

## VALEDICTORY

*Read by Edmond Donahoe at the Commencement Exercises,  
May 28, 1924*

My Lord, Reverend Rector, Your Honor, Your Worship, Rev. Fathers and Gentlemen of the Faculty, Fellow Students, Ladies and Gentlemen:—

The close of another college year has come upon us. Another class of graduates, having completed their course, have assembled for the last time to bid a fond adieu to Alma Mater before they go forth to battle with the stern realities of life.

To those who have not yet completed their course, Commencement Day is but the close of a college year and the dawn of a long looked for vacation, with nothing to mar the prospects of pleasant holidays to be spent with parents or friends. And, when the summer season is over, many of them will return to resume their studies, renew old acquaintances and form new ones.

But for the graduate it is not so. Though dim as may as may be his vision of the future he surveys a very different prospect. Behind him he is leaving forever his Alma Mater and all that was most near and dear to him. This day is as a curtain which drops between the life he is about to leave and that which lies before him. In the future he beholds the good and evil, the pleasure and pain of life mingled in frightful confusion; there he recognizes the bode of hope and fear, and the snares which are set to entrap those who are easily led astray by the false maxims of the world; there too, he beholds great stores of opportunities ready for those who are capable and willing to take advantage of them.

Reflecting on the pleasure of college life and the uncertainty of the future, the graduate hesitates to leave this miniature world where care and worry are practically unknown, before he marches forward into the hurry and tur-

moil of a restless world. But sustained by hope, and trusting to the training he has received, he steps forward to take his place in the onward march of civilization.

Is there any wonder then, that on a day such as this that the graduates should pause to say farewell? This word has aroused the deepest feeling of the heart. It has moved men to tears and has furnished the poet with sentiments for most beautiful productions. Especially in early childhood have we experienced this natural tendency of the heart so often accompanied by a flow of tears. Time nor experience has not abated these same emotions, and so today, as the portals of Old St. Dunstan's are about to close behind us, we pause before departing from those dear and familiar scenes.

So loth we part from all we love,  
From all the links that bind us;  
So turn our hearts, as on we rove,  
To those we left behind us.

Thus, the graduate just passing the second mile-stone of his career, finds himself face to face with one of the most serious problems of life; only then does he realize the necessity of possessing the qualifications which are so essential to lead men to true success in life.

To prepare her students to be better citizens, to fit them for their various stations in life, is the chief aim of Alma Mater.

It is only when our college course is completed and we are assembled to bid a fond adieu, that we realize the importance of the education we have received during the past six years. It was while under the kind protection of Alma Mater, where we were sheltered from the storms and strife of an outside world, that there was laid the foundation of a true education which will be of inestimable value to us in the years to come. Gently yet firmly she has guided us over the rough and thorny road to learning,

successfully avoiding whatever might endanger our future happiness.

The manner in which St. Dunstan's accomplishes her end has a characteristic charm and beauty all its own. Study, religious exercises and recreations are so well organized and disciplined that, intellectual, moral and physical training are at one and the same time supplied. Her object has been not merely to make our minds a store house of facts, but what is of far greater importance, to broaden our intellectual vision and strengthen our will power—in a word to lay the foundation of a true christian character.

For six years Alma Mater, knowing full well the spirit of the age, has labored with true maternal care, to prepare us for our various positions in life. Here she has labored to fit us for the world, teaching us the proper armour to wear against the conflicts which we must necessarily encounter, and today, as she bids us God-speed, we know that if we carefully follow her instructions, we shall attain success.

In our moral development, St. Dunstan's has been most solicitous. Here we are taught that our first and greatest obligations are those which we owe to God, and the duty of rendering to Him a perfect account of our steward-ship. Since He has entrusted to us an immortal soul we must return it to Him in a state of purity, or else forfeit the reward which He has prepared for those who love and serve Him. To enable us to render to Him that which we owe, He has given us certain talents and upon us rest the responsibility of making use of these, in so far as we are able, that we may accomplish the end for which He has given them. By word and by example we have been taught to lead good Christian lives and to dedicate all our actions to the greater honor and glory of God. We have been taught that Christian Faith is the most priceless heritage we possess, dearer to us than all the riches we may acquire, yes, dearer to us than life itself. Faith is the very



foundation upon which Alma Mater moulds the character of of her sons. Her ideals of education are expressed in that beautiful motto: "Ex eodem fonte fides et scientia." She has combined with the intellectual education the moral training, whereby the free will of man is strengthened and developed so that he may aspire to higher things.

How vain, aye, even fruitless would be the acquisition of knowledge, if the will, that dangerous faculty of man were not curbed and brought under control.

How happy is he born and taught  
That serveth not another's will;  
Whose armor is his honest thought  
And simple truth his utmost skill  
This man is freed from servile bands  
Of hope to rise, or fear to fall;  
Lord of himself, though not of lands;  
And having nothing, yet hath all.

Neither has our physical training been neglected; for since the body is the channel through which we receive our knowledge, it is essential that the development of mind and body be equally attended to. Consequently we see that it would be detrimental to man if he should devote all his energy to developing his intellectual faculties, and at the same time suffer his physical manhood to be impaired. A healthy mind in a healthy body is a principle strictly followed by Alma Mater; she is at all times solicitous for the physical welfare of her students, and thus the monotony of college life is broken by the various branches of athletics, which have not only furnished us with a healthful and enjoyable recreation, but have also fostered in us a spirit of steadfastness and loyalty. It is while playing the game that man exhibits his true character. It is here he experiences the great need of self-control and cheerfulness in victory or defeat. The man who has been taught to control himself, and to respect the rights of others while on the campus, will, without doubt, be able to conduct himself in a similar

manner when he finds himself in the more serious contests of life.

Such then is the training we have received; such is the preparation we have made; we do not wish for a moment to presume that our education is now complete and that we have nothing more to learn, but we wish to say that we have acquired a firm foundation upon which we may proceed to build a superstructure by entering into new fields of learning.

It will only be in later years when we shall find ourselves tossed about in the world, when we shall have to rely upon our own resources to combat the difficulties of life, that we shall be able to appreciate the true worth of the training we have received from our instructors, who have labored with untiring zeal and unselfish motives to prepare us for our purpose in life.

And thus, down the many years of its existence, Old St. Dunstan's has fitted her sons for the various stations in life. May she long continue her noble work is the hearty wish of all those who have been privileged to drink from the fountain of Faith and Science.

The time is fast fleeting and there are but a few moments left to revel in the happy days gone by before we enter upon the "World's broad field of Battle." The course is almost completed, and as we stand to make our last obeisance to dear old Alma Mater, we look back with fond recollections to the happy days of childhood and youth. What fond and lingering memories steal out from the past and arouse in us feelings which are delightfully pleasant.

But delightful as may be the memories of the past and eager though we may be to dwell upon various episodes of college life, we must not tarry. The time has come and the command has been given; we must now tear asunder these bonds of friendship which have bound us in the past and sever our connections with Alma Mater: but wherever we may go, or whatever profession we may follow, we shall

carry away with us these pleasant memories which will ever gladden and brighten our paths:

As travellers oft look back at eve  
When eastward darkly going,  
To gaze upon that light they leave  
Still faint behind them glowing,—

So, when the close of pleasure's day  
To gloom hath near consign'd us.  
We turn to catch one fading ray  
Of joy that's left behind us.

*Reverend Rector, Reverend Fathers and Gentlemen of the Faculty:—*

Since God has seen fit to entrust us to your kind and benevolent care, we wish, before taking our departure, to express our deep appreciation for all you have done for us. Next to God and our parents we owe to you a debt of gratitude which we can never fully repay. For the past six years you have been our instructors, advisors and benefactors, ready and willing at all times to aid us in our difficulties. To one and all we extend our heartiest thanks and our sincerest wish that God may give you health and strength to long continue your noble work. Farewell.

*Fellow Students:—*

We must bid you a fond adieu. For considerable time we have lived under the same roof in one common brotherhood. To-day you go forth to enjoy a well earned vacation and many of you will return to resume your studies, but we must leave never more to return as your fellow-students. Some of you are near the end of your college course, others are but beginning. Now is the time to make preparation for the future; and let not the time, given to you while here, be lost. Conduct yourselves in a becoming manner, so that when the time shall come when you too must leave the tender care of Alma



Mater, your record will be a light and an inspiration for those you leave who will follow after you. Farewell.

*Fellow Classmates:—*

I am unable to express the feeling of regret which this parting brings. During the past six years we have lived in peace and harmony, linked together by the most tender bonds of friendship; together we have labored in the same class-room; together we have striven in friendly competition on the campus, but to-day our companionship must terminate. As classmates we have assembled here this evening for the last time. This is a day of awful import to us. How secure has been the past! How uncertain the future! Let us strive to follow the teachings of Alma Mater and we may be assured that all will be well. May the golden chain of friendship continue to bind our hearts and that by practicing the virtues of Honesty, Sobriety and Industry we shall reflect credit upon Old St. Dunstan's and obtain the end for which we were created.

Farewell and

Let Fate do her worst, there are relics of joy,  
Bright dreams of the past, which she cannot destroy;  
Which come, in the night-time of sorrow and care,  
And bring back the features that joy used to wear.  
Long, long be our hearts with such memories filled!  
Like the vase in which roses have once been distilled—  
You may break, you may shatter the vase, if you will,  
But the scent of the roses will hang round it still.

