

VALIDICTORY ADDRESS

June, 1959.

Classmates, faculty, parents, and friends-

The year is 1947- a rather dull rainy day in the month of August. Two-timid, spindly-legged, 6-year old girls are left at the old school gate. They both had probably been looking forward to this day with eager anticipation, but as they neared the door of the old school house, their steps gradually became slower and slower. Finally, however, the inevitable door was reached. Getting to that door was one thing, but trying to get that stubborn door open was another. They tugged and tugged. The smaller of the two, Lola, nearly in tears, cried out to the other: "O Kathleen! We'll never get that door open." But they gave it an extra pull, and sure enough, the door opened before them.

Now, these same doors are about to close behind us. As we stand here, we, the graduating class of 1959, are apt to look back on our lives and think of the past experiences of our highschool days as well as public school days. We muse over our petty joys and sorrows, those vacant feelings during exams, our despair over report cards, and our little triumphs, and somehow when it is all over, we realize that these years constitute one of the happiest periods of our lives. We realize, as we think of the past, that many people have shared in a special way our joys and sorrows- and without whose help this goal which we have reached tonight would have been impossible. On behalf of my fellow classmates and myself, I wish to convey our deepest thanks to Mr. Kyle, who has so ably tutored us during our highschool years. Though, I am sure, we have often been a worry and a disappointment to you, we want you to know how much we have appreciated your efforts and your willingness to help us whenever we asked for it.

To you Mother and Dad, we cannot amply express in words our thanks for all you have done for us- nor can we ever expect to repay you for your understanding, your encouragement and your love through the years. But we hope that in some small way you may be rewarded tonight as we give you your Grade XII Graduate.

We have reached one of the great milestones in our lives. To us the past is a memory and the future is a hope. It lies before us like a strange, unexplored island. Most of us will leave home, some for college or university, and some of us will go out immediately into the world to wrest a living from an environment that is based on competition and ability rather than on kindness and mercy such as that in which we have lived so far.

As we face the world our general ambition is to attain success. That is accepted by all, but many have the perverted idea that success may be measured in dollars and cents. Money has been set up as one standard, and nearly everyone joins in the mad scramble to get possession of as much material wealth as possible.

Money is not the key to success. We all dream of great deeds and travelling highways away from the pettiness and humdrum of everyday life. Yet success is not occupying a lofty position or doing conspicuous work; it is giving the best that is in you. Jesus Christ says on the subject, "Whosoever would be great among you let him be your servant, whosoever would be chief among you, let him be your minister." So thus we see that success also lies in leaving the world a better place than we found it, which I believe can be accomplished with the help of God, by using all the talents He has given us.

It is interesting, as we look back into history to note the names of the men remembered now, not because of their wealth or riches but because of the heritage they left mankind. We think of David Livingstone, Martin Luther, Washington, Lincoln, Albert Schweitzer. But most of all we think of the Man of Galilee who gave Himself for all men. He had no house, no lot, not land, nor where to lay his head, yet He lived His life and gave His life to fulfill the purpose of God for Him.

Dear classmates, let us remember that we are laying the foundation of our tomorrows. Let us be sure we lay our foundation well with Christ as the Rock on which we build. We must face the future bravely. We are not here to play, to dream, to drift. We have hard work to do and loads to life. Shun not the struggle! Face it! 'tis God's gift. As we go out into the world remember there is One who is willing to help us find our place in life and to attain true success if we but let Him.

In facing the future, perhaps there are some who are a little fearful of what it holds. The path which lies ahead seems dark and unknown. I would like to leave this though with you. I quote: "I said to a man who stood at the gate of the year. 'Give me a light that I might go out into the unknown'. And he said to me, 'Put your hand in the hand of God. That shall be better to thee than a light and safer than a known way.'"