

## Valedictory.

(Read by Mr. Henry L. McMillan at the last Annual Convocation of Saint Dunstan's University.)

*My Lord, Rev. Rector, Your Honor, Rev. Fathers of the Faculty, Gentlemen Professors, Fellow Students, Ladies and Gentlemen :*

**T**IME, as it rolls onward, ever brings us face to face with new joys and fresh sorrows ; it takes from us friends trusted and true, and places by our side friends, unproven and untried ; it tears down the barriers behind which the future lurks, and turns our anticipations into realizations.

So, today, we, the Graduation Class of 1917—18, find ourselves stepping from the realms of the imagination into the realms of the reality. Long have we looked forward to this Commencement Day ; we have desired it with eager longing, wishing that the time would pass more quickly, counting the days, yea, even the hours as they seemed to pass slowly away. Now that the day has arrived we fain would stop its passing ; we long for the power with which Joshua stayed the setting sun ; we even wish with a poet that "time would turn backward in its flight". Alas ! this power is beyond us and our wishes are in vain ; we must go forward to take our places in the world, to struggle shoulder to shoulder with our fellow-man, to bear the stamp of failure or to receive the crown of success.

Our Alma Mater, like a kind parent, saw this day coming when it was yet afar off and realizing what our needs would be, has ever tried to instil into us the principles of Truth and Justice, principles upon which the life of every true Christian must be based.

We have been nourished at the fountain from

which flowed the wine to strengthen our intellectual life ; we have been fed with the "Manna", which strengthened our souls in the day of combat ; and we have been allowed to partake of the oil which renews the vigour of the athlete.—all these are enfolded in that beautiful motto "*Ex eodem fonte fides et scientia*".

But now we must go from under the guiding hand of Alma Mater ; we must leave our hitherto quite and peaceful home to mingle with the turmoil and strife of the world. Before taking this step, however, we would cast a parting glance over the years that are gone and like the eagle "renew our youth". We would in fancy roam again through the scenes of our childhood and visit again "each loved spot", so dear to the heart of every man.

Let us then picture to ourselves our childhood home. Let us recall in memory "every loved spot which our infancy knew". Our first remembrance is of the time when we knelt in prayer at our mother's knee and lisped with childish tongue the praises of our Heavenly Father. It was here, with innocence of heart and mind that we first learned to place our hopes and fears in the hands of a kind and all-merciful Providence.

A few years and we found ourselves trudging from home to school, there with the help of kind teachers to begin the upward climb on the "paths of learning", or to broaden our knowledge of our fellow-man by mingling with our playmates during the hours of recreation. Even now the remembrance of our friendly struggles for honors, both in class and at play, are fresh within us. Many of those classmates are far away ; some are sleeping their last sleep, but their faces are ever before us, as they were when we wandered carefree through the meadows or as we followed the winding stream.

Time passed and we stepped from childhood to youth. The tender and watchful care of mother and Father followed us with renewed vigour as we approached the more dangerous part of our journey through life. The unknown and hidden rocks upon which so many are shipwrecked in the early years of life, were carefully marked and prudently revealed to us. The chart of the wise and skilful mariner was placed in our hands, the one true course engraven thereon ; the hidden snares of an artful enemy were pointed out to us, yea, even more, we were taught, not only by precept, but especially by example how to guide our ship through this net-work of snares, which beset us on every side. Not alone was our soul strengthened by the practice of virtue, but our minds also were developed by careful training. Wise and prudent in their selection, our kind parents endeavored to place us always under the guiding hand of faithful teachers. No inconvenience deterred them ; expense was freely borne in order that we might receive a solid foundation upon which to base a strong and useful knowledge. Our talents, recognized and fostered, were directed towards that sphere of usefulness which would benefit ourselves and our fellow-man.

Our school days being over, we were enrolled as students at St. Dunstan's College. At that time, when our minds were filled with the nervous anticipations of college life, we little realized what a benefit was being bestowed on us, but now fully alive to this great advantage, we stand mute for want of power to express our gratitude. How well do we remember that day upon which we first crossed the threshold and came within the protecting walls of St. Dunstan's. All was strange, all was confusing, new faces, new duties, and a different mode of life loomed up before us. We looked



into the future with quivering hearts and wondered. Half in fear and half in earnest did we begin the upward climb as we looked ahead and upward we could see far up the giddy heights the goal we so much desired.

How often, maybe when on the verge of defeat, or when strongly tempted to turn back, did the kind word of some comrade, or the hand-clasp of some new-found friend, strengthen us and cause us to renew our determination. Nor are we unmindful of the fatherly advice and the consoling words of many a kind professor. Time wore on and we became accustomed to our new surroundings, friendships began to multiply, duties became pleasures and the very name of our Alma Mater, urged us on anew. The knowledge we imbibed in the class-room ; the virtues we acquired by precept and example, are debts greater than which no man has. As we stand to-day and look back over the years that are gone, we are fully aware of the great debt we have incurred.

Our obligations towards God, our neighbor and ourselves have been clearly and definitely pointed out. The reverence and obedience we owe to God has been instilled into our hearts. We have been taught that our greatest work is the saving of our own souls, and that Religion is the means we must use. Our neighbor has been placed before us as a fellow being worthy of our respect and assistance, having within him the semblance of the Creator. We have been instructed in the duties man owes to himself,—the perfection of his faculties and the acquisition of virtue. So throughout the years we have spent within these walls, has Alma Mater striven to furnish us with the armour necessary for our conflicts with the world. Now that we are about to bid farewell to the pilot, who

has faithfully guided us this far on the sea of life, and shall henceforth have to rely on our own piloting, we begin to realize the value of the moral and intellectual instruction we have been privileged to receive.

Not only have we received a through intellectual training but we also have been enabled to partake of that physical training, which has enabled us to keep a sound mind in a sound body.

The friendly contests on the Campus grounds cemented the ties of friendship closer than before ; a spirit of union was infused into all ; and the common sacrifices, born for the honour of the "Red and White" has left in each one a store-house filled with pleasant memories for future enjoyment.

This spirit of sacrifice, so well cultivated on the Campus has not been fruitless. To-day many of our fellow-class mates, as well as members of other classes, have donned the King's uniform and gone forth to battle for their country's rights. We began the year, that has just passed, with the brightest prospects in the history of St. Dunstan's College, but gradually, one by one, have our comrades departed, until to-day there remains only the sad remanent of a class of twenty-six members. Those who have gone have answered the call of duty, sacrificing all they held most dear, and their example in the paths of duty shall ever shed its lustre before us, brightening our future and urging us, who are left behind, to follow whithersoever duty calls. If there is one thing more than another that throws its sorrowful shadow over our hearts to-day, it is the absence of those whom we are proud to call friends and classmates. Nor can we wonder that so many noble sons of St. Dunstan's can be found fighting for King and country. Drilled as they have been in practice of religion, and having drunk deep from the springs

of patriotism, they stand as the living embodiment of Alma Mater's handiwork. They have already passed through the portals, and from under the protecting walls of St. Dunstan's. Now it is our turn to follow. However much we would wish to linger, we are unable to do so. The trumpet has sounded, the march forward has already commenced, we must not tarry longer. Hence it is with body and mind trained in a befitting manner, we stand to-day on the threshold of a new life. The sweet memories arising from a glance over the past, combined with the hopes for the future, rush in upon us, as we assemble here to-day, to receive the final injunctions of our Alma Mater.

In our hearts we hear resounding her last words, praying each of her sons, to stand firm in the day of battle, to be a true son,—not resting after the winning of any victory, but to prepare more firmly for the next, and thus, step by step, to advance, as time goes on, until we are asked to lay our talents at the feet of our Creator. The many faithful children that has proceeded us in every walk of life, shall stand as beacon lights on our voyage, making the course by which others have gone before, and urging us to imitate their efforts and win fresh laurels for our Alma Mater. As year succeeded year Old St. Dunstan's has sent forth her sons clothed with the armour of Religion and Science, bearing on their brow the stamp of immortality, and with hearts filled with grateful remembrances, ready to toil and suffer for the honor of the institution from which they came. Long may this "Grand Old Institution" stand upon this hallowed spot, to fulfill its noble mission!

In years to come, we shall look back to our sojourn in St. Dunstan's College, with hearts full of pride, remembering that we saw the day when, its merits no



longer ignored, it passed from a College to a University. The staunch and generous friends, who have made this change possible, have won for themselves the undying gratitude, not only of Alma Mater, but also of every student who has already, or who may in future enroll himself under the time honored "Red and White". Realizing that "deeds not words count", we go forth determined to do our utmost among our fellow-men, to show by our lives that we are ever ready to bear pain and achieve success for the greater honor of God, of our parents, and of our Alma Mater.

The time has come for us to say farewell. The ties of comradeship must be broken. With grateful hearts and kindest memories we say farewell to those friends who have assisted us with kind endeavours.

*Rev. Rector, Rev. Fathers and Gentlemen of the Faculty :—*

The day has now arrived, which brings with it the sad duty of saying farewell to you. Before passing out of your life, we would fain tarry a few moments to express, in heartfelt words, our gratitude towards you. It is at times like this that we bemoan our inability to express our feelings. With our minds filled with the remembrance of your wise counsels and ever mindful of your noble examples of patience and forbearance, we are forced to break asunder the ties that bind us together. We go from under your guiding hand, but assuring you we shall ever strive, by word and example, to practice the principles of truth and justice, you have so faithfully tried to instil into us. May God reward you is our parting prayer. Farewell.

*Fellow-Students :—*

The years we have spent together have fled like arrows from the bow of time. They have passed and we

hardly realized their going, yet they have not been barren for us. We have dwelt together in harmony as one family under a common head. The chain of friendship, forged with the passing years, will ever bind our hearts together. We leave you now, but before parting we would ask you not to be unmindful of the time that is still before you ere you arrive at the end of your college course. Ever endeavour to increase your store of knowledge, so that when you come to say farewell you shall not be found unprepared. May you succeed in the work you have so well begun and advance steadily and faithfully to the goal of your ambition. Farewell.

*Fellow-Classmates :—*

We have now arrived at the cross-roads of our journey in consort. Here each one must choose for himself the road he is to follow, knowing full well that he is followed by the heartfelt "God speed" of the friends he has made within those walls.

Hitherto our journey has been a most pleasant one, the rough places have been bridged over by the bonds of friendship. But now we must part, each one to cherish within himself, the fond memories of by-gone days. Go forth, Classmates, bear your part nobly ; forget not the honour of the institution from which you came ; stand by your fellow-man in sorrow and temptation ; be true to yourselves as graduates of "Old St. Dunstons", resting assured that in this way you will eventually arrive at that "Goal" where all hope to meet and part no more. Farewell.

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For truth has such a face and such a mien,  
As to be loved needs only to be seen.

—Dryden.