

Pasquaney *archives*



At what age will you call yourself a man? When will you turn to your friend at your side and say to him, "Today I am no longer a child" ? Ask yourself, do you have a portrait hanging on the wall of your mind, which bears an image of your future self? Has your consideration broached what dreams may come in the days that lie before you stretched out like so many stones on a highway? Or is the inertia of life carrying you along blind to where you're going?

My soul has been uneasy of late. Like a man deep at sea, who feels the pressure drop, the sky yellow over and the air foretell of uncertainty, I stand not knowing which way to steer. The ocean of choice is vast and daunting and unrelenting ... and in my fear of it, I want to shut my eyes and sleep.

I am still growing up, like you are. I am still struggling to make the choices that will forge my character and shape my life into the person I wish to become. And with every new adventure of my life, with every risk I take, comes the temptation to give myself up to my insecurity. With that in mind, gentlemen, I must ask you, please, on this rainy day,

To wake up. Wake up. Wake to the immediacy and urgency of this day. Wake to the thought that who you are tomorrow begins with the breath you're taking now. Wake to the idea that there are two kinds of people in this world, those who let their future happen TO them, and those who CHOOSE to make it happen FOR them. Wake to the gut-check that, unless you decide and make it otherwise, your life could be, simply, mediocre. Wake to the fear, that there are places and occasions in this world where you will slip, and no one will be there to catch you ... and you will fall ... and it will hurt you.

Most importantly, wake to the blessing that this is an ideal place to grow up and practice facing the fears and challenges life undoubtedly has in store for you. Here you can begin to fashion, to sculpt and to chisel out the kind of life you want to live. Here there are people who care not only about who you are, but who you will become.

Why do you think we have duties and inspection? Simply to keep the place neat? To see if you can get your top shelves perfectly uniform just in case a visitor happens to check the spacing with two fingers? I must tell you honestly gentlemen that my primary concern here is not whether the zippers on your shorts all face the same way.

Why do you think we have activities and hikes? I don't mean to burst your bubble, but the waterfront council's main interest is not in your ability to trim a sail or paddle a J-stroke or swim your half-mile. If you're on Hobbes Field or the tennis courts, and you hit a homer or serve an ace, people may congratulate you, but that's not all they are here for. Further up the hillside, the nature counselors don't want you to examine a plot of land simply to know what's there, and I don't cut down trees simply so you can make stuff out of them. And as a First Walker may tell you, we sometimes hike mountains for purposes other than a basking in a good view.

We do all of these things, not for the enjoyment only, but because they help us to grow up. They teach how to be patient when we're frustrated, how to push ourselves past our limits even at our most fatigued, how to inquire, how to plan ahead and foresee, how to recognize that the details of life are integral to the bigger

picture ... how to lead ... how to be a friend ... and how to give the those who come after us the lessons that we have learned from those who came before us.

If you're missing these ideas, please wake to them, for you are like a man walking through the Sistine Chapel gazing only at the floor and missing the glory of the ceiling. While we may dimly glimpse who we are, we know not what we may become. The season is almost half-over. Value your time here, and take it as the opportunity it is.

And if you are feeling lost at sea, let camp be your pole star upon which you can set your course, and let your friends be the constellations which rise to journey with you on your way.

Because life is nothing if it is not exploration. On your journey, I encourage you to explore actively and not just drift along. Explore here knowing you have friends to do it with.

Go to it then, go to it.