

THE ALUMNAE NEWS

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THE EIGHTIETH ANNIVERSARY

Eighty years after Lydia Wadleigh led her famous procession of three hundred maidens from the old Twelfth Street School to the building on Fourth Street and Broadway where, under an armory and over a carriage-store, a floor and a half were opened up to the new Female Normal and High School, Hunter's daughters—and sons!—with a number of good friends gathered, 534 strong, in the Grand Ball-Room of the Waldorf-Astoria, to celebrate the day. Out-doors St. Swithin and St. Nicholas seemed to have overcome St. Valentine, but indoors all was a picture of warm, sweet, hearty love.

A delightful time was promised by the charming souvenir program, its cover a lavender lace-paper valentine adorned by pictures of Thomas Hunter and George Shuster, of the old Gothic building and the modern sky-scraper Palace on Park Avenue. And these promises were well fulfilled.

After the singing of the National Anthem, and the Invocation by the Reverend Frank Grebe, Minister of the Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church and Chaplain of the Protestant Students of the College, President Shuster gave the first of the greetings of the evening, beginning with a salute to the great character whose birthday was being celebrated, and her great career ever since the day she was born. He read from Thomas Hunter's first "Report to the Board of Education as President of the Normal College", issued on May 13, 1870, dealing with his efforts to provide "requisite training for teachers", and with the "home feeling" that was growing up among the students, naturally, since a college for all races and creeds must be a friendly place. Then from Thomas Hunter's Biography President Shuster recounted the amusing tale of Lydia Wadleigh and what she did to a student's would-be "young man".

The greetings of the City were then, in the absence of Mayor O'Dwyer, tendered by the City Budget Director, Mr. Robert Patterson, who expressed regret that he could not report a subscription of \$100,000 from the City of New York to the Scholarship Fund.

The address of the evening followed, presented by the eminent citizen John Foster Dulles. He, like President Shuster, opened by going back 80 years—to the just realized prediction of his grandfather, who had been Secretary of State, that the day would come when women would serve as ambassadors. Then he in his turn looked forward, expressing the hope that youth would do better than older people, and women better than men. Finally he surveyed the present, when, he said, the country is for the first time in

its history facing a danger immense, imminent, and one that can well be fatal. Prudence may require our making hydrogen bombs, but they cannot give us security, for, lacking righteous and dynamic faith, and relying merely on material things, we are vulnerable from within.

Externally, he continued, our foreign policies are limited and inadequate. In the last century we were the least militarized of any western nation, but conditions changed as others began to think of us more as a source of money and goods, less as a source of inspiration and guidance. Sovietism, though it has caught the imagination of the peoples of the world as once the American experiment did, is a delusion, and its exponents will not permit their home to be open to inspection. Their culture, according to Toynbee's division of societies, represents the social development of communities as opposed to the spiritual development of souls. We as adherents of the second ideal must recapture our faith in the primacy of human liberty, our faith in man as a creation of God, our belief in individualism as an essential part of our religious heritage, our acceptance of the commandments to "love God" and to "love thy neighbor as thyself". Our individual duty to other men demands self-control, whereas an unfree irreligious society emphasizes government-control—but it is not necessary to go over to atheism and materialism in order to obtain justice.

"If war should come—which God forbid," said Mr. Dulles in conclusion, there would come with it a great spiritual revival. But if these finest qualities are reserved for war, we shall never have a lasting peace. Can we not have them also in time of peace?

The anxious thoughts aroused by Mr. Dulles' earnest words were lulled to rest at least temporarily by the soothing strains of sweet music as provided by Hunter's own cherished songbird, Molly Lippenholtz Starkman. Regina Resnik, too, was to have been on the program, but was unexpectedly prevented from attending by participation in a performance of *Don Giovanni* in Philadelphia that evening. However, the Metropolitan was well represented by another of its stars, the bass-buffo Gerhard Pechner, who entertained us delightfully a little later in the evening with the rendering of some charming humorous selections.

After Mrs. Starkman's songs, Dr. William Jansen, Superintendent of Schools, brought us the greetings of the public elementary and high schools, with the assurance that the entire staff of the public schools joined him in congratulating us, and that Hunter has no better friends than in the public schools.

The next greetings were from the Presi-

IN MEMORIAM

Katherine Devereux Blake, member of the famous centennial class of '76 to which Helen Gray Cone also belonged, died on February 2 in St. Louis, where she was born 92 years ago.

Miss Blake made her mark in the educational life of New York. For 34 years she was Principal of one of the city's most famous public schools, P.S. 6, at Madison Avenue and 85th Street. On her 89th birthday a party was tendered to her at which tributes were paid to her distinguished career in teaching by Mayor O'Dwyer, and also by Bernard Baruch, whose first teacher she had been, and who praised her for the inspiration and encouragement she had given him as a small boy. She served as President of the Association of Women School Principals, as the first woman Treasurer of the National Education Association (of which she was a Life Member), and as organizer of the Teachers' Section of the New York State Woman Suffrage Association. A pioneer in many fields, in 1885 she was Chairman of the Committee of Women Teachers and Principals which advocated appointment of a woman to the Board of Education, in 1895 she became the organizer and principal of the first evening high school for women in the city, and in 1897 she drew up the first teachers' salary bill ever put before the State Legislature. She served several terms as Chairman of Education in the New York City Federation of Women's Clubs.

Besides education, her great interests were the causes of woman suffrage and of peace. In the first of these she followed in the steps of her equally famous mother, Lillie Devereux Blake, whose biography she wrote under the title *The Champion of Women*, and who was President of the National American Woman Suffrage Association at the time of her death. The former Editor of the NEWS, Eleonore F. Hahn, herself an ardent crusader for woman suffrage, often told the writer of these lines that she first heard of the cause from her fellow-student Kitty Blake, who took her to her home to learn of "woman's rights" from her mother.

In the interest of peace Miss Blake was one of forty-two women who sailed on Henry Ford's peace ship in World War I, she was one of nineteen educators who accompanied John Dewey on his visit to Russia in 1928, and she was the chief speaker of the disarmament caravan that toured the U. S. in 1931 and presented a peace petition with a million names to President Hoover. She was an active member of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

She is survived by two nephews, Devereux Duer Robinson and Beverly Robinson, and by a niece, Mrs. Williams Kim Marriott, with whom she lived in St. Louis, and who, through the medium of the NEWS, kept her many friends in the Alumnae in touch with her during her last days.

E. A. H.