

DR. NELLES' BACCALAUREATE ADDRESS—VICTORIA
UNIVERSITY, MAY 14TH, 1882.

Members of the Class of 1882 :—

The admirable discourse to which you have just listened from the Rev. Dr. Stevenson has anticipated in part some of the counsels which I had intended to offer you. There is one, however, of such vital importance that I will venture to repeat it with earnestness and emphasis, not because it is at all new to you, but because I am giving you the solemn farewell words of the University, and what is said to you now may be more deeply impressed by reason of the tender interest of the hour. I would have you understand what is the one great and special injunction which we regard as important above all others. I, therefore, re-echo the sentiment of Dr. Stevenson. *Be loyal to Christ.* No man living or dead can give you better counsel than this. The air is full of the mingling and colliding philosophies of the ages, but amid them all and above them all sounds the name of Jesus of Nazareth, the great Teacher, Hope, and Saviour of the world. *Be supremely loyal to Christ.* It is not easy to be this. Far easier is it to be loyal to a system, or a sect, or a party. The disciples were first called Christians at Antioch, and many millions have been called Christians since, but always, more or less, the accidents and accessories of Christianity have encumbered and beclouded the essential principles. Put Christ in the foreground ; put all other considerations in the background. And to do this you will need, perhaps, to get rid of some obstinate and blinding prepossessions ; certainly you will need to study Christ's words, life, and character, with purified and open vision. A dying Catholic prelate asked his chaplain to pray that he might have "the elemental graces." So pray you. Seek the points of agreement among all schools of thought, and through the letter and the form find your way to the spirit and the power of the religion of the Cross. Even John Stuart Mill acknowledges that the world did not make a bad choice in fixing on Jesus of Nazareth as the highest Ideal. Let your minds dwell upon that Ideal in its simple, unmutilated, undistorted form, and let your lives be daily transfigured into that divine likeness. What higher attainment can there be for you than to bear "the image of the