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ON CULTIVATING AN OUTSIDE INTEREST. *

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Ladies and Gentlemen of the Normal School:

NO one can stand here to speak to you this evening without some sense of the gravity and importance of the occasion. After an all-too-brief period of learning and training, you are going back to the towns and country districts of Ontario to undertake the highest of all tasks—the education of the children. With many of you, maybe, this work will occupy a few years only of your life, before you turn to other duties; but with some at any rate it will be a life work. How long it may be your occupation, circumstances will determine; but whether it is for many years or few, the responsibility is grave and the outcome of your activity such as cannot be measured. To-night you receive, as it were, your ordination for the ministry; and as in some of the churches those who are about to enter the ranks of the clergy are asked whether they are moved by the Spirit to take upon them that

office and ministration; so I trust that most of you feel an inward call to your mission. I do not expect any impossible virtue; it is right that you should be influenced by reasonable considerations of self interest, or by honourable ambition. But still I am sure you do not regard your profession as a mere shop keeping—as merely the handing over of so much knowledge in return for so much salary. I am sure you have some love for children, some reverence for their happy ignorance of evil, a desire to give them something better than mere ability to read the newspaper and keep accounts—to help them rather to grow up into honourable and high-minded and self-respecting men and women.

But with whatever enthusiasm you may enter upon your career, there is a danger which stands in the way of all of you, of all of us who are engaged in teaching; and it is all the greater danger because it is hardly realized. It is the danger lest our daily work should become a routine, so that while we perform every part of it with

*An address at the close of the Normal School Session.