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HINTS TO YOUNG PRACTITIONERS.

The following letter of Mr. Wirt to Mr. Gilmer is from the *Virginia Law Journal*:—
Richmond, August 29, 1815.

My dear Francis,—I received last night your letter of the 15th inst., announcing your arrival at Winchester, and thank you for this early attention to my anxiety for your welfare. We have you at last fairly pitted on the arena—stripped, oiled, your joints all lubricated, your muscles braced, your nerves strung; and I hope that ere long we shall hear that you have taken the victim bull by the horn, with your left hand,

— durosque reducta
Libravit dextra media inter cornua cæstus
Arduus, effraetoque illisit in ossa cerebro.
Sternitur, exanimisque tremens procumbit humi bos.

I perceive that you are going to work, pell-mell, *nec mora, nec requies*; that's your sort; give it to them thicker and faster!

Nunc dextra ingeminans ictus, nunc ille sinistra.

It is this glow and enthusiasm of enterprise that is to carry you to the stars. But then bear in mind that it is a long journey to the stars, and that they are not to be reached *per saltum*. "*Perseverando Vinces*" ought to be your motto, and you should write it in the first page of every book in your library. Ours is not a profession in which a man gets along by hop, step, and jump. It is the steady march of a heavy-armed legionary soldier. This armour you have yet, in a great measure, to gain; to learn how to put it on; to wear it without fatigue; to fight in it with ease, and use every piece of it to the best advantage. I am against your extending your practice, therefore, to too many Courts in the beginning. I would not wish you to plunge into an extensive practice at once. It will break up your reading, and prevent you from preparing properly for that higher theatre which you ought always to keep intently in your mind's

eye. For two or three years you must read, sir—read—read—delve—meditate—study—and make the whole mine of the law your own. For two or three years, I had much rather that your appearances should be rare and splendid, than frequently light and vapid, like those of the young country practitioners about you.

Let me use the privilege of my age and experience to give you a few hints, which, now that you are beginning the practice, you may not find useless.

1. Adopt a system of life, as to business and exercise; and never deviate from it, except so far as you may be occasionally forced by imperious and uncontrollable circumstances.

2. Live in your office—*i.e.*, be always seen in it, except at the hours of eating or exercise.

3. Answer all letters as soon as they are received; you know not how many heart-aches it may save you. Then fold neatly, and file neatly, endorse neatly, and file away neatly, alphabetically, and by the year, all the letters so received. Let your letters on business be short, and keep copies of them.

4. Put every law paper in its place as soon as received, and let no scrap of paper be seen lying, for a moment, on your writing-chair or tables. This will strike the eye of every man of business who enters.

5. Keep regular accounts of every cent of income and expenditure; and file your receipts neatly, alphabetically, and by the month, or at least by the year.

6. Be patient with your foolish clients, and hear all their tedious circumlocution and repetitions with calm and kind attention; cross-examine and sift them, till you know all the strength and weakness of their cause, and take notes of it at once whenever you can do so.

7. File your bills in Chancery at the moment of ordering the suit, and while your client is yet with you to correct your statement of his case; also prepare every declaration the moment the suit is ordered, and have it ready to file.

8. Cultivate a simple style of speaking, so as to be able to inject the strongest thought