

Haledictory

*Read by William A. Reddin at the
Commencement Exercises on May 31, 1932*

Columbus, we are told, on his famous voyage in search of new worlds, was enabled to attain his desired objective through the guidance of the mariner's compass. Mariners today, they who sail the seven seas, still depend on this guiding instrument, this unwavering finger, to point them on their true course. So, in the great search for new truths which man is ever striving to acquire, there is one compass, one guiding-star—and one only—which will prevent his deviating from the proper direction, which will preserve him from the changing winds of error and which will enable him finally to attain those desired truths, at the same time leading him to his ultimate end. "And what," you may ask, "is this directing influence?" The answer is *Faith*, Faith is the guiding-star in our lives, the compass which directs us in our daily search for knowledge. Unfortunately, however, there are those in the world today who reject faith, who would dispense with the only refuge man has from despair, who would substitute chaos for order, who, we may say, would divest man's every action of purpose and render life but a futility. In denying that which is above the senses, in refusing to credit the great phenomena of Conscience, these degrade man's nature to the level of the beasts. What a terrible, what a hopeless spectacle they present, what an insult to the great Creator! Truly,

"An Atheist's laugh's a poor exchange
For Deity offended!"

But, after all, these modernists, who deny the need for religion and who, by denying that which is a universal fact, but serve to *emphasize* the need for it,—are but few in number. Happily many of the world's greatest scientists have been men of almost child-like faith. Pasteur, 'the most perfect man that has ever entered into the kingdom of science,' *with his whole heart proclaimed the immortality of the soul*. He tells us, in effect, that scientists must forever remain hushed in the presence of the great mystery of life and of being. Though man may rise through experimentation to a knowledge of Nature, Science

can never penetrate primary causes. These latter belong to the realm of religion, and the two domains of Faith and Science, though inter-related and mutually helpful, are necessarily distinct. True Science ought always to be of great help to religion for, in awakening man's mental faculties to renewed vigor, Science broadens man's intellect for the perception of the great Mysteries of Faith and strengthens his will for the conflict with evil temptations. This is the great lesson which has been impressed upon us here at St. Dunstan's, the lesson which we, the graduates of 1932, shall take with us into the future.

To you, Ladies and Gentlemen who represent what is familiarly known as "the public," St. Dunstan's extends a most hearty welcome on the occasion of these her seventy-eighth commencement exercises. More than three-quarters of a century has passed since the first foundation stone of this our college was laid. With what high hopes, mingled perhaps with trepidation, must our forefathers have assembled at her first convocation! How amply Time has justified the pioneer courage with which they built, how well has their confidence been fulfilled! Succeeding classes of graduates have combined to form an alumni whose members will be found occupying honorable positions of society not only at home but far afield, and of whom St. Dunstan's is, not unjustly, proud.

The essential function of any university is *to teach*. The prime purpose of education as conducted here at St. Dunstan's is not, however, as in accord with the materialist view, the amassing of knowledge directly intended to lead to the acquisition of material wealth and power; it is rather the attainment of intellectual culture and mental growth,—not the accumulation of "learned lumber" but rather the formation of character. The practical knowledge to be gained from the study of such sciences as Physics and Chemistry is, no doubt, of value serving as it does to reveal to us the great phenomena and laws of nature. All branches of knowledge are, for that matter, of a certain use inasmuch as all are more or less inter-related. It is to the Classics, however, that we, the present graduating class, are most indebted. In the study of the Classics we have enjoyed the companionship of the great spirits of the ages. That companionship will, we trust, be a solace to us in age as it has been a delight in youth. We have been living intimately, as it were, with the best

minds of the past. The products of their thought, and feeling and imagination, as reflected in Literature, cannot have failed to make a lasting impression on the individual character of each one of us. They have taught us to reflect, to analyze, to be patient in endeavour, and withal to be the master of our own knowledge as likewise masters of ourselves, for self-control makes self-respect.

In addition to the discipline of the will and the refinement of the intellect, St. Dunstan's constantly strives to inculcate in her students not only the cardinal virtues, prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance but, in particular, the great moral virtue of *humility*. Within her quiet walls her children have ample opportunity to heed the ancient maxim, "know thyself." Continually she exhorts them to turn the searchlight of reflection upon their own souls:

"Search for the foe in thine own soul,
The sloth, the intellectual pride;
.....
The lawless dreams, the cynic Art,
That rend thy nobler self apart."

Today, at such a time and on such an occasion as this, we who are about to leave St. Dunstan's are carried back in memory to that day of days when, under the guidance of Providence, we first directed our footsteps hither. At first, perhaps, we were a little bewildered—so many strange faces, everything so new. As the days and the weeks went by, however, we quickly formed numerous friendships, and a general spirit of good fellowship was soon abroad. It is with mingled feelings of pleasure and regret that we now look back in retrospection upon those days when Knowledge to our eyes 'her ample page, rich with the spoils of time,' did first unroll,—pleasure in the recalling of many happy associations together, regret that those days of so much mutual help and sympathy are now no more. Our little disputes were ever tempered by goodwill and understanding, and afterwards dismissed with the thought that, 'after all, a little friction is necessary for the wheels of progress.' The intimacies of those years have been invaluable in giving us a greater understanding and appreciation of our fellow men.

Fellow class-mates, the march of time has brought us not only to the end of our course at St. Dunstan's but

also to the termination of a most successful scholastic year. During the year we were honoured in having with us for our annual Retreat a most distinguished speaker. In athletics, especially, we have been particularly fortunate. Surely we should have every cause to rejoice. Yet the mention of athletics is tinged with a note of sadness. The hand of sickness has touched one of the members of our senior class who was also captain of our Senior Football Team,—

“The dearest friend to me, the kindest man,
The best condition'd and unwearied spirit
In doing courtesies.”

Now we stand on the threshold of a new life. We are going out into the busy world of every-day affairs to mingle with the soldier and the sailor, the statesman and the plowman. It is our earnest wish that we may be a credit to St. Dunstan's even as her past graduates are today. The training, the many social and intellectual advantages, with which Alma Mater has endowed us, will, we trust, enable us to occupy with grace the various professions and situations of life. Whatever measure of success God may grant our humble efforts, we shall always pray for the continued and ever-increasing prosperity of our Alma Mater, and shall hope, if God spares us, to be present in later years at the celebration of her one hundredth anniversary. On that occasion her graduates will assemble from the far places of the earth, will gather together on the same green lawn, in the shade of the same old trees, under the same blue sky. Again we shall hear the same Angelus bell ring out summoning us to Vespers, and once more shall say our “Aves” in devotion to Our Blessed Lady.

“Still o'er these scenes my mem'ry wakes,
And fondly broods with miser care!
Time but th' impression deeper makes,
As streams their channels deeper wear.”

Reverend Rector, Reverend Fathers, and Gentlemen of the Faculty—the hour of parting is at hand and we must now regretfully say, farewell. At this time our hearts are filled with gratitude for the patient and kindly interest which you have always taken in our welfare and for the noble example which you have given us. We leave you now with every good wish that you may long

enjoy health and happiness. To you, fellow-students, we say "bon voyage!" We need scarcely remind you that time is fleeting and that you are the graduates of tomorrow. We urge you, perhaps unnecessarily, to strive always to maintain the past record of achievement at St. Dunstan's, and we are confident that you will continue to cherish her ideals and her traditions in your hearts. And now there remains but one final, sad farewell. Fellow class-mates, we have reached another mile-stone in our lives and henceforth our paths diverge. During our happy days at St. Dunstan's we have formed many warm friendships, friendships which will endure through the years. In our games on the campus we have learned the value of sportsmanship and co-operation. That same spirit of good comradeship will enable us, we trust, in the great battle of life to 'go bravely marching on.' Farewell!



The words of Mercury are harsh after the songs of Apollo.—*Shakespeare* (*Love's Labor's Lost*, V. 2)

Smooth runs the water where the brook is deep.

—*Ibid.* (*King Henry VI*, III, I)

Framed in the prodigality of nature.

—*Ibid.* (*King Richard III*, i, 2)

Ay, every inch a king—*Ibid.* *King Lear*, IV, 6)

This was the noblest Roman of them all.—*Ibid.* (*Julius Caesar*, V. 6)

His life was gentle and the elements
So mixed in him, that Nature might stand up
And say to all the world, "*This was a man!*"

—*Ibid.* (*Julius Caesar*, V. 6.)

