

No one on this occasion and at Harvard could be unmindful of the debt which freedom - personal and political - owes to the belief that the pursuit of knowledge is good of itself and must be continued at any price, wherever it leads. We meet here in the shade of those learned and wise men who believed that, subject though it is, and always has been, to its own torments, such pursuit is our main source of progress and achievement. They dedicated their lives to the proposition that reason can unravel the knots and difficulties caused by the increasing intricacy of social and economic organization and by the bewildering advance of science. They insisted, moreover, that tradition is the starting point for orderly progress; that without it our life would lose much of its savor and our political institutions much of their stability.

It is hardly necessary for me, therefore, in this place, to elaborate on the duty of universities to foster exact learning and to promote free and unprejudiced enquiry. But I would like to say a little about their duty to encourage tolerance and magnanimity, in public, as well as in private life. There can be no quarter in hunting down those who abuse the liberty granted by our society in order to subvert it. They must expect to be punished under the laws they have broken; and they must be prevented from holding positions of trust which they could use for disloyal ends. But to say that is not enough. Man's powers for good and evil are too strangely intertwined for his quality to be decided merely by actions with which the law can deal or solely in matters of which the state can take cognizance.

More than one hundred years ago Herman Melville wrote, "Knaves, fools, and murderers there may be; men may have mean and meagre faces; but man, in the ideal, is so noble and so sparkling, such a grand and glowing creature, that over any ignominious blemish in him, all his fellows should run to throw their costliest robes." Our public life would be dangerously impoverished if we were ever completely to lose sight of this generosity and this humility of mind. It is alarmingly easy to do so today, when hard and sharp exposure, at times indecent exposure, by camera, screen or printed word, is not only exhibiting but often manufacturing blemishes.

The world, being what it is, will always be a place where those in whom the spirit burns brightest will often feel themselves outnumbered and ignored. Nor are such rare persons to be found only in our universities. Melville learned more on the whaler in which he sailed to the South Seas than he perhaps could have learned even at Harvard College. Completely unlettered individuals, as we all know, can, by the grace of God, be wiser than most professors. I hope that this is a comfort to those who have graduated without "laude". In few parts of the world has that fact received more effective and practical recognition than at Harvard, where education from the earliest days has been so broadly based, without unnecessary dependence on forms or formulae.

There are many contributions, apart from the pursuit of knowledge, and the cultivation of magnanimity to be made by a university community such as this and which are vital if we are to survive successfully our present trials. One of them is to foster what has always