Courtesy Detroit News

Regent Clements, Governor Groesbeck, and President Little in the Commencement Procession, Accompanied by the Guard of Honor

D. D., Sir Frederick Whyte, former President of the Legislative Assembly of India, delivered the Commencement address.

GENTLEMEN of the University, you are today passing out of the home which has sheltered and nourished you for four years, into the world beyond. Upon each of you is now set the seal of this University and your name is inscribed upon her rolls as the name of one who has acquitted himself well.

The degree which will be conferred upon you in a few moments is your passport to new opportunities. It represents an achievement, your achievement; but it is no end in itself, is a means to a greater end. For it is the sign to show that, inasmuch as you have proved yourself a not unworthy citizen of the confined commonwealth of this University, so you will acquit yourself worthily in the wider life beyond, as a citizen of America.

Today, you take not only your degree as a Michigan graduate, but your pledge as a member of the whole community. And this pledge is something more than a personal undertaking to make the most of your talents and your opportunities in the years to come. It is a promise to serve mankind in a manner that befits your status as a graduate of a great University.

When Ambassadors of Foreign Powers meet to transact the business of their Governments, in the negotiation of treaties, they present to one another their credentials to prove their right to speak in the name of their respective nations. These certificates are called *Pleins Pouvoirs*, Full Powers; and when duly accepted, the bearers of them cease to be mere individual men. They become plenipotentiaries, clothed with the sovereign authority of their Governments.

You go forth today endowed with these *Pleins Pouvoirs*. You are now Ambassadors of the great Commonwealth of learning. Your credentials as Masters of Arts, Doctors of Science, Medicine, and Letters, give you a new and representative character. They increase your stature and give weight to your words. And when you meet other men in the world without, they will recognize in you a man who speaks with authority and not as the Scribes. The symbols after your name say as plainly as if you spoke the words yourself: "I am a son of my Alma Mater, an Alumnus of the University, a Citizen of no mean City."

AS you pass out of her gates to join the moving procession of mankind, look back at this kindly mother for the last time, and take a vow that the gifts she has given you shall grow and multiply in your hands. These gifts are like the Talents in the Parable. They have no value in themselves except in the use to which you put them; and one of the greatest of them all is the training you have received in the way in which you ought to use them. You will soon learn to look upon them as keys to open the doors of the world for you. And these keys are of three kinds.

There is first the key of your profession which unlocks for you the door to your livelihood and your service to the community. It has been made for you by the Faculty whose labours do not always figure as a beneficient influence in the undergraduate's picture of academic paradise. We students are apt to think of ourselves as a great free democracy, with the professorial oligarchy as a somewhat tiresome, if necessary, corporation set in authority over us. We believe in the common sense of the majority and not in the presumed wisdom of the few; and it is only quite late in our undergraduate career that we begin to appreciate the virtues of these Elder Statesmen who control the destinies of our youth. We eventually reach the strange conclusion that a professor is really quite a remarkable person, with quite a decent reason for his existence. And by the time we appear before you, Mr. President, to receive our degrees we are almost in a mood to say "Thank you" to *all* our professors. There are, to be sure, some students who are prepared from the very first, to take the Faculty on trust and to accept with a becoming humility the professorial utterance *ex cathedra*: but these are the sycophants of learning. We, who are free men, will always demand experimental proof of the pudding: And so, our friends, the professors, must find what consolation they can in the posthumous gratitude of their graduates. I can assure them that this form of deferred pay is theirs in generous measure.

Now the second key is the gift of our fellow students, and will open a door just as important as the door to which the professors have led us. Its wards are fashioned in the fraternity, in the University Union, in the gymnasium and on the football field. In each of those arenas, perhaps without knowing it, we have undergone a form of preparation and examination quite as searching and perhaps more subtle than those by which we earn our

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The Seniors "Present Themselves Upon the Platform to Receive Their Diplomas," Which are Put in the Hands of the President by Shirley W. Smith, Secretary of the University

academic credits. We are surrounded by an invisible power which moulds us almost imperceptibly—the power of public opinion; and we learn lessons of conduct which we shall forget at our peril. We learn, if I may use a vivid English phrase, that there are things no fellow can do; we learn the value of cooperation; we learn the lesson of friendship; and at the end we carry with us a band of friends whose attachment is more precious than any other gift which the University has to offer. In a word, we learn to be men in a world of men.

These two keys open the gates to citizenship in its widest sense.

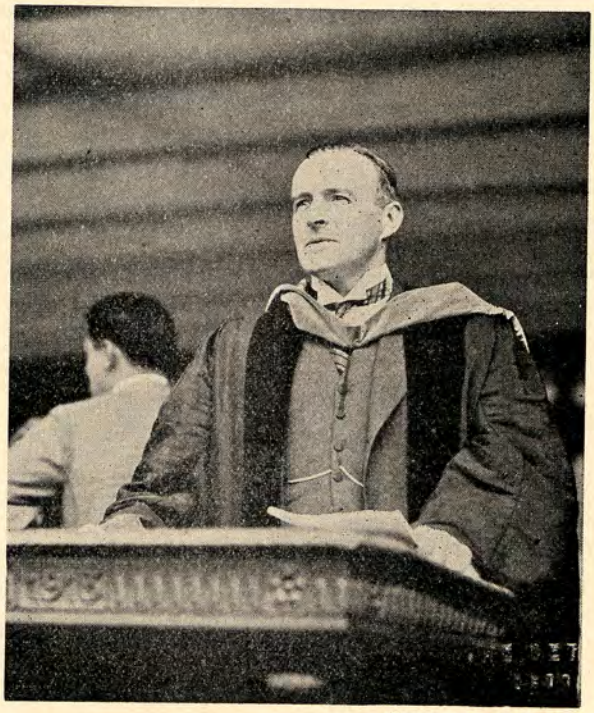
THE third key is a little, private instrument of your own. It opens a casement looking, not outward upon the world, but inward to yourself. It is the key to leisure.

Now the use of your leisure, in years to come, will show how your mind has been formed here. Leisure is the time for refreshing mind and body after labour, and is not mere idleness; for, if recreation be change of occupation, it is still occupation. One of the early rhymes of the labour movement in England was:

"Eight hours work,
Eight hours play,
Eight hours sleep,
Eight bob a day."

This is not a bad allotment of your twenty-four hour day; and if you know how to play during the eight hours of recreation (which we do not always get); we need have no fear about our work, our sleep or our wages. These will all be added unto you if you can play aright. Most of us know how to use our leisure in the open air, as horseman, swimmer, sailor, golfer; and therefore the little key which opens your locker at the country club or the golf club is not likely to rust in your drawer. But what of the locker of your mind?

In speaking to you a moment ago, as to men and women entering the great world, I put the friendships of University life as its greatest gift. But there is another which runs this companionship very close. It is the companionship of books, the memorials of the Great Adventure of the Pen, which are among man's highest titles to fame and immortality. If you leave the University without the key to that pleasure, you have not found here all you ought to have found. Montaigne, the great French essayist, tells us that at the end of each busy day he would enter his library, close the door upon the toilsome world, and seek the refreshment of his soul in communion with the great men of the past. From the shelves of his library these friends of his mind stepped down to commune with him for a while and offered him a happy escape from the perplexities of daily life. And my father, who had as great a love of books as any man of his generation, used to tell his class in Edinburgh, "Sell your bed and buy great books." Well, fortunately for us, we are not condemned to choose between a world without beds and a world without books. It would need the genius of a J. M. Barrie to depict a world in such a dilemma between the devil and the deep sea. Our eight hours of sleep will be spent on a bed; but they will be all the sounder and refreshing if some of the eight hours of our play have been spent in the company of those who have written great books for us.



Courtesy Detroit News

SIR FREDERICK WHYTE, M. P.

Former Presiding Officer of the Legislative Assembly of India, Who Delivered the Commencement Address

THESE, then, are the three keys which the University has for you. But if she has gifts for the individual students, she has also a national purpose. Year after year she takes from the nation an ever increasing company of the aspiring youth, passes them through a process of training and sends them forth upon their mission in the world. The University is thus the masterpiece and the crown of a national system of education. It is therefore the duty of the nation to see that her needs are satisfied and her standards maintained; and the nation which fails to cherish the University will lack both the thinkers and the artisans of progress. Modern civilization is the offspring of science in all its forms, and the offspring cannot flourish unless the parent is sustained.

But let us look a little more closely at this creature which we have called the child of science. We say that our complex society is scientific; and that is true in the sense that our lives are conducted largely by mechanical processes of scientific origin. This age of machinery is the triumph of science as applied to manufacture and transportation. It is an era of mass production in motor cars and safety pins; aye, even in men and opinion. And there, in these last few words, lies its greatest danger. The individual man and woman of today is subjected to a pressure which seeks to produce a standard shape, a conformity to certain conventions which is the enemy of individuality. Thus mass production tends to create in us all a frame of mind which is the very denial of the scientific spirit; and if in us the scientific spirit is wanting, our knowledge is a mere accumulation of dead facts, and we lack the compass which points to the pole star of truth.

Every nation is beset by this danger, and the more scientific peoples run the greatest risk. The latter are usually those which live under democratic government which assumes in the citizen an ability to judge public policy and public men by adequate standards. How are we to foster that ability and to maintain such standards? Only by education. And since the University is the nerve-centre of our national system of education, it is to the University that we must look for our salvation.

THE most important thing about a university is its identity, its individual character, its freedom to serve the community in the pursuit of knowledge unhampered by any bureaucratic regulation of its activities. Discipline let there be, by all means, for the good of the undergraduate soul; but beware of putting the University into the straight jacket of regulation, restriction or control alien to its true purpose. Beware, also, of any attempt to turn the University into a man machine for the manufacture of a standard type of humanity.

Here within these walls the search for truth is, or ought to be, pursued; truth in all its manifestations: and whether it be in the prosecution of research, or in the pursuit of truth in history, philosophy or economics, the Uni-

versity cannot abdicate its function as the home and the protector of all sincere seekers after the truth. As long as she fulfills her function the students who go out from here, year by year, will carry with them the scientific spirit—which is but another name for the love of truth—by the exercise of which they may help to create and maintain the great force of public opinion, which is the only stable foundation of democracy.