

in such matters, will do much ; access to home life, to the friendship of motherly mothers and of modest, sensible daughters, will do more. Shy and awkward a Freshman may be, and ridiculously afraid of speaking with women : yet the shyer and the more awkward he is, the lonelier he is—the more in need of seeing the inside of a house and of a home ; the more likely to remember as what made his first college year supportable some few days in which a good woman who used to know his mother has opened her doors to him as to a human being and a friend.

After all, the most searching test of a parent's relation to his son in college is the son's own view of the purpose of his college life. As I have said elsewhere, "Many parents regard college as far less serious in its demands than school or business, as a place of delightful irresponsibility, a sort of four years' breathing space wherein a youth may at once cultivate and disport himself before he is condemned for life to hard labor." They "like to see young people have a good time," a little evasion, a little law-breaking, and a handful of wild oats mark in their minds the youth of spirit. They distinguish between outwitting the authorities, whom they still regard as impersonal or hostile, and outwitting other less disinterested friends. "Boys will be boys" is a cover, not merely for the thoughtless exuberance of lively young animals, but for selfishness, trickiness, cruelty, and even vice. I wonder at the recklessness with which respectable men talk of wild oats as a normal and on a whole an attractive attribute of youth ; for the wild oats theory of a young man's life, when seen without its glamour, may mean awful physical peril, disingenuous relations with father and mother, dishonor to some girl, as yet perhaps unknown, who is going to be his wife. Yet parents, whether by precept or by

example or by mere personal ineffectiveness or by dullness and neglect, encourage that very disingenuousness which is exercised against themselves. Those who have seen the unhappiness that such disingenuousness brings can never forget it. I have been begged by undergraduates to keep students out of a great Boston gambling-house, long since closed. In that gambling house as Freshmen they had become bankrupt, and for months—almost for years—they had shifted and led to keep their bankruptcy unknown at home. The crash of discovery had come, as it always comes ; the air had cleared ; and as Seniors they were unwilling to leave college without at least an attempt to save other Freshmen from doing and from suffering what they had done and suffered. I have seen sons before the crash, and I have seen parents after it.

How much that is objectionable in college life is the result of injudicious money allowances (whether princely or niggardly) I have never determined. Some students use large incomes as wisely as their elders and more generously ; some pay the entire college expenses of fellow students in need. Others, no doubt, have more money than is good for them ; but it is hard to pick out that part of their moral and academic disaster for which wealth is responsible.

I may mention here that two-edged argument so often urged by a father when his son is to be dismissed from college ; "If you don't keep him here, what *shall* I do with him ? He isn't fit for anything else ; he would do nothing in a profession or in business." I cannot say with some that it is no concern of the college what is done with him ; for a college, as I conceive it, has some interest in the future of every boy that has darkened its doors. But I can say that a youth confessedly fit for nothing else is not often good timber for an alumnus. A college s