

*Your Service to
Mankind*

BRYANT COLLEGE

Providence



Rhode Island

Address to Graduates at the 81st Commencement
of
Bryant College, Providence, Rhode Island
by
Henry L. Jacobs, President

YOUR SERVICE TO MANKIND

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Guests, Parents, Friends, and Members of the Graduating Class.

Two classes of graduates meet in memory today—you who are here in person to receive your degrees and diplomas, and those of our young men who are facing the fury of war. Over four hundred of our present student body and hundreds of our alumni have answered their Country's Call.

We give pause to reach out to them in thought with a prayer on our lips and in our hearts for their protection, hoping that most of them will be spared and permitted to return to finish where they left off, and to enjoy the normal pursuits of life. Some have already made the supreme sacrifice and will never come back. No engrossed parchment—no verbal tribute can honor them enough.

Only in the sensitive insight into their self-abnegation, the disciplined character to meet problems, and the conscious action to overcome future trials sure to arise, can we show ourselves deserving, in part, of their sacrifice.

Is it possible for us to hear of the great catastrophes of our day, to see the cruel results of organized barbarism, to suffer losses of human companionship, and still go on our way wrapped in thought of our own petty concerns and conceits? If so, it were better we had not lived in this heroic period which calls for maturity of thought, magnanimity of spirit, and unselfish action greater than any generation has been called upon to give.

None of you is too young or too insignificant in the scheme of things that you cannot meet the responsibilities of your age. You can help in many ways to enlarge the circle of influence to help better conditions among mankind.

What do we live for if not to be kind and helpful to one another?

You are not alone. You are one of a family group—you will be one of an office group—you will be one in a community, a state, a nation, and the sum total of citizens of a nation will be one among many nations.

A strong civilization cannot be built upon shoddy individuals. Face the facts of your day by bearing responsibilities bravely, honestly, and self-reliantly.

Up to this time you have had the protection of parents, the wise advice and counsel of your teachers, and the higher training in business offered by your College, all helping to give direction and meaning to your future.

On true knowledge, acquired skills, strong character and a brave soul will depend what you want to do—what you want to be—where you want to go in life. Have the vision that sees beyond material possessions, fleeting successes, and creature comforts and amusements.

Your absent classmates are giving up everything they possess, even life itself, that you may continue to live in peace. You may escape the violence of war, the physical suffering, the permanent handicaps, but you cannot escape the responsibilities that must be borne.

From henceforth make each day an act of consecration to your fellow man, your Country, and your God by thinking honestly, acting truthfully, and meeting defeats and victories like our soldiers in battle with a faith firm and strong to carry on to the end.

My best wishes go out to you and your parents on this day. We at Bryant College will watch your progress through life and our proudest moment will be when we hear that you are living up to your highest ideals and meriting the rewards of peace so dearly earned by your absent classmates.

Remembering them always, you will not fail them. Emulate their valor and courage in thought, word, and deed as a daily practice.

We are striving in our economic world to share a larger measure of the world's wealth. Far more important is to share good will and harmony of thought in our social world. We can deny ourselves much of what the world offers in luxuries and pastimes, but our debt of gratitude to our defenders in the Army, Navy, and in the air is an obligation that must be met in order to deserve the peace for which they are struggling.

Let gratitude be your watchword in your service to mankind.