

What can I say as a parting word to the Class of June '38, for whom I have a real affection? I should be bitterly ashamed to have to fall down in your eyes and to say as Dr. Butler is quoted as having said at the recent Columbia graduation: "Can it be possible that Spengler was right when he told the world some twenty years ago that the decline of the West was obvious and certain? Must the coming generation accept a situation in which Democracy through feebleness, lack of moral courage, and want of efficiency becomes 'the spectator of its own tragedy rather than the hero of its own destiny' "?

When men are well on in years, they sometimes feel out of step with the times. To them the "times are out of joint" while actually they have lost touch with the times. Yes, and I venture to say it, if Dr. Butler believes this, he too, is out of date. To get up and suggest defeatism to you young people, the great hope of the land, is a sign of futility. Dr. Butler and his kind may be defeated; I assure you that you are not.

This year as class after class of graduates have sat on the edges of their seats, thinking of their futures, jobs, homes, the thrill of living, it has become fashionable for stuffy oldsters to tell them that all is hopeless, that they are a lost generation. What pat words these are! And what do they mean? You are not lost. Only those who have no message for you are lost.

There have been so-called lost generations before. I belong to a previous lost generation. It is a rare privilege that I should address you, for those who called us lost almost two decades ago, are still doing most of the speech making. Ours was the lost generation following the Great War. Our young people were supposedly lost in an orgy of riotous loving and living, stimulated by bath-tub gin, with F. Scott Fitzgerald as our soothsayer. Certainly the war uprooted our lives.

We were thrown into violent upheaval and the very surface phenomena of our release from a shady Victorianism was mistaken for our inability to adjust to a changing world. However, I promise you that we did adjust, as young people usually do, and we settled down to our homes and children, our careers and jobs. We are more critical and less set than our predecessors, but we are bearing our share of the burdens of the community. We are not lost; it is those who failed to understand and help us who are lost.

And now they turn their attention to you and are calling you a lost generation. While the Great War supposedly upset our equilibrium, the Great Depression is said to have upset yours. I want to assure you it has permanently upset only those who do the speech-making, not you. You will no more be

lost than we were. You may have to wait a bit longer for your homes and jobs but you will have them.

Over 100 years ago, the first four women graduated from Oberlin College. This Spring, Hunter alone is graduating more than 900 students. There is a great future for women. There is a great future for you. Being strong, hopeful and courageous, you will create new opportunities for yourselves and will replace those who have lost hope. They are the real lost generation, lost in the ideology preceding the Great War.

What you have to do above all, is what that pre-war generation has failed to do. You must adjust to a changing world. And the world is changing and has changed before. In the late 18th century, revolution against autocracy ran around the world. America freed herself from tyranny. France followed suit. Democracy became the order of the day. And this movement was supplemented in the middle of the 19th century by a great movement for individual liberty. You had the Chartists in England; Garibaldi in Italy, and the uprisings in Germany which sent Carl Schurz and many others to America.

Now you are seeing collectivism surge through the world. Communism in Russia and Fascism in Italy are but different manifestations of the same collective trend. The emphasis is on groups rather than on individuals. Collectivism can take vastly different forms in different countries, depending on the fundamental objectives of each community. Its influence has obviously spread in this country. But do not fear; there is small sign of tyranny here. You must learn to take the new factors in your stride. I believe that it is the inability to accept change which is causing havoc today.

And so I see for you, friends and graduates of '38, a world of hope, a world not of decline but with a future. You will live in a community more or less conditioned to collectivism, but a free and democratic America. You will still be in control of your own destinies, having learned to adjust in an ever-changing world.

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From: Anna Steese Richardson,
Talk to the 1938 Graduates,
Hunter College,
June 15, 1938

FACING A FEW FACTS OF LIFE

President Colligan and the faculty of Hunter College:

I congratulate you on having completed another year of service to the City of New York and its young women.

To the parents of the 1938 graduates I extend my warmest felicitations. From experience I know that this is a great day in your lives. For some of you it ends a long period of personal sacrifice and self-denial. But ^{all} that is behind you and today, as you look at these girls whose education you have made possible, there is in your hearts only the joy of realization. For no matter what ^{you} parents may achieve in a business or a profession, no matter what ^{you} we may produce through manual toil or creative thought, nothing can compare in value to society with your clear-seeing, clear-thinking daughters. Bone of your bone, flesh of your flesh, these graduates are your ^{finest contribution to} ~~reward for whatever their education may have cost you, and~~ ^{It} the City of New York, owes you a heavy debt for seeing them through Hunter College.

And now to you, the graduates of 1938, I offer congratulations on having finished your course at the largest college for women in the world and one whose standards have never been lowered by its continuous and unprecedented growth. But more than congratulations, I owe you a debt of gratitude for the privilege of standing before you today as a woman with a message.

When your Mr. Chase, as an old friend of our magazine, asked me to speak here today I told him that it was impossible. I had never spoken

at a college commencement; I had not graduated from a college or university, and the only degree I have ever received is an honorary one, in recognition of my services to business. I could not possibly bring to you such a message as ~~you deserve~~ as you have earned at the hands of a master mind in education or in world affairs. My Alma Mater is the Normal School of Philadelphia, and I am a working woman.

But Mr. Chase laughed off my confession of academic shortcomings. And when he informed me that I had been invited to speak, not by the president and the faculty of Hunter College, but by your votes as the members of Senior Class, well, that was a different story. Wild horses couldn't have kept me from accepting your invitation. My first impulse was to meet some of your class leaders and learn first-hand what sort of a message I could bring to you on this, one of the most significant days of your life. But you were all cramming for your finals, and I was making a speaking trip for the Crowell Publishing Company in the great middle west. So instead, I interviewed prospective graduates in Chicago, in Minneapolis, in Nashville, in Kansas City, ~~in Philadelphia~~. What problems of the immediate future were heaviest on their minds? ~~But~~ I learned about you from those young men and women in our sister states. And I made the astonishing discovery that your problems today are exactly the problems that vexed me when I received my diploma fifty-three years ago.

Like you, I wanted to live fully, richly, to have a career of my own choosing, and to be happy. I faced the same obstacles, even greater ones, than you are facing today. I had the same bitter disappointments that you will meet in your upward climb. But you will find that obstacles and disappointments develop the strength of character, the tenacity and the persistency that make for success.

Yes, I can hear some of you whisper to each other, "Oh, but when

she went to work there were jobs for everybody." Were there? No!

In those days being a woman was a ^{real} handicap. Employers spurned us. Men,

^{were our} ~~fellows~~ workers viewed us with suspicion and resentment. As a pioneer newspaper reporter, I ^{was} remember being snubbed by my neighbors. I couldn't possibly

be respectable and run around ^{with the} calling on men as I did. One of my classmates at the Philadelphia Normal School was the daughter of a man who

owned a prosperous business college, which was training young men to use typewriters, - then a novelty in the business world. When his

daughter announced that she would open classes in her father's business school to girls, the entire faculty of the Philadelphia Normal School tossed her into outer darkness. She was about to lead nice girls astray

in the ^{the business} world. Of course a few aged, withered spinsters served as clerks in retail stores, but with them it was stand behind a counter

or starve. They had no ambitions to become buyers, or stylists, or copywriters in the advertising department. ~~Every pioneer in the business~~

world fought, bled and ^{or} sometimes had nervous prostration. There were times when only my sense of humor saved me and kept me at work. (I recall

~~that soon after I achieved the post of associate editor of Women's Home~~

~~Companion, and was mighty proud of it, I visited a wealthy and - I might~~

~~as well admit it - snobbish relative in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. And~~

~~Pittsburgh is at once the ugliest and most snobbish city in America.~~

~~While I was dressing for a dinner party, my aunt entered my room, coughing~~

~~apologetically: "Now, Anna dear", said she, "please don't mention your~~

~~work tonight, will you? None of my friends have daughters who work for their living."~~)

Obstacles? All kinds - professional, social, domestic.

But what of you girls? You can glory in your right and your ability to

work. Your families will encourage you; your friends will congratulate you, and if you get a job you'll be the envy of all your associates. The right to work in any chosen line is yours. ^{companion} Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. ^{if you can get the job.} A phrase as old as our country, as vital as it was in 1776 - as it is today and it will be tomorrow and always.

Then consider our respective preparation for living and working. We of the graduating class of 1885 had no practical education for living. Our physical education was limited to what were known as the Delsarte exercises. We wore baggy bloomers where you wear snappy shorts, and those bloomers typified our education for living. There were no courses in hygiene, or home economics, in the handling of money, budgeting, or buying. We ~~learned how to cook, but~~ we were taught nothing about diet and its effects on the human body. We had no extra-curricular groups for guidance in meeting modern conditions and adjusting ourselves to the social body. We ^{had} had no forums in which to hear discussions of economic or social conditions. ~~If there were international relations, we never heard of them.~~ Primarily, we were trained to be teachers who would train more girls to be teachers. To teach, ^{but} not to live. And you have ~~everything~~ ^{all of them} - all the rights and the liberties and the social opportunities that we, the pioneer business women, ^{earned} ~~had to win~~ for you. You have in your hands the knowledge and the opportunities which should lead to the abundant life.

Yes, I know what you are thinking. Where are the jobs? How do we get a start? What door will open to us? I can't tell you that. I can only say that today the job goes always to the exceptional girl, not to the average girl. And that most jobs are made by the girls ^{themselves} ~~themselves~~. May I give you one instance? Two years ago a young woman graduated from a famous college of home economics. She couldn't secure a post as

teacher nor as home economics director in a food factory. ^{But} She read an advertisement. A business woman wanted an expert housekeeper to take over her home and two children. The graduate without a job answered the advertisement. ^{Ans} For two years she has managed the business woman's home; she did the buying for the family, she hired and fired the day workers who helped her. Because she was a fine dietitian, the children thrived under her care, and being a teacher instead of a mother, she ^ltaught them their manners. She found her job so exciting and so satisfying that she did not weep over her lost career, but she did what most of us have to do if we ever run a home, she developed a sense of humor. Last week she married a fine man who was a frequent visitor at the home she managed. I cannot say how much her splendid management of that home influenced the ^{his} man's proposal, but she has entered upon the career that God meant her for - a wife and mother. I can't wish any of you a more abundant life than that!

One day, at a luncheon, I was relating my difficulties in securing a gardener. I mentioned ^{that} our neighborhood could boast a dozen boys of high school age who spend hours playing ball and hanging round the corner drugstore, but I couldn't get one of them to cut my grass or weed my flower-beds. As we were leaving a young girl stepped up to me and said, "I love gardens. I'd love to work in yours. Perhaps if I wore overalls or slacks your neighbors wouldn't notice I was a girl."

Well, that girl is on the staff of a house and garden magazine today. If you want to live, find work that you love and then throw yourself into it, body and soul.

~~Another girl came to see me, bearing a letter of introduction that I could not ignore. She had been out of work three months. She had been private secretary to one of the executives to a firm that had~~

failed. She had excellent recommendations. I really couldn't understand why, even with times what they are, she couldn't get a job. In the jargon of the office woman, I asked: "Haven't you had any 'nibbles' at all?" "Yes", she answered, "at fifteen dollars a week, but I'm not going to drop from fifty dollars a week to fifteen without making a fight. I can't live on fifteen dollars a week."

"Well, how long will your savings last?" I asked.

"Oh, they melted long ago. My father and mother are helping me."

I learned that her mother and father live upstate, while she lives in Greenwich Village, waiting for a fifty-dollar a week job. And this in spite of the fact that there are no fifty-dollar-a-week jobs for any new the employee today. That girl is headed for W.P.A or relief rolls. A)

Possibly salaries for beginners have not been so low in years as they are today--and this in spite of minimum wage laws and labor legislation. Be prepared to take whatever is offered to you, may be ready and eager, because if you have special qualifications, these will be recognized by any business firm. And don't think that beginners are offered minimum salaries because it is the year 1938. Except during the lamented golden years of the late 20's, when money was all too easy for the good of any nation, when practically every woman received more than she was worth, beginners have always been poorly paid.

*Beginners have always seen jumps
fairly.*

If you knew the business history of women who have attained leadership in their respective lines, women whose positions you envy, you would be stunned by their humble beginnings, the salaries at which they started.

How many of you have heard Martha Deane and Mary Margaret McBride on your radio? Well, they are one and the same girl. And she's tops in the broadcasting world. No other woman can touch her for popularity and income.

Not so long ago, Mary Margaret was working her way through the University of Missouri as a reporter on a local newspaper at \$10.00 a week. Next she became a feature writer on the Cleveland Press. When she received an offer from New York at less money, she jumped at it because New York was the city of her dreams. But in eight months that job vanished and Mary Margaret was stranded. So she turned stunt reporter, doing all sorts of daring things at which other women writers quailed.

When the depression came, newspapers folded up and magazine editors stopped buying stories. Undaunted, Mary Margaret McBride looked for a ~~new~~ ^{different kind of} job. She followed up twenty-seven prospects; the twenty-eighth was an audition in a local broadcasting studio. Mary Margaret had found an opening in a new field for women, and Martha Deane was born.

In 1936 Miss McBride won the award offered by the Women's Exposition of Arts and Industries for the outstanding contribution to radio. This year the Women's National Radio Committee voted her the most popular woman on the air, and the University of Missouri presented her with a medal for distinguished services to journalism.

Yes, hers is what is scornfully called a success story, but strangely enough her story can be duplicated a hundred times in this city. And it can be re-lived by you if you will decide upon the work for which you are best suited and then go after it with all of your energy, initiative and faith.

How many of you have read "Fashion is Spinach", by Elizabeth Hawes? Elizabeth ~~Hawes~~ was born in a town just across the Hudson River.

*To design American fashions
-8- for American women.*

At the age of nine she sewed on her own clothes. At twelve she did her first professional dressmaking for a small shop. While at Vassar, she spent one whole vacation as apprentice in the dressmaking department of Bergdorf-Goodman. Do you imagine that was fun--or even well paid ?

Then she worked as a sketcher and as a fashion reporter in Paris and New York. She was stylist for this store and that. Today she is the only American designer of clothes who holds an annual opening comparable to the openings held by the world-famous coutourieres of Paris.

She succeeded because she believed she was born to
Mary Brooks Picken, now a stockholder in the G. Lynn Sumner Advertising Agency, and one of the founders of the Fashion Group, started on a Kansas farm, sewing carpet rags for her grandmother. She went hungry in Kansas City and in New York to equip herself as a teacher of home dressmaking. Eventually she founded the Women's Institute of Household Arts, a correspondence school in Scranton, Pennsylvania. New York called her-- and why ? Because she believed that she was born to teach women how to make attractive clothes, and to enjoy making them.

You--each one of you--has a special gift, the thing you were born to do. Have four years at Hunter College helped you to find out what that is ?

While she was still in school, Gertrude Battles Lane, the editor of Woman's Home Companion, decided that some day she would edit a magazine. She started in a Boston publishing house at a salary of eight dollars a week. When she had worked up to twenty a week, she received an offer of eighteen from a New York editor. She didn't hesitate an instant. She left the comfortable home of her parents in Boston to live meagerly in a stuffy New York apartment. But she never pitied herself. She and her ambition were going places.

Twenty-five years ago she was made the editor of Woman's Home Companion. Today she is the only woman editor of a magazine with a national circulation. She is not only one of the most influential women in the publishing world, but one of the wealthiest.

She believed that she was born to be an editor. Do you know what you were born to be ?

As a child I believed I could write. My teachers agreed with me, but public opinion prevented my taking a job as reporter when I graduated. I became a newspaper woman only after I had married and achieved liberty. My husband believed that I could write, but I had to start as a society reporter, at \$5.00 a week, in Council Bluffs, Iowa.

Perhaps this explains why I subscribe to the modern idea that a girl should hold her job after she marries, if she so desires^s. In some cases only the double earnings make marriage possible and the mutual problems of husband and wife in the business world often forge strong ties of understanding, sympathy and affection.

Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. And the greatest of these is the right to work according to your qualifications, to do the thing for which you are best suited and which you yearn to do.

To appreciate this statement you must travel abroad as I have, studying not architecture, or memorials or palaces or cathedrals, but people. I wish that some multi-millionaire--if we have any left in this country--would send the whole \$60 of you to Europe before you begin to work for your living. You would return with a new perspective on these United States of America. You would burn with patriotism, with faith in your country.

During the past ten years it has become increasingly fashionable--or if you will, popular--to cast aspersions on our government, our finan-

cial system, our business institutions. But in Europe you would learn quickly whether any country on the other side of the Atlantic offers you the same opportunities for self-expression, for the abundant life, that you enjoy right here. You would soon discover what regimentation does to individuality, what totalitarianism does to intelligence and ambition. At Hunter College you have been educated to think freely, to reason and to base your actions on your conclusions as an individual. Under any form of totalitarianism your education would be wasted for you would have no opportunity to think or to reason. Only the dictators and their advisers are permitted to think.

What is your idea of freedom. To defy the police in a town like Yonkers by walking the streets in shorts and a halter? That is cheap exhibitionism. To leave the home of your parents and live in a one-room apartment in Greenwich Village; to live your own life, as you call it? That is sheer selfishness. It merely proves your inability or your unwillingness to adjust yourselves to the lives of others. It is unsocial. To flout marriage as an institution? That is pure folly, ^{well} and bravado, for marriage is your only protection against the selfish desires ^{of} ~~and~~ unscrupulous ~~men~~ men. Irregular relations are not liberty. They forge shackles around the woman's life and let the man go free.

(In his new book, "Our Country, Our People and Theirs", M. E. Tracy makes this statement: "While resulting from different causes and claiming to seek different objectives, all forms of totalitarianism have certain features in common. All of them rest on the one-party system; all are intolerant of adverse ideas; all strive to prevent the expression of such ideas by outlawing groups and activities that might be used as media; all employ unified and more or less secret police forces; all find it necessary to invoke censorship and other repressive measures; all tend

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toward the concentration of authority, and all regard disloyalty to the one established party as treason to the State." Under totalitarianism, what you and I accept as commonplace conveniences in America are unattainable for the average citizen. We complain of the congested traffic on Sunday or on a holiday because in the United States practically all of us ride in automobiles, buses, trucks, something that moves. In Germany, under Hitlerism, one rides and ten talk, mostly in goosestep. In Italy, under Fascism, one person rides while twenty walk. In Russia, 150 walk to one who rides.)

Here We may have unemployment. We may have a large underprivileged class. We may have injustice. We may have unscrupulous employers and dishonest public officials, but we are still a free people.

Two weeks ago, in Atlantic City, I attended the annual convention of the New York State Federation of Women's Clubs. As I ~~wandered from conference to conference~~, I heard those club women condemn almost everything that met with their disapproval--billboards that interfered with the beauty of the landscape, the advertising of liquors and cigarettes, this law and that which are under consideration in Congress. Even the President himself did not escape. They criticised his wife's clothes and his children's manners, and they laughed gleefully at any story that lampooned a government official.

Well, what would have happened to those women in Italy, Germany, Russia? In Russia, let two or three women gather in conversation and a spy, a neighbor, even a member of their own family, may carry a tale to the police which will land them in jail. In Italy certain families would find themselves short a wife and mother. In Germany, the population of concentration camps would show ^{for naked} an increase of ~~several hundred women~~.

Here In America we women, in particular, undervalue the liberty into which we

have been born. Perhaps education has developed skepticism and sophistication. Then your problem is to keep skepticism and sophistication within bounds; to look for that which is good in the American system, government, business and living; to preserve what is good and to weed out what is wrong. If democracy has its weaknesses, you have the education and the power to strengthen it. Forty thousand or more young men and women will graduate from colleges and universities in the United States this month, and whether you believe it or not, you have the power to correct any evils that exist here today. ^{Any} But you won't correct them by tearing down a system which has served a nation well for a century and a half. If democracy is weakening, it is your task to rebuild it, to reconstruct it.

Many of you girls can trace your ancestors back to the founders of New York. Have you ever stopped to think why they came here? Some of them to escape political or religious persecution. Some of them to establish themselves in a business or a profession from which they were barred by caste in their native land. Some of them because they believed that here they would be free to raise their children according to their own plans and desires, to give them an education and a social position which they could never attain in the old country. For you they risked untold dangers, endured incredible privations. They built this country, they built this government, and they have left it all to you -- not to destroy, but to support as a monument to their memory.

Many of you are the daughters of those who in more recent years migrated to this country to escape pogroms and persecutions that can be compared only to those in the days of Nero and the Christian martyrs. Your forefathers dreamed of you as free, living your lives in safety,

carrying on their names, helping to build good government. Do you propose to support ^{any} an ideology which will destroy forever the realization of those dreams? Totalitarianism means concentration camps, firing squads at dawn, and pogroms.

America is not perfect. We have scoundrels here, murderers, kidnapers, absconders, political bosses, but we the people still have the right to dispose of them as we will. We still have the right to work where and when we will, if we can get it to do. We ^{may} still make profits in business. Private enterprise still exists to stimulate effort, to ~~offer rewards to individual effort~~. In spite of unemployment, long relief rolls and uncertainty about the future, we are today the most fortunate people in the world. We have the highest health rate and the lowest death rate, the most comfortable homes, the best food, ^{and} the highest standard of living, ~~the widest opportunities for abundant living~~.

The population of the United States is not more than 7% of the whole world's population, yet we have nearly as much purchasing power as all of Europe. ~~We harvest nearly half of the foodstuffs consumed by the world, and we have 31% of its railroad mileage. We use half of the world's electrical energy and we own more than 40% of the world's wealth. We extract 50% of the world's minerals from our hills and we produce 74% of all the trucks and passenger cars manufactured in the world. Half of the world's consumption of coffee is drunk in the United States, and we Americans consume 50% of the world's rubber, 61% of its petroleum and 3/4 of its silk. Best of all, in 1934 we spent on free education in the United States \$2,500,000,000 - \$1,500,000,000 more than all the rest of the world put together.~~

~~These can be counted as material advantages.~~ Politically,

economically, socially we may have made mistakes, but show me a nation which has done a better job for its people.

Where would you rather live than in the United States of America ?

And now may I speak to you from actual experience, from a rich and satisfying life ?

Two months ago I celebrated my 73rd birthday. More than forty of those years ^{cl} have been spent in close contact with American business men - the men on whose enterprise most of you must depend for ^{your jobs} ~~employment~~. And I have found them fundamentally honest and just. My faith in the American business man is a precious inheritance.

Always I have lived and worked among pioneers. My great grandfather was scalped and murdered by Indians as he traveled from Pennsylvania to the Western Reserve. His wife and children carried on.

His eldest son, my grandfather, established the first large tannery in Stark County, Ohio. There he tanned ^{fine} ~~honest~~ leather for ^{honest} ~~individual~~ shoemakers to use.

His eldest son, my father, established in Philadelphia one of the first factories for making shoes by machinery, cheaper shoes, good shoes for more people to wear. And as they built honest business so they helped to build churches, schools, hospitals.

As a bride I lived in a one-room cabin on government land in southern Colorado. There I watched valiant, determined men dig ditches for an irrigation system which transformed a desert into waving fields of wheat, rye and alfalfa. When I came to New York in 1900 I said, "My pioneering days are over." But they were not.

In three rooms of a shabby office building overlooking Madison Square, I started to work for Woman's Home Companion. For 35 years I

Address made by Mrs. Theodore Simis, President Associate
Alumnae of Hunter College, at Commencement Exercises
held at Carnegie Hall, Wednesday, June 15, 1938.

Dr. Colligan, Members of the Board of Higher Education, Honored Guests, Members of the Staff, Friends of Hunter College, and Graduates:-

The privilege of addressing you today is indeed a happy one, because I bring to you from thousands of Hunter's older daughters ^S messages of congratulations, best wishes, and a cordial invitation - to join with us in our work for Alma Mater. For four years this has been your home. For four years you have been guided, encouraged, and instructed carefully, conscientiously, earnestly. You have grown mentally and spiritually. In return, Hunter asks nothing of you but that you lead upright lives, be useful citizens, and loyal daughters. The thousands who have gone before you, have built for Hunter a solid foundation of excellent scholarship, citizenship, uprightness, and devotion. On each of you falls the responsibility of ^T strengthening this foundation. Join with us therefore in building for Hunter an even better and finer college.

I bring you also best wishes for your happiness, God-speed, and success. I say success with some misgiving, but I am using the word in its finer sense. When, a year from now, you review the past months and take an inventory of your accomplishments, let the following suggestions be the measures of your success and progress:-

Remember that it matters little how much money you made;- the important point is, ~~what did you do with it~~ to what use did you put it? Was it used for some good?

Remember, that it is not important to know how popular you were, or how many telephone calls you received,- think instead of what you said when you made those calls. Were you understanding, open-minded, unprejudiced, helpful? Remember, also, that it matters little what profession you chose, because each in its own way contributes to progress-but it matters much how faithfully and joyously you performed that task. You will get out of life only what you put into it.

May you therefore find the greatest happiness in each day, making the most of every moment, enjoying every task.

Robert W. Service expresses this most effectively in his poem "The Spell of the Yukon" when he says:-

(after having achieved his goal and riches)

" It isnt the gold that I'm wanting,"

" So much as just finding the gold."

" Its the great big broad land way up yonder"

" Where silence alone has its sway "

" Its the beauty that fills me with wonder "

" Its the silence that fills me with peace. "

My wish for you is that you may find happiness, not in gold, but in your search for gold. May you find in nature's beauty and silence, a peace and freedom within your own lives.

Remarks of Greeting
from
Board of Higher Education
at Hunter College Commencement
by

Ordway Tead, Chairman

Members of the Class of 1938:

At this occasion which marks a definite turning point in your lives, I am here to convey the good wishes of the Board which is charged by this City to oversee Hunter College. I am glad of the opportunity to do this - to wish you well as you shift from being taught by teachers to being taught by life; as you change from learning out of books to learning from the chaotic experiences of living.

But I would be a blind well-wisher if in an era like ours I left our greetings as solely wishful. That is too easy - too easy for me and too misleading for you. I must in all honesty add to my felicitations a brief word of comment. And this I do knowing full well that advice is cheap, is usually unsought, and is as often as not the gratuitous gesture of exhibitionism on the part of those who find it easier to advise than to act! With this realization that advice is not what you - or any of us - usually want, I shall disguise my advice as merely comments!

I wonder if you have heard of the Brazilian sailing vessel which ran out of drinking water 150 miles off the mouth of the Amazon River. The captain hailed a warship which signalled back to him "Let down your buckets where you are." Those on the sailing vessel were shocked at such heartless advice, and they repeated their request for fresh water. The same answer came back again and yet again. Finally in desperation they let down their buckets; tasted the water and found it fresh. It seems that the great force and flow of the Amazon River thrusts far out to sea so that the freshness of the water is not yet diluted

at that great distance. They found what they sought right where they were.

The point of this anecdote for us is obvious. In the next few months you all have the difficult task of fitting in; of finding a toe hold, a niche, in which you are to function as a person. This task may well prove heart-breaking. I have no desire to make it sound easy. You and I know that the facts are otherwise. For each of you to find a vocation, a job, a career, an opportunity - which will be distinctively yours - this is never easy; what is doubly heard in this recession or depression - or as someone has facetiously called it this Repression.

For some of you, by choice or note, this fitting in may temporarily have to be done in your own home, where the job of home management is in your mother's hands, and where she may with reluctance allow you a share in it.

Others of you may find jobs which are not to your taste, which do not seem to offer scope for what you know are your real powers. Still others of you may find - at least temporarily - that you just don't know what to do.

May I remind you that there are two broad ways in which these situations can be approached. They can be approached grudgingly, reluctantly, indifferently. Your attitude can say, "I'm too good for this kind of thing; I'll just go through the motions nominally."

Or your opportunities - even if only for seeming idleness - can be approached eagerly, wholeheartedly, with determination to put in your best and get out of it the best that you can; you can toy with the next thing that comes to hand to do; or you can do it to the hilt.

Indeed, to the hilt, are the key words I leave with you.

The secret of effective living is not obscure. The door to personal achievement ~~and mastery~~ is not a hard one to unlock. It is to do the next job to the hilt. Mastery and the striving for mastery are themselves satisfying. To be uniquely creative is to live - in the best sense. The joy is always in the effort, - in one's best effort. The reward or the result - these are not for us ^{you will} to determine. But the process of striving is what we all do have control over.

And that process has its own superlative value.

The subtle danger is in dabbling, in being an amateur, in not committing yourself wholly to what lies next to be done.

But, you ask - if I can't find a job how can I be uniquely creative? - Or if I find an uncongenial job, how can I be distinctive at it?

I answer - if there is no job, make of your leisure a creative opportunity.

^{or} If the job you get is not ideal, do it anyway to extract all it can offer you of ^{new} experience and insight. And then, too, make your avocational life count uniquely.

Your college has done less for you than it should, if in the event of your finding yourself really idle next fall, you cannot capitalize ^{productively} on that free time for your own and the world's good.

You can capitalize on it if you have this attitude I speak of. Choose a line of activity and do it to the hilt! But choose; stick to it; master it. I care not whether it's needle-point, writing poetry, doing volunteer social or civic work, helping your mother make pies or setting your cap effectively for what I believe is called "the boy friend."

Do it heartily, do it without reservations, do it ^{unshrinkingly} ~~instinctively~~ - do it to the hilt.

And I promise you that out of the doing something will happen to you that you will find good. ^{will be good for you}

And I promise you too that out of any such enterprise really well done and out of the skill it brings - sooner or later another opportunity will emerge - an opportunity that gives you more scope and more adequate self-expression.

The chances to do interesting things do not come by accident. They come to those equipped to do, eager to venture, ready to share new enthusiasms.

I know the outlook may not look bright. But I say in utmost seriousness that with the intellectual equipment you have, it may well be that the next assignment for many of you could profitably be to study to find out why the right kind of jobs aren't available for you ^{all}.

I saw a girl reading a book in the subway the other day and I looked at the title which was, "A World I Never Made."

It is a world you never made. And if it appears to be a world that is not welcoming you with open arms into interesting jobs - that is a grievous fault. But let it never be said of you that the title of your book of life is "A World I never took a hand in remaking."

That, I repeat, may well be ^{a next} your major job - to come to grips with the ^{some} anomalies of a world where you seem vocationally to be unwanted. ^{for many of the adventuresome among you}

Why is this so?

You have a right to ask. And having asked, not to let the question go till you have an ^{found} answer which seems ^{rational} ~~natural~~ and constructive.

Do that, too, to the hilt. You can help to build a world where significant vocations are more readily found.

I wish you especially well at that task, among the many worthwhile tasks you may have to create for yourselves.

I wish you well ~~with~~ ^{in facing up to the} hardships of our economic insecurities.

The lists may be entered here for a real prize. But the prize is not security.

I wish you well for effort, for striving, for mastery, for creating in your own unique way.

No lesser wish would be honest - in the kind of a world this is.

Finally, I hope that, living to the hilt, you will recall what Jacob was supposed to have said when he wrestled with angel of the Lord -

"I will not let thee go unless thou bless me."