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## President Trotter's Address to the Graduating Class of 1902.

### THE DEBT OF THE COLLEGE GRADUATE TO SOCIETY.

When, under similar circumstances, I addressed a few words to the graduating class of last year, I spoke on the Debt of the College Graduate to the College. To-day I wish to speak for a few moments on the Debt of the College Graduate to Society.

It is of the greatest moment as you leave college, to merge your lives in the great outside world, that you ask yourselves the question—"What am I going out for? Is it to get or to give? Is it with the thought that Society is a debtor to me, or that I am a debtor to Society?" It has been taught you persistently throughout the years you have been here, that the true ideal for you out in the world of human life is to count yourselves not beneficiaries with a claim but debtors, with an obligation. I but say a word to clinch the teaching of the years. As college graduates you owe a debt to society which it will take all your life-time to discharge.

### THE GROUNDS OF OBLIGATION.

If I may say a word as to the grounds upon which your special obligations to society rest, I would remind you first of all that, as honest men and women, you owe to society a large requital for benefits received. Whence came the opportunity which stood before you four years ago of coming up here, to enjoy during these intense years the inestimable privilege which has been yours? It was one of the gracious gifts of society to you. The college stood open to you, but the college was but the concrete expression of the ideals of society, wrought out through centuries of labor and struggle and self-sacrifice. You lifted up your eyes and saw the open door, but you did that because the leaven of high ideals had been working in society, had penetrated your homes, and had at last communicated itself to your blood and to your brains.

And just as truly, while you have been here, a thousand ministrations of society have been the indispensable condition of your continuance in this privilege. By its protection of life and property, by its maintenance of civil order and religious freedom, and by unnumbered intellectual and industrial activities, society has been your servant. For you, during these four years, men have hewed in the forests, have delved in the mines, have drudged on the farms, have toiled in the factories, have breasted the seas, many of them performing menial, perilous, exhausting, thankless tasks, by which your wants have been supplied, and by which you have been left free to luxuriate in the realm of mind and thought and spiritual ideal. In all this, society has done well for you, and well for itself, but only on the condition that you now go down from your eminence of privilege and make society an honest requital, by consecrating the inspirations and acquisitions of these years to its advancement and ennoblement.

But if there has been so much direct giving to you on the part of society, under any right view of life, you would be its debtors all the same, its debtors by a weightier obligation,—the obligation of the law of benevolence, which is the supreme law of God. Paul gave expression to this law when he said "I am debtor to the Greeks and to the Barbarians." But, in what sense was he a debtor to the Greeks? Not as a disciple of their philosophy. Not, it would seem, as a recipient of their bounty in the matter of art. Not, certainly, in the matter of religion. He was a debtor simply in the sense that he had the true knowledge of God, which the whole barbaric world was without, and he owed it to every man who had it not. By that same law of benevolence are you debtors to the world into which you go.

You have received much which is denied the multitude. People talk much about over-educating; the fact is that only the smallest percentage of the young people of these Provinces have ever entered the doors of a college. But you belong to that elect and favored percentage. You have enjoyed privileges that are priceless, and make you the envy of multitudes of the young people against whom the door of opportunity has been shut. Now I say that these special privileges which have been yours, and the special capacity for service which they have secured to you, create a special obligation, and make you by so much, under the law of benevolence, debtors to every man and every cause that you are capable of serving. Your debt to society then rests upon two things: the law of honesty, and the law of benevolence.

### THE PAYMENT OF THE DEBT.

And now a word as to the currency in which your debt to society should be paid.

First of all, it will be demanded of you that you make a contribution to society in the way of trained intelligence. For a nation's welfare trained intelligence is indispensable. The world of nature becomes available for man's use and comfort, only as it is subdued by the mind. Advancement in the prevention and cure of disease is dependent upon scientific investigation. Industrial and commercial progress is conditioned upon increase of technical education. Social amelioration and betterment are dependent upon the intelligent appreciation of social laws, and the intelligent construction of reforming measures. In politics, in theology, and in every department of thought and activity, trained intelligence is imperatively demanded. Now the college is the special gymnasium where this training is acquired, and society with its many problems will expect of you that you will place at its service keen and disciplined minds.

Secondly, your debt to society should be paid in the currency of noble thoughts and ideals. The college is the depository where the thought accumulations of the race are stored and dispensed; it is the seed-plot of the world's thought-life, where the thought of the past is fertilized by the life of the present, and made to spring up into new forms of beauty and fruitfulness; it is the "Valley of silence" where young souls, before being plunged into the deafening roar of the world's tumult, may tarry awhile and listen to the voices which speak from the depths of the soul within and from the heights of the heaven above; it is the mountain summit where the eyes may get a far vision which shall illumine and guide all the after course of life.

Every student who turns his college days to good account, experiences mentally and spiritually a new birth; old things pass away, all things become new. Ideals, interpretations, outlook, motives, sympathies, purposes, all are transformed; and if the attitude of the mind has been right the new possessions are marked by insight, comprehensiveness, truth, nobleness, and the possibility of life and blessing not only to the possessor but to all others wherever he shall go. Now it is your duty to society, as I have said, to carry out into the world and scatter broadcast this blessed seed of noble thoughts and ideals.

If you cannot make a contribution to the twentieth century like that which Ruskin made to the nineteenth century, which led Carlyle to call him "the seer that guides his generation," there will at the same time be for each of you a circle of life in which your thoughts and ideals may be a controlling and shaping force, materially affecting the course of human living and leaving its mark forever.

If, however, you would discharge your debt to society, there must be something more than trained intelligence, and the enunciation of thoughts and ideals, be they ever so noble. You must give to the world the added blessing of moral enthusiasm. The world is not lacking high thoughts and ideals so

much as moral passion to call back home what it has. Ideas and ideals are mere mechanism until moral purpose puts power behind them, and moral enthusiasm drives them forward.

Now Acadia has served you but poorly, and has failed of half her work, if, while enlarging the bounds of knowledge for you, and disciplining your reason and judgment, she has not kindled in your souls a passion for righteousness, for humanity and the Kingdom of God. I trust she has done this at least in some measure. I beg you to guard these fires; not to permit them to be quenched, but to feed them to an ever hotter and hotter flame. We go into a world in which time-servers, cynics, and Laodiceans are sufficiently numerous. No more are needed. But if you will go with your trained minds, and enlightened and wholesome ideals, to live a purposeful, courageous, passionate life for all high ends, the world will call the day blessed that gave you to its service.

But I must not detain you. In keeping the ideals true, the will firm, and the heart warm, it may help you to look back to your college home; it will help you also if you shall take as your exemplars those noble types in the past and present who have been the true servants of their generations; but the deepest inspirations will come from fellowship with Him who came "not to be ministered unto but to minister," who has given to the world a new ideal of living, and who died in His passion for humanity.

Go forth into life, not mailed in scorn,  
But in the armor of a pure intent.  
Great duties are before thee, and fresh songs,  
And whether crowned or crownless when thou fall'st,  
It matters not so that God's work is done."

Accepting the  
Situation.

The despatches from Pretoria indicate that the prospect seems good for the establishment of peaceful conditions without further friction. The burghers are represented as being in a mood to accept the situation and make the best of it. The open letter in which the Boer leaders announce the fact of peace to the burghers is said to be an eloquent and pathetic document. The leaders thank the burghers for their noble self-sacrifice, and express sympathy for the bereaved. The letter concludes: "Now that there is peace, and although it is not a peace such as we hoped for, yet let us abide where God has led us. We can, with clear consciences, declare that for two and a half years our people have carried on the struggle in a manner almost unknown to history. Let us now grasp each others hands for another great struggle lies before, a struggle for the spiritual and racial prosperity and welfare of our people. Casting aside all feelings of bitterness, let us learn to forget and to forgive so that the deep wounds caused by this war may be healed." British officers are daily receiving the surrender of the Boers. The methods of procedure is thus described: The Boer leader goes out to meet a commando and returns at its head. The Boers, who come in, are generally dressed in dilapidated clothing, but have a smart and soldierly bearing. The Boers who are to surrender are assembled and the Boer leader delivers an address to his men urging them to listen to the British officer who has been detailed on the work. The British officer then makes a speech to the men of the commando, in which he informs them of the admiration of King Edward and the British nation for the gallant struggle and the bravery of their people and promises that the British authorities will do their utmost to help them resettle on their farms. A meal is then provided for the Boers, after which the formal surrenders occur. In many such instances the Boers have cheered King Edward and they have sometimes expressed surprise that no army was sent out to receive their surrenders. The Boers are allowed to retain their horses and saddles, and the majority of them appear to be glad the war is at end and that they will now be able to join their families. A few of the Boer women, it is said, still inveigh against surrender, but the general feeling among them is in favor of making the best of the situation. In disposing of the surrendered burghers, those who can subsist upon their farms will be given ten days rations and allowed to begin their new life immediately, those who are unable to subsist upon their farms will be permitted to join their families in the camps and remain there until their homes are once more made habitable, and all others will be divided among the various camps.