

*CLASS VALEDICTORY.**

YOUR EXCELLENCY, §

YOUR GRACE,

REVEREND GENTLEMEN,

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.

We have finished our course. On the pathway of life we have made a goodly advance. The merry blissful days of childhood are no more, and what we may properly call the last day of our youth is fast speeding to a close. We know not the future or what it has in store "behind the veil"; yet we somehow trust that Providence, so beneficent in the past, will still guide us safely on. And though the star which has hitherto lit up our pathway is sinking beyond, yet there rises in the East another orb, brilliant in radiance and alluring in appearance. It is the star of Hope—hope enkindled by trust in a bountiful Deity and by confidence in the abilities which are ours as a consequence of skilful training under competent instructors. We owe it indeed to the honor of our Alma Mater, to the skill of her professors, and to the efficiency of her methods of teaching, that we go forth from her walls confident of successfully grappling with future contingencies.

Very naturally, of course, on this our last night in college, many and various thoughts engage the activities of our minds. A few there are which bring us heartfelt joy. We feel glad that we have reached the end, long-awaited, hard-won and eagerly-desired. Well do we remember to-night the first closing exercises we ever attended. Sitting

in the galleries, we saw the successful candidates receive their well-earned diplomas, we heard their farewell address, we saw the smile of satisfaction which played upon their countenances. And then came rushing in upon ourselves the thought of our own future, accompanied by a desire, a yearning for the end. How long seemed then the years which separated us from the night when we too would be graduated, and how uninviting those tedious intervening hours of study. But this night is so much the more gladdening and welcome, because it brings an end to all those trials, a consummation to our honest endeavours, the reward and crown of perseverance. Yes, we thank Heaven for having given us the courage to stand to the end, we thank Heaven that we have securely reached the hour of graduation.

There is yet another thought which stirs our souls to the very depth and engenders within us a spirit of wholesome gladness. We will be soon again amidst the scenes of our childhood days; we will soon sit once more at the old family fireside; a few brief hours and we shall be at home. Home, so dear to the heart of every man, so cherished for its sacred, hallowed associations, the scene of blissful days, nearest approach to an earthly paradise. What better place wherein to enjoy a little rest after these weary years of toil. Dear parents, who through all this time have been the faithful guardians of the old hearth, may that joy which we know is yours to-night, rejuvenate your aged hearts. Now your

* Delivered by John J. Quilty, B.A., '97.

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