

THE ALUMNÆ NEWS

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No. 1

At a special meeting of the Board of Directors of the Associate Alumnae of Hunter College, held on Wednesday, December 6, 1939, the following Resolutions were unanimously adopted:

Whereas: Dr. Eugene A. Colligan has resigned as President of Hunter College, and

Whereas: Under his able leadership the Scope of the College Curriculum has been greatly widened, and

Whereas: his devotion and untiring efforts have helped to further the plans for the New Building, and

Whereas: during his entire administration he gave the fullest and most gracious coöperation to all activities of the Associate Alumnae, now therefore be it

Resolved: That we the Associate Alumnae desire to record our deep regret at his resignation, and are moved to voice our sincere appreciation of his outstanding work for the fame and prestige of Hunter College.

IRENE B. GRAFF

GENEVIEVE B. CROTTY

RUTH LEWINSON.

ALUMNAE BREAKFAST

Make your first reservation on your new 1940 calendar for the Alumnae Breakfast on Saturday, February 10th. It will be a gala occasion. Jean Starr Untermeyer, the well-known poetess, will be the guest speaker. Mrs. Philip Kraus, a Hunter alumna, will be the guest soloist.

The committee has arranged a delightful program. The winner of the valentine contest will read her poem to the Alma Mater. This contest was inaugurated last year and is being conducted throughout the College with the kind coöperation of the English Department under the guidance of Professor Wyman.

Round up your classmates and make this a grand reunion. Send your reservations early for good locations. Tickets are \$2.50.

GENEVIEVE BURKE CROTTY, Chairman.

Mrs. James A. Crotty,

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CORNERSTONE LAYING

Anticipated for almost three years by faculty, alumnae, and students of Hunter College, the laying of the cornerstone of the new \$6,000,000 building at 68th Street and Park Avenue took place on December 6, with Mayor LaGuardia and administrative officials taking part in the ceremonies.

The Mayor pleaded for national child labor legislation, development and perfection of pension and retirement systems, and realization that the youth which is graduating from colleges to-day must be provided

with an opportunity to earn a decent living. This is a national problem, the Mayor warned, since hopeless youth unable to find necessary occupation will believe any propaganda, even if false, which offers hope. "Personally, we know that not only our hope, but the hope of all the world lies in the salvation of the American system of government. But the only way to offset propaganda is by being realistic and doing something actual for the youth of America." He said it would be necessary for some time to come to continue the National Youth Administration and to create employment artificially for some people. "But is it not better," he added, "although risking a charge of extravagance, to spend millions of dollars for youth of the land in keeping them usefully employed, instead of spending billions of dollars to put them in the army to kill and be killed?"

Dr. Ordway Tead, Chairman of the Board of Higher Education, said: "We are here to seal the cornerstone of a habitation of shared learning, of associated truth seeking, of organized and sustained inquiry into the ways of mankind's mastery of its world. Here will be forwarded a deliberate conservation of the body of human culture and a devoted attempt to enrich that culture through our own effort."

The copper cornerstone box was presented by Mrs. Theodore E. Simis, President of the Associate Alumnae, to Acting President George N. Shuster, who placed it in the cornerstone, which was closed by Mrs. Walter S. Mack, Jr., Chairman of the Administrative Committee. Among the contents of the box were: copies of the College catalogues; a copy of "What To Do in the World's Work", the bulletin issued by the Faculty Committee on Vocational Guidance; the latest issues of the *Hunter Bulletin* and the *ALUMNAE NEWS*; copies of the metropolitan newspapers; and signatures of the members of the Board of Higher Education, of the executive officers of the College and its instructional and administrative staffs, and of members of the faculties of the Hunter College High School and Model School. Also included was a motion picture film, "Hunter College Prepares Women for the World of To-morrow", which was shown at the World's Fair.

Among the guests of honor who attended the exercises were Mr. Albert Weiss of the Board of Higher Education; Miss Pearl Bernstein, Administrator of the Board; Miss Millicent Baum, aide to Mayor LaGuardia; Dr. Ruth Lewinson, First Vice-President of the Associate Alumnae; and Miss Jenny Hunter, daughter of Thomas Hunter, founder of the College.

CLAIRE GLASSBURG.

REMARKS AT THE
LAYING OF THE CORNERSTONE
OF HUNTER COLLEGE

By ORDDWAY TEAD

Chairman, Board of Higher Education.

I find myself asking why we are here. We have turned away at this noon hour for a few brief moments—away from the hot, ceaseless pursuit of familiar habits of conduct, and insistent preoccupations; away from all our random and often irrational action in a highly disorganized world which keeps a surface appearance of organization and of sense.

And we have turned to what? To a symbolic act of the preliminary dedication of a building. Not just another building, we hope and believe. But a building erected for and consecrated to a special kind of use.

It is not a domicile of ordinary shelter. Even this short ceremony would not be thought necessary to commit it to that familiar purpose.

It is not a house of universal public use, like a city hall; for admission to its halls is determined by special qualifications of prior accomplishment and present fitness in the realm of intellectual attainment.

It is not a house of worship. Were that the case, the particular rituals of specified religions leaders would undoubtedly be observed to make the consecration most authentic.

We are here to seal the cornerstone of a habitation of shared learning, of associated truth-seeking, of organized and sustained inquiry into the ways of mankind's mastery of its world. Here will be forwarded a deliberate conservation of the body of human culture and a devoted attempt to enrich that culture through our own effort.

We are here to symbolize the dignity of man's search for his own salvation; to acknowledge the validity of man's aspiration for a life that shall realize more and more of truth and beauty and righteousness in the processes of living.

To come out from the ordinary ways of men thus to symbolize and to acknowledge the need for reenforcing the search for more truth and beauty and goodness—this is itself good.

The college stands to-day as one of the few reminders of sanity, of devotion to freedom of thought and utterance, of the beneficent potentialities of reasonableness and orderliness and planfulness in human affairs. The college in its ideal role is, indeed, the great conservator of the spirit of truth-seeking through intellectual integrity, freedom, and passion. This is its unique function—its momentous function. It is a function so crucial to the preservation of civilization, so indispensable to keeping the lights of rationality and of goodwill among men aglow, that in comparison with its reason for being, all our personal stirrings on its behalf can only seem pitifully inadequate in their effectiveness.

Occasions like this give us pause. We hang our heads in shame at the contrast between the functions of the college and the contribution of ourselves to the fulfillment of that function. All that we can do and be, all devotion, all zeal for positive gain in wisdom and in ability to impart wisdom—these seem puny beside the task the college summons us to. For it summons to excellence, to continuous growth, to unparalleled masteries, to complete commitment to whatsoever things are true and beautiful and good. Before its summons, every lesser motive, every limited intention, every self-seeking desire,—these are dwarfed so that they would become ridiculous did they not become tragic in their consequence.

If I seem to set a place for the college which is superlatively high, if I ask much of it, that is only because in all honesty we must face the fact that it (or some other institution which might replace it) shares with the home and with the church a historic role which *has* to be filled in human society. Indeed, like both of these, it seems to me to share such a position of human trust and sanctity that it would be impossible to accord it too high an estate. I, for one, am prepared to say of a college, as I would also say of a home or of a house of worship,—and I say it of Hunter College—"Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain who build it."

Nothing less than universal, ultimate, and more than human validation seems to me the fitting assumption and mood for the consecration of a college structure. For we are concerned here to implement the outreaching of the human spirit—veritably a holy enterprise if we but know in our hearts that the human enterprise is holy.

It is true that the public college in our feeble vocabulary is rightfully regarded to-day as a secular institution. But what I am saying is that any secular institution which takes for its allegiance the zealous pursuit and impartation of truth, beauty, and goodness is by that effort far more than secular. It shares a human purpose made sacred by its very audacity, its historic persistence, and by the inclusiveness of the realms in which it searches.

I must personally agree with a friend who in a recent book says: "The search of the mind for beauty, goodness, and truth is its search for God, and our modern irrationalistic prophets do not help us when they beckon us to other paths. For what doth the Lord our God require of us if not to do justly and to love beauty and to walk humbly with the spirit of truth? And how, if not through these, is his way to be made manifest among men?"

These are the considerations that come to mind when I ask why we are here foregathered. Here we are preparing not just another impressive structure on a famous worldly highway. We are adding a temple beside the highway mankind is treading, a

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temple of learning, where successive generations can come closer to the spirit of things, closer to understanding, to mastery, to fraternal regard, and to zeal for all these.

My deepest prayer as we perform this symbolic rite is that in very truth as we build, we shall not be found to be laboring in vain.
