

VALEDICTORY

Read by Richard G. Ellsworth at the Commencement
Exercises on May 26, 1927.

As a great river that flows seaward, carrying on its bosom the never-ending streams of commerce and industry, now gliding peacefully between green meadows and forest lands that smile a greeting as it passes, now rushing forward swiftly where its course is narrowed by jutting headlands, at one time crystal clear and pure as when it bubbled forth from the virgin fount, at another, dark and turbid with the mud deposits of alluvial shores, till at last, after many windings, it hurries forth to lose itself in the vast waters of the sea—so time rolls swiftly past, bearing on its relentless current the sum of human destinies, until it, too, having reached the gateway that opens into Eternity, passes away and loses itself in the Great Beyond.

From various sources of this great river, and at different times within the past few years, the young men who now appear before you set sail upon its broad waters, to taste of its adventures, to look with admiration upon the wonderful vistas that spread in broad panoramic view before them, to explore the unknown lands that lay beyond the horizon of their youth, to battle with the seething storms of human passions, to guide their frail barques over the treacherous shoals of temptation, but always buoyed up with the hope of one day gliding peacefully through the portals of death which open upon the calm Sea of Eternity.

At first timidly, and with the fear which the unknown inspires, they groped their way carefully, always keeping close to the shore; but later, with the familiarity of experience to guide and embolden them, they turned their crafts to midstream and glided along with the increasing current. At times they turned aside to see what lay beyond the forest veil which temptingly obscured some small stream whose trickling waters added their contribution to the main stream; sometimes they rested beneath the cool shade of some deep recess; again they hastened forward breathlessly, till at last they arrived at their first great port of call—St. Dunstan's, over the gateways of which was written where all might read: "Ex Eodem Fonte Fides et Scientia." Here, at last, was an opportunity to satisfy their longings for the better things of life. Here were

riches to be gathered before proceeding farther; here, indeed, was a place to linger, to drink from the golden cup of Knowledge, to pluck the rich fruits of Experience, to arm themselves with the armour of Faith, to strengthen themselves by daily partaking of the Bread of Eternal Life.

To-day, we must launch forth once more, for all is in readiness for our departure, and time and tide have no respect for persons. But before our departure, Alma Mater has summoned us for the last time, to give us her parting benediction and to wish us God speed. She has called together our parents and friends to behold the fruits of her labours. Proudly she says: "You entrusted your sons to my care. I have given them all I had to give. I have been faithful to my trust. I have guarded and nourished them well. I have trained their bodies and toughened their sinews by the strenuous sports of the campus, where I have taught them to play the game of life fairly, to be generous in victory and noble in defeat. I have fostered their appreciation of the truly good and beautiful by giving them an insight into the great masters, developed their confidence and poise on the platform of the debating hall, whetted their thirst for knowledge by a solid grounding in the physical sciences, and I have based my educational structure on a course of sound philosophy. More important still, I have schooled their wills by a careful discipline, and nourished their souls with the Bread of Life Itself."

From her very inception it has been the aim and policy of St. Dunstan's to train the physical, mental and moral faculties of young men, to prepare them to take an active part in the great drama of life, where each must take his place and play his role according to his several gifts and abilities. The records of her numerous Alumni who have made good in their chosen callings bear ample testimony to her many years of strict and faithful adherence to the principles for which she stands—principles which have stood the test of time, principles which cannot become antiquated with the passing years, principles which are as unchangeable as truth, principles which she so aptly expresses in her beautiful motto: "*Ex eodem fonte fides et scientia.*" In that short, concise and meaningful expression we read the whole secret of her success. In direct contradistinction to the erroneous opinions held by so many modern philosophers, she firmly holds, openly proclaims, and confirms by her teachings that faith and science are so

far from being incompatible that, not only are they *not* exclusive of one another, but that they are mutually dependent, and that each is the necessary co-relative of the other in all that goes to make a properly balanced, sound and solid education. With the Holy Doctor, St. Thomas, she declares: "They agree because they must agree." What a wealth of meaning, what a depth of sound, philosophic thought is contained in that, what at first sight may seem an altogether meaningless expression! "They agree because they must agree." Nothing more nor less than a humble acknowledgement of that Superior Intelligence which is the Author of all truth, whether that truth is incomprehensible but revealed, and therefore to be received on faith, or whether it falls within the limited capacity of our intellects, and so becomes the object of science. Without faith, our knowledge of the past would be very small indeed, and science would be at a practical standstill. This is true in the natural order, and still more is it true in the supernatural order, in which there is so much that passes our feeble powers of comprehension. We know that certain things and facts exist in the natural order, and we know that they always operate according to fixed laws, but scientists can get no farther than theory when they attempt to arrive at the causes of many of them. Much more so, then, in the spiritual order must we bow our intellects before those truths of God which are incomprehensible to us. We can prove conclusively, for example, that God exists, that He is unique, simple, immutable, eternal, immense, infinite; we can demonstrate that the human soul is substantial and immortal. We can *not* prove by pure reason that there are three Persons in God. Such a truth is so far beyond us that, when it is proposed to us, we must accept it on faith or reject it. To accept is to acknowledge humbly the infinity of God and our own limited intelligence, to admit that "there *are* more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy." To reject it is to deny to God that which we daily credit to His creatures, namely, our belief in a truth of which we have no science, our assent to which is founded on the knowledge and veracity of the one who reveals it. This is what St. Dunstan's teaches, faith in the incomprehensible, science of the comprehensible. This has been the system of the great scientists of the past, the really great among whom were men of the most childlike faith. The more they knew, the more

were they aware of their limits, and the more sincere was their acknowledgement of the great gulf that separated them from the infinite Intellect of God.

The word 'faith' in our motto pertains more to those truths of the spiritual order, and most of all does it mean that Alma Mater places before all material or worldly matters the welfare of the immortal soul. Faith is first. Material advancement is important but always secondary. Thus has she taught for over seventy years, and thus will she teach as long as she exists. Like a true mother, she looks only for the welfare of her children, proud of their attainments, sharing in their honours, encouraging, reproving them all through life, ever reminding them of the watchword of their college days: 'Fides et Scientia.'

Another scholastic year has now come to a close. During all this time, as has been her wont, Alma Mater has gone on quietly, unostentatiously in her work of teaching men to live. To-day she opens her doors to the public, and invites parents, friends and wellwishers to share in her rejoicing. We of the class of '27 feel that this is particularly our day, the day for which we have worked and waited, the day towards which our past efforts have been immediately directed. Now that it has come, we would like to delay the parting which it brings, but we must not hesitate. It remains now only to say farewell—farewell to our beloved Rector, who to-day gives his parting blessing to his first graduating class, to the Reverend Fathers and Gentlemen of the Faculty, whose labors in our behalf, although for the most part unknown to the world, are writ large upon the Book of Life, to our fellow students who remain behind, and lastly to one another. As we pass through the doors already swung wide for our departure, our last word is: "May God bless Old St. Dunstan's, and may He crown with success those who in the future enroll under the banner of 'Fides et Scientia.'"

Great men are never sufficiently shown but in struggles.—*Burke*

Gratitude is the fruit of great cultivation; you do not find it among gross people.—*Dr. Johnson.*

Enthusiasm is the breath of genius.—*Beaconsfield.*