

The time for parting has come. The associations of years must be broken. The students, who four years ago entered these halls as freshmen, have steadily and persistently climbed the steep and rugged hill of Knowledge, until now, from the hand of the justly honored President of these Institutions, they are to receive the parchment which marks an important and honorable stage of their progress. I see before me many friends of Acadia. They are gathering from near and from far. In particular I notice a large number of persons who are specially interested in the Class of '97. Of this class they are thinking. It is of this class they speak. The town is looking at its best in the beautiful robes of Spring. The verdure of the fields finds its counterpart in the rich green of tree and hedge. Holiday garb seems to have been put on for some special occasion. College Hall, too, presents an attractive appearance. On the platform there are the varied tints of the flowers. Class flags adorn the walls. Conspicuous among these, occupying the prominent place, is the banner of the class which is to receive its formal acknowledgement of University service and is now to step forth into public life.

As the people are assembling in College Hall on this eventful morning to witness the graduating exercises, a stranger sitting by my side, evinces much interest in the proceedings. He desires especially to obtain some information concerning the class that to-day is saying farewell to these familiar scenes. The time is very limited; it is altogether too brief in which to give an adequate description of our worthy friends. Yet in the few moments at command, it is a pleasure to enlighten the stranger as far as possible.

The first item of information I have to communicate is that the class is large—numbering 30, and that it has an interesting proportion of young ladies. These 3 gifted aspirants for baccalaureate distinction are not simply an annexment to the class but a real factor of its life. They have always taken a lively interest in the debatable subjects which came before the class organization, and in all the departments of study they have taken high rank in scholarship and in marks as well; though the stranger thinks "the marks don't amount to much anyway."

The class of '97 is a company of good students. In class work and in general attainment they stand well. There are the weak points in the line certainly. But it should not for a moment be assumed that the reason to be assigned for any weakness in the essential work of a student is to be attributed in any case to a lack of devotion, application or natural ability; rather indeed, the cause is to be found in a superabounding devotion.

During the days of their College sojourn, the members of '97 were extremely devoted—to each other. As a common experience each seemed to find in another member particular attractiveness.