

Valedictory.

Very Rev. Rector, Rev. Fathers, Fellow-Students, Ladies and Gentlemen,—

There are times when even the most stoical amongst us ignores, for a space, his philosophy and grants priority to his feelings. Such a moment is this. For Class '13 the hour of parting draws rapidly nigh. And it is with conflicting emotions that we make the last few halting steps which will carry us beyond the gates of Alma Mater. We proceed with a sense of pleasure which, as the poet says,

“Hath something too of sternness and of pain,
For it drives back my thoughts upon their spring.”

Amid the hurry and bustle of the last few weeks we have had little time to reflect upon the days which have now passed away from us forever,—upon our college days, upon the life which is the only one we know as yet. Perhaps 'tis as well, for in the trial we needed all the incentive which the anticipation of success could bring to urge us on. We have been pleased to have achieved success. With pleasure we have anticipated the launching of our several barks upon the sea of life. But to-day these pleasures, these anticipations, sink into very insignificance in the face of the price which they demand. We must part. The memory of the happy years which we have spent, of the struggles in field and forum which we have enjoyed and in which we have engaged, of the good fellows we have met and warm friendships we have made, the memory of all these is borne back upon us with an intensity which makes us realize in some measure the good fortune which has been ours.

It is but natural that such reflection would lead us to remember those to whose labours and sacrifices we are indebted for all our good fortune. I mean our parents. Our debt to them we can never clear off, least of all at this moment. They have struggled to educate us, to fit us for the battle of life. We thank them now. We shall repay them by the trophies which we win in the battle.

Yet our regret at parting does not check the ardour with which we set forth upon the unbeaten tracks. We have youth and vigor. We have the brilliant example of those who have gone before,