

VALEDICTORY

Read by Joseph E. Campbell at the Commencement
Exercises, May 28, 1925.

"The play is done; the curtain drops
Slow falling to the prompter's bell.
A moment yet the actor stops
And looks around to say farewell."

This earth has been compared to a stage upon which each man has a part to perform. We may carry the comparison farther, and say that every man's life is divided into acts, few or many, according as Life's course goes smoothly forward, or is furrowed by many changes. The limits of the acts are clearly defined; there is the beginning and the end, and at the end there is a farewell. These acts have their own distinctive features; there are no rehearsals and no reproductions. The only preparation that we can have for future parts is the careful performance of the preceding ones; and when each one is finished the curtain drops upon it forever.

We the class of '25, are today finishing one of the acts in life's great drama, and we are assembled here to bid farewell to our directors and to the scenes in which it has been performed, before we go to take other parts amid different scenes.

Farewell! it is a hard word to utter, for it means the severing of those ties that in the past have been tried and proven, and the passing on to new connections with which we are not familiar; for us it is the crossing of the boundary that separates a known and beloved country from a strange and unknown land. This is not our first farewell, but never before did we realize, as we do now, what the parting of the ways means. Our first farewell, though we did not think of it as such, we said the first day we went to school. There was no sorrow in it, for school life appeared to us all pleasure crowned with success; the time of disillusionment had not yet come. It was a joyful farewell, for we considered that we had acquired a new importance in the eyes of those about us, and that childhood days, which we then despised, would soon be over. Again there was the parting from home when we came to college. There was deep and poignant sorrow in that farewell. The separation from those whom we loved and who loved us,—the leaving

of boyhood friends. Of all the leave-takings that man must experience, the parting from home brings to him most of the true emotional sorrow. Now another act in our lives is completed; we must say farewell to our Alma Mater. We may not experience as much sorrow as when we departed from home, but, nevertheless, the leave-taking is more difficult, for during the years that we have spent at S. Dunstan's our field of vision has enlarged, and we see the future filled with graver duties than we have hitherto known. The responsibilities that other changes of life brought to us were light or at least so we considered them, but now we know that it is manhood's duties that we are to take up, and we must fulfill them alone. There will be no longer the arms of Alma Mater cast around us in protection, no more the freedom from worldly cares. St. Dunstan's is, as it were, a sheltered nook in which we lead a quiet life, unmindful of the storms that rage around us. It may not have appeared at all times a pleasant place to us; we have often wished for this day which seemed so far distant during the first years of our course, but the years that then looked so long have passed rapidly away, and now they are short indeed as in retrospect we wandered through them, gazing with fond remembrances upon the many happy moments that they contain, yes, even the sadder ones are changed and now to us,

They are not those to sorrow known
But breath so soft, and drops so clear
That bliss may claim them for her own."

There is ever this pause at the end of an act in life's drama, when for a moment the actor reviews the parts performed, then turns, and with his mind's eye tries to pierce the shadows that envelop the future. He tries to conjecture what his new role shall be, and what it shall bring him. Today as we pause and consider the past and the future, one fact stands out clearly before us. The time of childhood and youth is over. Henceforth we must take the part of men. We realize that we have reached the divide that separates the musical and gently flowing streams of carefree youth from the rushing, surging torrents that will carry us forward through manhood, and bear us to the port of eternity. The gentle, persuasive voice that in former days gave us directions has now changed to a stern, commanding one and the order that it today issues to us is forward,

In obedience to the command of forward, we leave our Alma Mater. We do not go unprepared, for St. Dunstan's has been training us for the past six years to take our places in the ranks of the world. She has built a structure in our souls that should stand firm and unshaken in the blasts of adversity that we may encounter. She is no faddist experimenting with some new theory; she is no mean architect ignorant of the laws of true construction; she is no careless worker seeking only material reward. No, St. Dunstan's builds strong and true laying her foundations in principles that have stood the test of ages, principles that have brought success as no others ever have or shall, for these principles are founded in eternity; they are the three great truths; that we come from God, that we belong to God, and that we must return to God. We have been given no false standards to uphold; we have been taught, not what may be true, but what is true,—truths upon which reason has set its seal. For us ultimate success is not measured by the standards of the world, its honours, its glories, or its riches, but it is the attaining of the end for which we were created. Although this has been the primary object of St. Dunstan's teaching, she has not neglected to prepare us for the contest in worldly affairs. By the instruction that she has imparted in the humanities and sciences, she has laid a deep and strong foundation on which we can build the structure of knowledge necessary for the faithful performance of whatever life work we shall choose.

The parting from the many things that have become so dear to us causes sorrow, and we would fain linger where our hearts incline, but duty has issued its command, and ambition urges us on to try our strength in the contest where only the worthy receive the prize. These scenes, which have become so familiar to us shall soon be but memories. Pleasant memories, they shall be, entwining our hearts, and serving to lessen the burdens of the coming years, when our shoulders shall stoop beneath the heavy load of duty; memories that shall not fade until, the drama of life being over, we have said our last farewell.

Must we say farewell to thee, St. Dunstan's? No, there is a better word, adieu.

"Adieu to thee again, a last adieu,
There can be no farewell to scenes like thine;
The mind is colored by thy every hue."

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

Another band trained under your skilful direction, leaves St. Dunstan's to enter the lists of the world. You have been our guides in the pursuit of knowledge; you have performed your work with a zeal and energy that has been a source of inspiration for us. We know that it is only in future years that we shall fully realize all that you have done for us, but now, with a deep gratitude for your interest in our behalf, we say farewell.

Fellow Students:

From you who have been our companions and friends, we now depart. When the University opens in the fall the class of '25 will be but a memory. Before we go, however, we would like to tell you what appears worth while to one who has finished the course, and gazes back through the years spent in college. What we would say to you is this: be true to St. Dunstan's, uphold her traditions, work at all times to bring credit on yourselves and on your college. Remember that the day is not far distant when you also shall have to say farewell to your Alma Mater, and, then, it will not be what you have failed to do in your studies, but what you have done that will count. Farewell!

Fellow Classmates:—

The bells of St. Dunstan's have pealed forth their last command for us; the doors that six years ago were opened to receive us are now swung back for our departure. Here we have been living a common life, and doing a common work. These have been years of happiness in which we shared our pleasures and our sorrows, but now the end has come and we must sever.

The future lies before us; what it contains we know not, but we shall push boldly on, let come what may, St. Dunstan's has trained us. Why should we falter? Class-mates, we are as mariners leaving a wind-sheltered port to sail over a wide sea. We are all making for the same harbour, but our courses will not be the same. Now the waters look placid, the sky foretells no storm, yet there may be tempests, and fierce ones, before we reach our haven. We, however, have been taught how to set our courses. God grant that there be no shipwreck.

We have been gathered together many times during

the last six years; we have seen many join our ranks and many depart, we are the survivors; and now we also are assembled as a class of St. Dunstan's for the last time. Henceforth our ways diverge, and it is improbable that we shall all meet together again till over the face of the earth the call to judgment resounds. Till then farewell!

"Farewell, a word that has been, and must be,
A sound that makes us linger,—yet—farewell!"



ACTION

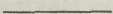
How far that little candle throws his beams!
So shines a good deed in a naughty world.
Heaven doth with us as we with torches do;
Not light them for themselves; for if our virtues
Did not go forth of us, 'twere all alike
As if we had them not.

—Shakespeare.



"If you and I—just you and I—
Should laugh instead of worry;
If we should grow—just you and I—
Kinder and sweeter hearted,
Perhaps in some near by and by
A good time might get started;
Then what a happy world 'twould be
For you and me—for you and me!"

—Anonymous.



The common problem, yours, mine, everyone's,
Is not to fancy what were fair in life,
Provided it could be—but noting first
What may be, then find how to make it fair
Up to our means.

—Browning.