a fine exhibition of stupidity in the recitation room. It is true that disinclination to study sometimes grows out of fatigue and illness. The liver is responsible for much of it; but in the majority of cases it is pure laziness, as young people will discover if they will shake themselves up and go resolutely to work.

This sort of indolence in youth is very dangerous, for it becomes a habit, and the mind grows rusty and dull in the very prime of life, when it should be at its best. And on the heels of this form of laziness comes another bad habit, that of intellectual loafing. What loafing is in the common sense, all know. It is hanging about with no definite aim or purpose, idling away the time without method and without profit. Well, there is mental loafing as well, and it is known in the dictionary as reverie. It is a dreamy state of the mind, when the thoughts go wool-gathering. The fancy sails away into fantastic seas, and revels in unreal things till the wits are fairly benumbed and unfitted for sober work.

This habit, so common to young people, is fatal to mental growth. Many a promising youth is ruined by over-indulgence in it. It wastes time and enfeebles the mental powers. It is really a form of laziness, and it should be sternly corrected at the very outset. The action of the mind should be kept under control. When the thoughts begin to wander, it is time to whip them into order. A resolute will will do it.

— *Selected.*

"EVERY true disciple has often found that the work he took up painfully from a sense of duty became to him a source of special joy. On this path are the shining footprints of the Master."

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PROFESSOR F. L. PATTON'S article in *The Forum*, on the Andover doctrine, assumes that the Calvinistic view of a sovereign election of a portion of the race to salvation, with the consequent reprobation of the rest, is more logical and scriptural than the view which supposes that all must have a chance under the gospel, if not in this life, then in the life to come. The Professor's view of election explains truly the method of the divine dealings under the economy of redemption up to a certain point. Salvation in this dispensation of His grace seems to be confined to a chosen few. And there is no other explanation but that it has thus seemed good in His sight. So far, then, as Prof. Patton sees into this mystery, he sees truly. But he is wrong in supposing that there are no summits of God's grace beyond the hills that bound his horizon. He mistakes in supposing that the purpose of God in ordaining some to eternal life terminates upon these favorites, whereas He never chooses any person or class except as He makes them channels of blessing to a wider circle. If He selects a church of the first-born, it is because there is to be a later born. If we are "a kind of first fruits of His creatures, of His will begotten," it is because there are later fruits to be harvested. If we are "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood," there must be those, to whom we are to fulfill these offices. It is because the strict Calvinist fails to see these wider stretches of God's great plan of grace that his system is so inadequate, and not because he errs in tracing everything back to the will of God. This age does not bound everything in redemption. Most of mankind fail of salvation in this age. So far as the results of trial in this life are concerned, their failure is final. Only a little flock enter into life. The gateway into it is much more narrow than even the preachers of

orthodoxy represent it. "Few there be that find it." But these few are "baptized for the dead." If no resurrection has been provided for the unjust dead, there would be no hope for any but the elect. But "He gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." The mistake of the Andover school is in overlooking the fact that souls in sheol are not under a prolonged dispensation of grace, but under the penalty – "in prison." The only door of hope for the dead is the hope of resurrection. Any trial for the prize of eternal life must come in after punishment has been visited, and the dead have been recovered to the life and opportunities of manhood.

– *Words of Reconciliation.*

