

The evening sun gives word of pressing night,  
 The work is done and tools are all put by.  
 While men congest to talk in spirits light,  
 Youth goes to rest, the sandman drawing nigh.  
 All is serene, the troubled world afar;  
 A madman's whims cannot this quiet mar.

The beaming moon keeps watch o'er sleeping earth,  
 And inwardly is thankful for her task.  
 Her lamp turned low, she waits upon the birth  
 Of coming day to match the one that's past,  
 Her lonely vigil o'er, earth's slumber done,  
 Her light then fades before the rising sun.

—JOHN ELDON GREEN '47

#### A CAPITAL SIN

A good old English word which seems to be dying out of conversational and even out of literary usage, although common enough in both half a century ago, is the name of the seventh of the Capital or Deadly sins. Those of you who took your first lessons in dogmatic and moral theology from Butler's small catechism clearly remember, or at least can easily recollect, the list which you once so glibly recited: pride, covetousness, lust, anger, gluttony, envy, and sloth. Familiar as was the word in those days, not merely in the catechism but in other books as well, it has of late decades fallen more and more into disuse.

If the word, however, is obsolescent, the thing for which it stands is not. The vice or sin of sloth, call it by what name you will, is fully as common nowadays as it was half a century or a century ago; and it will scarcely become obsolete as long as human nature is not radically transformed. And what is sloth? The dictionaries tell us: slowness, tardiness, disinclination to action or labor, sluggishness, habitual indolence, laziness, idleness. In so far as the ordinary, everyday, temporal duties of life are concerned, sloth means practically the same thing as laziness or idleness; but when there is a question of the duties of religion or exercises of piety, the better synonym for sloth is lukewarmness in the service of God.

With respect to its effects on both body and soul, sloth has been denounced formally and publicly by the philosophers and moralists of all times and nations. We have often



heard it said that idleness is the devil's home for temptation and for unprofitable, distracting musings, while labour will profit others and ourselves.

It would be superfluous to point out how disastrously a man's temporal fortunes are affected by his slothfulness, his habitual idleness or laziness. And in regard to his spiritual condition, it ought to be unnecessary to remind any Christian that lukewarmness is by no means a safe state in which to live, and especially in which to die. It might be said also that lukewarmness, in either the natural or the supernatural sphere, is far more liable to result in eventual coldness than in heat; the tepid soul is much nearer to mortal sin than to fervid love of God.

As a matter of everyday experience, the slothful are utterly cowardly in undertaking, even for God's honour, anything that implies difficulty; and they are notably inconstant in carrying to a conclusion any good work which they have been brought to undertake. At the beginning of Lent, it may be, they decide that it behooves them to practice certain acts of mortification, persevere in the practice for possibly a week, and then disgracefully yield to their laziness and discontinue the mortification. At the conclusion of a mission, they take good resolutions about attending Mass daily and frequenting the sacraments several times a week and, before the first week is finished, fall back into their former stagnation.

There is one excuse to which the idle or slothful occasionally have recourse, "I am injuring nobody." The victim of sloth or idleness is before God a servant with talents he has not used and without merit he should have gained. In a very true sense he merits the sentence pronounced by our Divine Lord: "Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit shall be cut down and shall be cast into the fire."

—CHARLES McIVOR '46

#### POURQUOI DU LATIN ET DU GREC?

On raconte assez souvent des adversaires de l'humanisme tel qu'enseigné dans le cours classique. "Perte de temps, badinage; César et Demosthène n'apportent pas à diner; pourquoi ne prépare-t-on pas plus adéquatement nos jeunes à la compréhension de leurs responsabilités éventuelles, plutôt que de les lancer dans des études qui manquent