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## THE COMING DAY. Valedictory, Acadia, 1899.

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Slowly, steadily, laboriously has the world climbed the hill of the centuries. Up from the valley of the thick darkness, up to the slanting foothill slopes, still indistinct in the rising mist, up to the bolder shoulders of the heights in the grey dawn, where the winds are fresh and free, up to the very summit has she ascended, and the sky is clear, the retrospect vast and various, the prospect pleasant and prime with promise, and the glory of a new day is breaking. Along the eastern sky, light is growing, it is the light of the twentieth century, the stars pale before it and in the west the night cloud sinks low. Through the opening curtains of this new dawn, burst the foregleams of the resplendent day, shoot their fire-tipped, golden lances into the zenith and cause the face of the sky to flush with a new brightness. Soon the rising sun shall tinge with glory the western clouds ere they vanish, and crown the mountain peaks with fire, and hang about their huge forms their mantle of mystic purple and lay a richer green on field and forest and a brighter blue on lake and river, and piercing to the lowest and remotest of earth's valleys, banish night and bathe them with the day.

Nineteen centuries have rolled away since Christ was born and we pause with bated breath at the dawning of the twentieth. A few more revolutions of old mother earth and we shall have been projected into the glorious epoch, the golden age of the world. It is our privilege, we the class of '99, to complete our preparation with the old and begin our life work with the new.

Honor to our fathers, who have made for us a mighty nation, who have wrought out for us a glorious constitution, and whose good old British blood still leaps from hearts as steady and as strong! Honor to the heroes who through the ages have fought and labored, who have taught us how to fight, how to labor, how to love, and how to die, who have won for us the battle for freedom and the right, who have laid for us the groundwork of our civilization and bequeathed to us our blessed Christ! Honor to those men from whose hands we now take the torch of learning, whose words have instructed, whose example has encouraged and whose thoughts have inspired us with the love of truth and lofty aspirations!

Our time is now come, the day of labor and of conflict has arrived for us, the blaze of the twentieth century sun is even now appearing and the call that summons every hand, heart and brain, is, "Work! Work!"

Ah, men of '99, that will be a day of triumphs! Truth shall triumph over error, and the low-browed countenance of superstition and the subtle-eyed, cadaverous jawed visage of imposture shall descend to darkness and oblivion, while smiling truth, with open face and honest eye, shall wield her sceptre with universal sway and hold the world in willing and in sweet obedience. Peace shall triumph over discord; the temple of Janus shall be closed forever and the olive shall flourish in every land; the war drums shall be dumb and the battle flags be furled; the swords and bayonets shall be beaten into knives for pruners and shares for ploughmen; those huge engines whose thunder shakes the earth shall be molten into implements of peace; those war dogs of the sea that go roaring about the world shall be converted into ships of trade and travel, and those millions of idle fighting men already armed, drilled and disciplined shall be disbanded and sent

back to farm and factory. Liberty shall triumph over slavery, and the hydra headed monster Oppression, whose victims now appear as captives of war, now as purchased bondmen, now as native born serfs, and now as struggling laborers, shall become so hideous in the far shining torch light of justice, that men shall loathe its shape and banish it from the earth. Then shall be full liberty, liberty of body, free to go and come at will, liberty of mind, free to hold what doctrines one pleases, liberty of speech, free to speak out one's beliefs, liberty in all things save in error, sin and selfishness. O Liberty thou art a priceless jewel, thou art the world's highest good, thou art the safeguard of human happiness and of religion, art and science, the sole condition of success! Equality shall triumph over class distinction and social gradation, and there shall be no proletariat, no struggling laboring class, no respectable middle class, no titled upper class, no aristocracy, either of blood or gold; no kings, no emperors. And there shall be no high, no low, no degrees of honor save the high and low of moral worth and the degrees of inborn native genius. Fraternity shall triumph over racial difference, over national prejudice, over political division, over family pride, over selfish motives, and the race, being of one blood with one father, God, and one king, Christ, shall live together in the bonds of peace and brotherhood. Then shall mother earth blossom like the rose and smile again and rejoice! Then shall the stars sing in gladness! Then shall the angels strike their harps and sing in unison with men the praises of the glory of the Father.

And, my classmates, that will be a day of opportunity! Never in the history of the world has such a time for chances been known as the twentieth century day promises to be. It will be as though our old planet were transformed and all the treasures of her wisdom and knowledge laid bare. It will be as though the souls of men were to unfold, like flowers in the spring time, revealing their hidden ideals of love and beauty. It will be as though the unknown were to part its veil and the mysteries of the universe, of God, of Christ, of existence were to be made clear. Even now, by the spade of the excavator and the lantern of the antiquary, the records of our race begin truthfully to unfold, laying open a mine of exhaustless treasure. Even now, by the successful labors of earnest pioneers, many new and correct paths are being opened in the field of natural science which invite our feet and promise rich discoveries. Even now daring Columboes begin to cross the unknown seas of speculation, returning with strange tales of the new world beyond, and we have ships as good as they. Even now the mists begin to lift from the heights of spiritual truth and many an untrod-able land and unclimbed lofty peak emerges to our view. Even now, while kindled by the old, sparks of the new artistic genius begin to rise and there is hidden fire enough to light the world with beauty and to fill it with sweet sounds. Opportunity, thy name is Legion! For the lawyer, doctor, scientist, teacher, preacher, statesman, philanthropist, for a man in any field of work, our day will glitter with as many chances as there are stars in the firmament. O what a day our's promises to be! A day when tidings shall compass the world in the twinkling of an eye, when a man's achievements shall become in a few days the possession of the race, when easy rapid transit over land and sea shall open the accessible parts of the world to all, when the struggle for existence shall give place to an easy livelihood for every man, when there shall be ample leisure for mental improvement, and when all the people shall be taught to recognize and appreciate the good and

true. Our hearts bound within us with a life never so strong and our souls spread their wings for a flight never so high as we think of it. Let us remember our heritage, it is great, for we stand in the foremost files of time and are the heirs of all the ages. Let us remember, also, as we stand on the great divide of the centuries, as we pass the portals of our dear old *alma mater*, as we strike hands at the parting of the ways, that, "There is a tide in the affairs of men, which taken at the flood leads on to fortune, omitted, all the voyage of their lives is bound in shallows and in miseries."

But it will be a day of giants, for the stature of true manliness shall have attained gigantic proportions. No longer will it be possible for the unproductive drone, the heir of ill-gotten gains, the lord of wantonness and ease, or the idle inheritor of vast estates to live a burden upon their fellows and to hold the highest seats on the social coach; for the giants in that day will not be of that kind and neither will they tolerate that sort of giantism. No longer will it be possible for professional politicians to lead their constituents by the nose, or to feed at the public crib, or to line their pockets with monopoly franchise dividends, or to implicate the state with other states in wars and broils of tariff reforms and boundary disputes, or to complicate the legislation of the land by interminable laws and clauses and red tape and devious ways, until justice is a farce; for the giants in that day will not be of that kind and neither will they tolerate that sort of giantism. No longer will it be possible for men, unqualified both in brain and heart, to set themselves up as spiritual guides and teachers of the people, and to stand forth on their lofty pinnacles of high office, braced and bolstered and supported by an organization called the visible church, which for ages they have befogged and hoodwinked with endless form and dogma; for in that day there will be no giants of that kind, neither will they tolerate that sort of giantism. Men will stand on their merits, and the places of honor and responsibility shall be filled by men possessing peculiar adaptability for them. What then will the giantism of that day be, and what will make a man a giant among giants? Not physical might, for there will be no gladiators, not military genius, for there will be no war. Not wealth, for there will be no capitalists; but rather a giant brain to think with, a giant hand to work with, and a giant heart to love with. The true worth of the soul as character will be recognized, and because the shackles of social bondage shall be struck off, and because God has fixed no limit to the soul's development, and because every human soul is an independent activity, every man may become a giant.

Hark! What sound is that we hear rolling along the hills of time and waking the echoes in the far eternity? The bells of the twentieth century! Listen, how they roll and rattle and reverberate, peal on peal! It is the world's holiday and the angels who sang at the birth of Christ, Peace on earth, goodwill toward men, are ringing now the coming of the kingdom.

Farewell, fellow students, farewell, honored professors, farewell, kind friends, farewell all, we can stay no longer, if you want us you will find us where the dust and din are thickest.

Up classmates and away! Up for the honor of old Acadia and the glory of the homeland! Up and lay our giant shoulders to the world's wheel, and like giants lift until the old world coach shall roll on level ground! Up, and upon the sounding anvils of our professions, let our giant strokes descent with such rapidity and strength that the very gates of hell themselves shall tremble with their shock! Up, and like the fixed stars for steadiness of purpose, set our eyes on the goal, crying, as we bear aloft the standard of the cross, *In hoc vinci* and *Palman qui meruit ferat!*

June 6, 1899.