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Alumni Essay

By HOWARD GRIFFIN.

St. Dunstan's May 31st.

TRUE IDEALS OF ART.

Art which, next to religion, has done most to elevate man from his primitive state is the true watchword of civilization? The gradual discovery and development of it can be traced side by side with the course of culture. In the popular conception of the word, art is a rule or practice which leads to the accomplishment of some end. It has ever been the office of art to educate humanity to the perception of beauty and to appeal to the higher instincts of man. How well it has been fulfilled is left for each one to judge. We are immersed in beauty though, we do not know it. Certainly it is true that the heights of Italian and Grecian art have approached the sublime in their proportion and harmony. In the sculptures of the Greeks, and in the masonry of the Romans, and in the pictures of the Tuscan and Venetian masters, the highest charm is the universal language which they speak. A confession of nature, of purity, love, and hope, breathes from them all.

Two divisions manifest themselves in art: the fine and the useful arts. The fine arts are practised for themselves alone and include painting, sculpture, music, and poetry. The useful arts have for their aim to serve the need of daily life. Among them architecture, pottery, weaving, and glass-making stand out in pre-eminence. Architecture may stand in the borderland of both domains.

The true ideals of art are those in which nature, charity and religion guide the workman. By this means alone can it fulfil its true ideals in the eyes of God, because in these are contained beauty, truth, simplicity, and harmony, those attributes which make art shine with a heavenly light.

Since nature is the very reflection of God in his omnipotence and beauty, it is the receptacle of all that is good and beautiful. The very plainness of nature adds to its beauty and is an asset in itself. It is a common belief that all great works of art are great miracles, some wonderful combination of color and form. A visit to these works of art will at once remove this false idea, which, instead of dazzling the beholder, will charm him by their simplicity. They are not the picturesque. Nothing moves men so much as common sense and plain dealing. All great actions have been simple. So also should it be with art. The "Transfiguration" by Raphael, is an eminent example of this merit. A calm and gracious beauty shines over this picture and goes directly to the heart. It seems almost to call you by name. This familiar, simple, homelike, countenance impresses one as if he had met a friend. Listen not to the knowledge of picture-dealers because it was painted, not by them, but for you; for those of you who have sensations capable of being moved by simplicity and lofty sentiments.

The beauty of things consists in the due proportion of their parts and in the true harmony of their colors. Nature is a characteristic portrait of this. The heavenly bodies with their countless intricacies, the greatness in size and number of their members, and the regularity of their movements are an unexcelled example of harmony. Again, let us consider the functions of the human body, the regular interdependence of the movements and duties of each. How wonderful is nature! What a pattern for artists to imitate. We wonder little that Wordsworth and Shakespeare, so much and in the supreme productions of their literary art, the monarchs of the poetic world, admired nature; so readily followed her guidance. In nature all is useful, all is beautiful. It is useful because it is alive, moving and reproductive; it is beautiful because it is symmetrical and fair. Art can never be what it can and should be until it is a true mirror of nature and is no longer held in subjection by an outer, artificial

counterfeit. The color, shape, and size of the object must not be grossly exaggerated.

Together with the influence and guidance of nature, the ideal artist must be animated by the majestic virtue of charity, the queen of all the virtues. Charity will produce in it that feature which does not now exist, the transference of feelings accessible not only to some people of the rich class, as happens now, but to all the classes as well. Those productions which will convey the feelings that draw people to brotherly unity should be considered art. Only this art will stand out, be admitted, approved, and spread. All the rest of it, conveying feelings accessible only to a few will be considered unimportant. Then the patrons of art will not be, as now, the separate class of rich people, but the whole nation. In order that a production be considered good, approved, and cultivated, it should satisfy not the demands of a few people, but the demands of the whole nation, the great masses who live in the natural conditions of toil.

The artists, then, will not be rare persons selected from a small part of the nation, from the rich classes of those close to them, but all those gifted people of the whole nation who show themselves able and willing for artistic activities. Art will become more natural and more like a product of charitable beings. Love of his work and his fellowman, not mercenary gain, is the true purpose to prompt a workman to his productivity. Avarice and desire of fame detract from the already existing good qualities of an artist. Love of God and of your neighbor is an indispensable avenue to the attainment of honor and success. An ardent charity will reproduce itself, as it were, in the product and, like a precious oil, smooth off and enhance its beauty.

Before a true artist can exist, he must have a strongly religious mind. If he is to choose suitable subject matter he must have a deep religious discretion to guide him in his choice. Without a religious mind, he cannot have true artistic purposes; he cannot survive the vanity and profanity of the world. Nothing is more beautiful than to enlist the services of religion for the purposes of art. Nothing less than God and the creation of man would find in it an outlet for his whole energy. Art would exhilarate and throw down the wall of circumstance on every side and awaken in the beholder or reader the sense of universal religion and power.

Another suggestion which presents itself in art is that, before a man can produce art which is the exponent of his true ideals in life, he must develop in himself the ideal man. The artist should begin early in life and study the masters before he enters the heart of his work. Just as is done in athletics, where the candidate goes through more strenuous training and uses more energy in preparing for the proposed contest than he will possibly be called upon to expend in the trial itself, so should the artist train himself in his youth for the work upon which he is about to enter, train himself to look upon art as the means to his end. This training is especially lacking in the higher arts where only those who think that they have an inspiration or an inborn gift, the useful arts, however, present a more encouraging aspect because they are studies and learned almost wholly in apprenticeship. In every branch of the latter we have examples of nearly perfect artistic designs due solely to training and practice. For instance, in the Middle Ages, when the useful trades were practically hereditary, many mixtures were found in glass-making which have not since been equalled nor even discovered. In painting, combinations of colors were produced which are imitable today. Thus we explain the decline in art today, and, not until some similar custom is introduced or academic training in art is developed, can true idealism be cultivated in the field of art.

The subject matter should not consist in the expression of exclusive feelings, vanity, weariness and sensuality, but in the expression of those which are experienced by a man who lives the life proper to all people and which flow from religious consciousness. To many people of the distinct classes, this subject-matter when compared to the refinements of exclusive feeling may appear monotonous. But at the same time the only really new sensations possible in our time are Christian feelings and those accessible to all.

The feelings flowing from the religious ideas of our time are endlessly new, rich and varied; but not in that one sense, as some think, of depicting Christ and the episodes of the Gospel, or of



BABY'S OWN SOAP

Boys just love its smooth

and foundation of our ultimate happiness.

It is upon this force, the greatness of faith, that Alma Mater moulds the integrity of her sons. Upon this as foundations are built the principles with which she shapes the lives of her subjects. By means of this she hopes to fulfil her high mission upon earth. None may have true wisdom without faith, for in faith alone lies the recognition of the providence guiding the affairs of men. Through faith alone can man achieve to truth. Virtue, valor, and greatness, are all the three handmaidens of faith, without which they are but superficial and vain. Knowledge can not be without faith, for faith is the highest knowledge of all.

It would be impossible to recount the many benefits which St. Dunstan's bestows upon her students. Nor have we any need to express in words what is being daily expressed in deeds. The lives of her alumni form a eulogy which no tongue or pen is capable of producing. From the first day of our entrance, from the time when first we crossed the threshold of our college and submitted ourselves to her protection and her guidance, we incurred a debt which we can never repay. Nor does our Alma Mater desire that we repay. Her reward will be in our achievements.

How clearly can we recall that first day, when half in fear and half in hope, we began the ascent toward the goal which we so much desired. We were bewildered for a time. Everything was new and strange. The order and the steady regularity of the things about us filled us with awe. Many times, perhaps, during these first few months, we were tempted to give up or to turn back; but the encouraging words of some new-found friend, or the sympathy and understanding of our professors, inspired us to renewed effort. With the passing of time, we became accustomed to our surroundings, we grew to like this once strange environment, we made new friends, in whom we could confide, and on whose judgment we could rely; our duties were no longer irksome; the very name of old "St. Dunstan's" was a stimulus to our work.

Numberless are the memories of his student days which the graduate carries away with him, to gladden him when life has lost for him his former glamor, and to guide him along the path of virtue, when the evils of the existence about him would seem to lead him astray. They shall be to him the most cherished of his possessions, not to be bartered for gold. Surely the poet had been thinking of his college days, when he wrote:

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In the attainment of any goal we experience both a consummation and a change. The consummation, bringing with it the cessation of effort relative to that goal and the realization of long-cherished hopes, is the climax of some certain period in our lives, and is in itself an object of joy. But the ensuing change, if it be from stable, certain, and peaceful conditions to a vague and insecure order of things, cannot fail to be attended by sorrow.

Today we, the graduates of 1921-1922, have attained the goal for which we have long been striving. Today we arrive at the second milestone of our lives. Our hopes are realized. And yet, we cannot say that we are happy. We are beset by mutually conflicting emotions. We realize today that we must leave our hitherto happy home, to take our place as citizens of the world. Today we must break the ties of friendship formed by our long association here. Today we must step from the realms of sheltered imagination into the realms of reality.

During the past few months there was not one of this class who did not at some time pray that this day would speedily arrive. There is not one of us but longed for it with eager longing, bewailing perhaps the seeming sluggishness of time.

The day has arrived. The day has arrived, and we are powerless to prevent its passing. We can but snatch a few moments from the fast-flowing stream of time to pay our final respects, as best we may, to our Alma Mater, our Loving Mother, who has trained us, developed us, labored for us, and sacrificed for us, that through her our journey through life might be crowned with success.

Success does not come unsought; nor does it come to those who are unprepared for it. To insure our success, our Alma Mater has endowed us with the two essential means for its attainment, the one preparing us for the success of the spirit, for happiness, the other for the success of the world; Faith and Knowledge.

We have been privileged to drink from the fountain of knowledge; to imbibe those truths, which, stimulating and strengthening the mind, fit the student to take an eminent place in whatever profession he may choose. But education means more than the mere training of the intellect. The will also must be developed.

Alma Mater realizes that man is an animal redoubtable alike for his passions and for his reason. His passions if unchecked, direct him to great evils; his reason, a double-edged tool, too often supplies him with the means for the attainment of these evils. To train this animal, to discipline his actions, to instill in him the principles of justice and of virtue, to fashion him for society and to insure the salvation of his soul, can not be accomplished by knowledge alone. Reason is insufficient, inadequate to so great a task. The human reason may be thoroughly developed; knowledge of every description may be accumulated; intellect, memory, social inclinations, all may be cultivated with great success, but the heart would still be a waste space, as dry as earth without water; and the will, that dangerous faculty, if left undisciplined and unguided by a light far superior to that which reason alone can furnish, would be liable to become the scourge of its possessor and the bane of society.

The light which reason alone

Notes By The Way

(Continued From Page 4)

al arena are exceedingly quiet. In the legislative chamber which ere while was resounding with noisy speech, there is now a notable silence. Possibly it is better so. Some philosopher has left on record that "speech is silver and silence is golden." Be that as it may, the contrast between a superabundance of speech and absolute silence is wide and striking. For the harp of Liberalism like that of Erin, which once through those stately halls shed the soul of music now hangs as mute upon the wall as if that soul were dead.

Hushed are the voices once vibrant there proclaiming mutual admiration of each other, laudation of the best of all governments, benedictions upon the faithful ones. Silent is the caucus chamber and the council room, once filled with animated voices, sometimes heard in tones of protest and defiance beyond the closed doors and windows. Visitors to the library, who come to read or to exchange books, no longer find the door closed and sentries posted because of a private gathering of the faithful there, weighty matters of state — where the talk was of budgets and taxes, of roads and of bridges, schools and ferries, of new judgments; and of old and new election laws.

And a like silence in regard to provincial politics has fallen upon the sweet-toned organ of the government. Upon all such matters it is now as mute as the harp of Tara. But a short time ago it was spreading broadcast over the land its political propaganda in double column editorials and members' speeches—17 columns for Premier Bell and 20 columns for Mr. Lea, as it boasted—with proportionate space given to the lesser lights of the party. Now the big lights and the little lights political seem alike forgotten and obscured, the voices of the big guns and the little guns are no longer heard and as for provincial politics, the name is as much out of mind as the meteor that flashed unnoticed in the distant past.

The silence of the Liberal organ is the more noticeable from the fact that there are several important and timely subjects for discussion and also from the fact that is every day discussing other matters to the exclusion of these. There are, for instance, those by-elections for the five seats now vacant for six or eight months, seats that were vacant during the entire length of the recent legislative session. Surely this is not a matter of small importance in a province where we are supposed to have representative government. The people are asking when these elections shall be held, why the long delay? but to all such questions the organ is mute as the proverbial oyster.

Of us must travel alone that road of life which he has chosen. It is no easy life that lies before us. There are temptations, there are discouragements, which must be met and overcome. It may be that some of us will fall by the roadside, stricken by the plague of the flesh, or lured from our pathway of truth by the call of the world. It may be that some of us will deny those very things which here we love and cherish. Perhaps, and perhaps not. We have our own lives before us, to make of them what we will. We know what is right, we know what is true. We are now men, strong and purposeful. If we remember the lessons which we have learned at St. Dunstan's, if we adhere to what we have here discovered to be the great and the noble things of life, we cannot fail — we cannot fail. Farewell.

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The light which reason alone

There are moments of life which we never forget, which brighten and brighten as time steals away; They give a new charm to the happiest lot, and they shine on the gloom of the loneliest day.

Well do we remember the friendly contests on the campus, where we learned for the first time to be men of action and of strength; where we learned the quality of self-control, learned to bear the brunt of many hard-fought game and to meet the sting of defeat with a smile. Well do we remember our class-rooms, where, more often than not we dreamed of a fine spring day, of what we should do when time had made us men. And well, too, do we remember our college chapel. Here, in the quiet of the morning, did we come to offer to our Creator, for His honor and glory, the work of the coming day. To this silent refuge from the cares of the life outside did we again return at noon and at night, "to praise Him for the blessings of the day, and to implore His protection for the night to come." It is neither to the campus nor to the class-room that we shall owe whatever fortune shall be ours. We have been shaped already, and the place of our shaping was our Chapel.

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And a like silence in regard to provincial politics has fallen upon the sweet-toned organ of the government. Upon all such matters it is now as mute as the harp of Tara. But a short time ago it was spreading broadcast over the land its political propaganda in double column editorials and members' speeches—17 columns for Premier Bell and 20 columns for Mr. Lea, as it boasted—with proportionate space given to the lesser lights of the party. Now the big lights and the little lights political seem alike forgotten and obscured, the voices of the big guns and the little guns are no longer heard and as for provincial politics, the name is as much out of mind as the meteor that flashed unnoticed in the distant past.

The silence of the Liberal organ is the more noticeable from the fact that there are several important and timely subjects for discussion and also from the fact that is every day discussing other matters to the exclusion of these. There are, for instance, those by-elections for the five seats now vacant for six or eight months, seats that were vacant during the entire length of the recent legislative session. Surely this is not a matter of small importance in a province where we are supposed to have representative government. The people are asking when these elections shall be held, why the long delay? but to all such questions the organ is mute as the proverbial oyster.

Of us must travel alone that road of life which he has chosen. It is no easy life that lies before us. There are temptations, there are discouragements, which must be met and overcome. It may be that some of us will fall by the roadside, stricken by the plague of the flesh, or lured from our pathway of truth by the call of the world. It may be that some of us will deny those very things which here we love and cherish. Perhaps, and perhaps not. We have our own lives before us, to make of them what we will. We know what is right, we know what is true. We are now men, strong and purposeful. If we remember the lessons which we have learned at St. Dunstan's, if we adhere to what we have here discovered to be the great and the noble things of life, we cannot fail — we cannot fail. Farewell.

Valedictory

BY R. D. HOWATT

Read at St. Dunstan's University Commencement Exercises, May 31st.

My Lord, Your Grace, Reverend Rector, Your Honor, Your Worship, Reverend Fathers and Gentlemen of the Faculty, Fellow Students, Ladies and Gentlemen:

In the attainment of any goal we experience both a consummation and a change. The consummation, bringing with it the cessation of effort relative to that goal and the realization of long-cherished hopes, is the climax of some certain period in our lives, and is in itself an object of joy. But the ensuing change, if it be from stable, certain, and peaceful conditions to a vague and insecure order of things, cannot fail to be attended by sorrow.

Today we, the graduates of 1921-1922, have attained the goal for which we have long been striving. Today we arrive at the second milestone of our lives. Our hopes are realized. And yet, we cannot say that we are happy. We are beset by mutually conflicting emotions. We realize today that we must leave our hitherto happy home, to take our place as citizens of the world. Today we must break the ties of friendship formed by our long association here. Today we must step from the realms of sheltered imagination into the realms of reality.

During the past few months there was not one of this class who did not at some time pray that this day would speedily arrive. There is not one of us but longed for it with eager longing, bewailing perhaps the seeming sluggishness of time.

The day has arrived. The day has arrived, and we are powerless to prevent its passing. We can but snatch a few moments from the fast-flowing stream of time to pay our final respects, as best we may, to our Alma Mater, our Loving Mother, who has trained us, developed us, labored for us, and sacrificed for us, that through her our journey through life might be crowned with success.

Success does not come unsought; nor does it come to those who are unprepared for it. To insure our success, our Alma Mater has endowed us with the two essential means for its attainment, the one preparing us for the success of the spirit, for happiness, the other for the success of the world; Faith and Knowledge.

We have been privileged to drink from the fountain of knowledge; to imbibe those truths, which, stimulating and strengthening the mind, fit the student to take an eminent place in whatever profession he may choose. But education means more than the mere training of the intellect. The will also must be developed.

Alma Mater realizes that man is an animal redoubtable alike for his passions and for his reason. His passions if unchecked, direct him to great evils; his reason, a double-edged tool, too often supplies him with the means for the attainment of these evils. To train this animal, to discipline his actions, to instill in him the principles of justice and of virtue, to fashion him for society and to insure the salvation of his soul, can not be accomplished by knowledge alone. Reason is insufficient, inadequate to so great a task. The human reason may be thoroughly developed; knowledge of every description may be accumulated; intellect, memory, social inclinations, all may be cultivated with great success, but the heart would still be a waste space, as dry as earth without water; and the will, that dangerous faculty, if left undisciplined and unguided by a light far superior to that which reason alone can furnish, would be liable to become the scourge of its possessor and the bane of society.

The light which reason alone

There are moments of life which we never forget, which brighten and brighten as time steals away; They give a new charm to the happiest lot, and they shine on the gloom of the loneliest day.

Well do we remember the friendly contests on the campus, where we learned for the first time to be men of action and of strength; where we learned the quality of self-control, learned to bear the brunt of many hard-fought game and to meet the sting of defeat with a smile. Well do we remember our class-rooms, where, more often than not we dreamed of a fine spring day, of what we should do when time had made us men. And well, too, do we remember our college chapel. Here, in the quiet of the morning, did we come to offer to our Creator, for His honor and glory, the work of the coming day. To this silent refuge from the cares of the life outside did we again return at noon and at night, "to praise Him for the blessings of the day, and to implore His protection for the night to come." It is neither to the campus nor to the class-room that we shall owe whatever fortune shall be ours. We have been shaped already, and the place of our shaping was our Chapel.

The time has come for us to depart. We must now sever the ties that have to the present held us together. Reluctantly we now bid farewell to those who have assisted us during our life here.

Beloved Rector, Reverend Fathers and Gentlemen of the Faculty: The gladiators of old, when they were about to enter the combat of the arena, greeted their masters, the emperor, with the words, "We who are about to die, salute you." Today we are about to enter the great combat of life, not to die, but, through your instruction and through your example, to learn rightly to live, salute you. You have taught us much. You have taught us what is true and what is noble. You have furnished us with the armor necessary for our battle with the world. For years we have been your care, helpless without you. Now, as we go under your guiding hand, we have but one wish, to wish for you, one prayer

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And there are our claims against those western lands. What is being done, or to be done, to recover those claims? It is nearly three years now since the Bell Government had charge of this matter. Once last year the premier wrote a letter to the premier of Nova Scotia on the subject. Are we to let it go at that? Just write a letter and drop the subject? The same course has been pursued in regard to getting mussel mud from Richmond Bay to make good for the closure of the plant at Midgell. The premier wrote a letter! Two letters, no doubt, involve some effort on the part of the writer, but they effected nothing; they have brought the people no money and the farmers no mud. And ministers and their mouthpiece are alike silent on the subject.

We submit that these matters are important and timely, quite as much so as the publication of 38 columns of the speeches of Messrs. Bell and Lea, which ignored those subjects during the session as their mouthpiece ignores them now. The by-elections are long overdue and not a single Liberal candidate yet nominated for one of the five seats. Both the government and the people want that claim money. The farmers want fertilizer for their fields and they want it now. All that the people have got so far to supply these three urgent needs is those two fruitless letters written by Premier Bell. And Mr. Fielding has done about as much for the potato growers!

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