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## THE SEVENTY-FIRST COMMENCEMENT

The Seventy-first Annual Commencement of the University of Michigan took place on Thursday, June 24, 1915. The Commencement address was delivered by President William Oxley Thompson, LL.D., of Ohio State University, who spoke upon "The New Outlook for Educated Citizenship," in which he appealed to the graduates before him for sane, intelligent leadership and a sound philosophy of optimism in an effort to abolish war.

Degrees were granted to 939 students. These, with the names of those who had completed their course of studies, and were graduated in the period between January and May, 1915, made a total of 1,007 names in the official list. There were also granted 13 honorary degrees.

As has become the custom, the day opened with the bugle call at 8:15, followed by the formation of the various lines of seniors in their respective positions on the Campus. To the music of the University Band, and the answering bugle calls from various sections of the parade, the line slowly formed, headed by the standard bearers, bearing the flags of the University and the State, and the parade-marshal, Professor Herbert C. Sadler, in his brilliant Glasgow gown. President Hutchins and President Thompson came next, then the Board of Regents, the Faculty, all in academic robes, and the alumni, followed by the long line of seniors, who lined the walks as the President, Regents and Faculty passed down from University Hall to Hill

Auditorium and fell into their proper places at the end of the procession.

President Thompson's address was as follows:

The congratulations that fill the hour emphasize the obvious fact that the month of June annually sends into the citizenship of America thousands of young men and women who have had the opportunity that comes to the few, and to them but once in a life time. To spend four of the choicest years of youth in circles where freedom of thought, of opinion, and of expression abounds, is a rare opportunity unparalleled in the ordinary callings of life. The significance of this carefree experience relieved from the perplexities of ordinary life is not always appreciated. Here is the opportunity for the forthcoming generation to make a calm survey of the world of thought and action into which it shall throw the energies developed through education. In a very profound sense therefore, the period of higher education as represented at the University furnishes opportunity for organizing one's life and thought and for a proper orientation of the enthusiasm of youth with the experience of age. The present chaos of public thought in these days of war and rumors of war suggest the theme for the morning.

From the beginning educated people have regarded themselves as called to leadership in the several circles where they have lived. Their intellectual life, their broadened vision and their profounder conviction upon current problems has always led them into community leadership.

This theory of life has been encouraged by the educational institutions, and indeed made a matter of some prominence by colleges and universities. They not only assume but directly affirm that one of the great functions of a college or university is to prepare its alumni for leadership. The older institutions made this fact quite prominent. The limited number of men and women who studied in the older type of college made it quite natural that these people should rise rapidly into prominent leadership. In these days, when the few have been supplanted by the many and the "streets have gone to college," it is obvious that the tens of thousands of college graduates can hardly occupy the same relative prominence as did their predecessors of two generations ago, when only the children of favored families or of the specially ambitious found their way into college. Nevertheless, we should not overlook the fact that the world while growing smaller as a neighborhood, has grown immensely larger as an industrial community. Japan and China are our neighbors. We feel toward them a sense of nearness. We have a similar feeling with regard to Europe and Africa. Meantime, the business, industry and commerce of the world has multiplied by leaps and bounds. This has opened up new worlds of service in which educated leadership is in great demand. Since the Spanish-American war the United States and other governments on the two American continents have assumed a place of importance in the world's activities unforeseen and unanticipated by the fathers.

The completion of the Panama Canal was an event of world significance. It was expected that this triumph of engineering skill would develop and revolutionize oceanic commerce; all the world would be brought a little nearer together and the consequent obligation of state leadership would fall more heavily upon the nation providing this new highway of traffic.

For this enlarged leadership we have been quietly making preparation. For generations we have believed in a manifest destiny for this great democracy. It has been the current belief that the United States of America was somehow under the leadership of a beneficent providence to lead the world onward and upward to a better definition of human rights and human freedom. There has been singularly absent from this political theory any widespread belief that the United States should ever seek an enlargement of territory, or be actively engaged in colonization. The freedom to renounce American citizenship and transfer to the citizenship of other countries has never been questioned. Consequently American citizenship is held only by those who desire to hold it. The result of this political theory has been to leave our citizens free to develop the fundamental ideas of liberty and freedom. Our people have desired therefore, to see other people enjoy the same liberties which we prize so highly. It is easy to understand therefore, why there was universal rejoicing in this country when our President declared against territorial annexation in the Mexican situation, nor was the approval less enthusiastic when in the face of the great European

struggle he declared that the United States would ask nothing for herself that she could not ask for humanity. Our political theories have therefore brought us face to face with the doctrine of international leadership rather than of international dominion. The United States desires for herself no dominion over the territory, the business or the citizenship of any other country. She only desires to lead the world toward more humane government and a stronger allegiance to the interests of humanity.

Alongside the development of this political theory we have engaged our energies in an elaborate program of education. This has been due to a cherished belief that the perpetuity of a democracy is conditioned upon universal education. Democracy and ignorance cannot dwell together. A stratified citizenship means death to popular government. Popular government can not be endured unless it is devoted to the public welfare. These things demand not only intelligent citizenship but educated leadership. Moreover they demand that the leadership shall be in sympathy with, and devoted to, the fundamental ideals of democracy.

Our educational program has been in accord with these ideals for half a century. The enlarged place occupied by science, and particularly by applied science, in our modern education, has been paralleled by the introduction and development of economic and social science. The older humanities while not abandoned, have been surpassed by the newer philanthropies. These new developments in education, beginning with agriculture and running through the gamut to economic zoology, have furnished opportunity and occupation for educated men and women to render most beneficent service in the interest of public welfare. Curiously enough, in the midst of these activities our democratic government is rapidly becoming a government by experts. The United States Department of Agriculture, in co-operation with the several states, is rapidly developing expert service in every field of agricultural and horticultural production. In like manner the Federal Government and the states are uniting their energies in the promotion of applied science, of commerce, and of business. The public health service, to speak only of one, has put tremendous emphasis upon the importance of human life and upon national health as a great asset. All these activities have been under the direction and leadership of our educated citizenship. There is a long catalog of splendid leadership among our citizens who have used their talents and attainments for noble and uplifting purposes. We have rejoiced in our education because we have believed it was preparing men and women to build a better society and a better state.

Amid this rapid development we have seen the necessity of an ethical point of view and have continually urged upon the generation of students the importance of ethical character as underpinning our skill. For example, applied chemistry has made toxicology an important science. The state has stepped in and regulated the sale of poison in the interest of the public. The larger field of adulterated foods and drugs has led to general legislation, intended to protect the public. It is obvious that we have not yet reached the place where the ethical standard of men having intelligence and education will prevent them from making criminal use of their knowledge. Nevertheless, public sentiment through educated leadership, has set the current in the right direction. The regulatory and police powers of the state are being used as never before in the interest of the public welfare. This movement is due entirely to the educated citizenship of the country.

Amid all this evidence of progress there is one feature to which I would direct attention. It is not altogether complimentary to our civilization that we have not yet developed any great control over the tendencies developing from selfish or criminal impulses. The positive efforts in this direction have been manifested somewhat tardily and not with the universal enthusiasm we might expect from a generation with the wide vision brought by education. Some years ago President Eliot, of Harvard, directed attention to the fact that crime had not decreased as public education had increased. The public school men came to the rescue of our system of education and stoutly resented some of the inferences drawn by President Eliot. Nevertheless, the fact remains that even among the more highly educated, criminal impulses and criminal conduct have been by no means suppressed. The practical issue is whether our educated citizenship has bent its energies as it ought to the corrective and reformatory results desired in our civilization. Grateful appreciation should be given to the movement looking toward prison reform, our philanthropies and the new points of view given by modern psychology and sociology. It is to be observed

however, that these efforts have chiefly been made among the poor and the dependent classes. The large area among the well-to-do in our generation has been almost entirely neglected. Education is not complete when it has developed skill, or what men term efficiency. It is the direction of this efficiency which introduces the ethical factor determining in the last analysis the quality of the leadership.

In view of these considerations I raise the issue whether our educated citizenship has assumed its full responsibility. How far are we responsible for the organization of the world's thought and activities? Should both the form and the spirit of government be under the control of the political philosophy of our educated citizens? Is there an obligation on the part of such citizens to assume aggressive leadership in the world's affairs? We have been proceeding on the theory of freedom in initiative and subsequent control of such wrongs as were developed. Our corrective factors have, therefore, been introduced after the development of the wrong. Under this freedom almost any form of evil may develop and society has been content to provide a remedy as best it could. It is encouraging to note in certain limited circles, that modern education believes in putting in the corrective before the criminal has been developed. This is education and leadership, rather than reform. Is it possible to give this principle a wider application and reconstruct society and the state on the basis of the right and the true, and thus relieve ourselves of a large amount of penal and reformatory service? Here as it seems to me, lies a great uncultivated territory where the educated citizenship of the world could engage itself in the finest kind of pioneering. We must steadily advance into this unoccupied territory and fill it with right ideas if we are to protect the future against the calamities of error and selfishness. We have proceeded upon the theory that governments will be inefficient, corrupt and expensive. Our remedy has been the temporary makeshift. My contention is that the educated leadership of the country has lacked in aggressive character and loyalty to its own ideals. If such men had rendered a more constructive service in the affairs of the world there would have been less need of the penal and reformatory in readjusting conditions.

As illustrating this principle, let me direct your attention to the fact that we are today in the presence of a world war. True, only Europe is actively in the battle-field, but the entire world is so engaged intellectually and sympathetically with the conflict that we are halted in many of our activities. The thought of America is as much on Europe today as on the pressing problems of American life and democracy. The world is not only disturbed and distressed, but paralyzed in the presence of this great suicidal effort of civilization. No nation has yet been willing to assume responsibility for this war. They attempt to explain it but not to justify it. This situation is ample proof that history will never justify it. Whether the blame and responsibility will be satisfactorily located and accepted is another issue. It has been pertinently suggested that this is a scholars war. Certainly it is no peasants war. The multitudes never invented it. The business interests in the countries involved did not petition for it. On the other hand, attention has been directed to the fact that every crowned head of Europe has been educated for his position. The leaders and counselors of state are practically all men of university training. Underneath all the activities of two generations has been a philosophy teaching that war was both necessary and inevitable. This has been the philosophy of the scholastic and not the desire of the plain people. Moreover, science, both pure and applied, has made a contribution to this awful human slaughter as never before in the history of the world. The instruments of war have reached a state of perfection which only the most exact science could provide. The theatre of war has been changed from the battle-field of the meadow and the surface of the ocean, to the sky above us and the waters underneath the earth. The airship and the submarine have added to the destructive impulses of men. The inventive genius of the chemist has provided a new weapon. Everywhere applied science manipulated by educated leadership has multiplied the horrors of the war. This educated generation has totally eclipsed the brutality of the savage and stands unrivaled in its ability to sacrifice human life, to destroy property, to disregard the sacred institutions of history and to trample under foot the finer sentiments for which our education and our religion have presumably prepared us. The educated publicists and writers upon current political history have told us for a generation that this catastrophe was impending. I do not assume that

they knew its awful dimensions. We have listened to their counsels and have argued ourselves into the belief that this condition was unavoidable.

In our own country today there are thousands of educated citizens who are attached to these same theories. They assume that human selfishness and human greed can neither be suppressed nor controlled. Occasionally we hear that war is necessary to prevent us from a decline in national virility. Apparently these men fail to realize that their philosophy is responsible for the consequences. After the adoption of our own Constitution we parleyed about the institution known as human slavery. Compromise after compromise was effected only to result in the dreadful struggle of the Civil War. Erroneous theory and a false philosophy underlay our political life. In Europe the political philosophers have led on to a condition where literally by the millions the plain people are led to the slaughter as a price to be paid for adherence to false teaching. Who, if not the scholars of Europe, are to be held responsible for the destruction of civilization, the sacrifice of human life and the unmeasured suffering of the next fifty years?

It is worth while to meditate upon the fact that the organization of all the productive industries of Europe for more than a generation have been occupied in a preparation for war. This in itself is a terrible indictment of civilization. Moreover, the enormous expenditures of money have made the burdens of the people almost unbearable. Add to these the uncounted millions of indebtedness now being piled mountain high upon the people engaged in this war, and we face either public bankruptcy or a perpetual enslavement of the people in business to the wickedness of war. Who can imagine what the results would have been if all this intellectual power, this business activity, this human energy, had been devoted to a constructive program in the interest of human brotherhood? Why have not these resources been so utilized? If the conditions had developed from the passion of the ignorant multitudes there might have been some glory in a readjustment by the educated men. It was not a quarrel between Abraham's herdsmen and Lot's herdsmen, but Abraham and Lot have been the chief offenders in this great strife. The educated men of the world stand today indicted before the bar of public opinion for having brought on a suicidal controversy in the heart and home of history, of tradition, of science, of philosophy, of religion, of education and of civilization.

What then shall we say of the outlook for educated citizenship? What new opportunities or duties does the present day present? What equipment of mind and heart does the educated man need in order to meet adequately the problem of his day and generation? Manifestly in this great democracy we must have a safe and sane leadership by educated men to protect us against danger from whatever source. Ignorance furnishes only the material for foment and discord when aroused and led by the demagogue or designing men.

My first suggestion is that we need a sound underlying philosophy that shall grip our hearts. It should be constructive and thoroughly practical. We have spent a great deal of time in studying the philosophy of the ancients. This is well and furnishes the basis for intelligent scholarship and judgment. Unless I am mistaken too many of us have regarded our philosophy as pure theory. We have not looked to philosophy as a guide of life, nor have we regarded philosophy as a basis on which to reconstruct our business. In our eagerness to follow the dictates of science we have overlooked the importance of philosophy as furnishing the final reason for our civilization. We are today seeing the fruits of a philosophy born from materialism, cherished in skepticism and relying upon force, physical force at that, as the final test of all civilization. Out of this world contest we shall hear the death knell of materialism as the philosophy of life, and of physical force as the supreme assurance of contract. This great war is just now a war of ideas. When the war has closed, the real war will begin. That is to say, the contest will be for the supremacy of a true philosophy of civilization and a definition of the true functions of government. The supremacy of the intellectual, the moral and the spiritual will be the great issue. The world is now aroused on this question as never before. Unless all signs fail this war will be followed by widespread revival of interest in the simple doctrine of cause and effect. The world will want to know the significance of its own actions. National budgets will be subjected to a new interpretation. The burden bearers will cry out against a political philosophy that assumes the permanency of selfish interests. The law of the jungle will not control among educated people. Philosophy has

hitherto been the resort of the scholars. From now on it will be the friend of man. The scholars and the university men of all nations will be called upon to lead in the direction of humanity and of public welfare. The false notes that have been struck in the past generation are now pretty well known. We shall ask the philosopher of the future to tell us, not simply what has been, or what must be, as the outcome of false premises, but what ought to be. We shall also ask him to join us in bringing things to pass. We have worked out, in America, in a fairly satisfactory way, the doctrine of brotherhood. We need to give it new emphasis and lead in the organization of a brotherhood as wide as humanity itself. The cosmopolitan character of American citizenship brings us into sympathy with all nations of the earth. Individuals may have their local prejudices, but as a whole American citizenship stands committed to the welfare of the whole world. Our political, social and religious philosophy in accord with the truth above must be as broad as the needs of humanity. America will not, therefore, take a position of antagonism, but one of co-operation. She will insist upon a broad and generous interpretation of fundamental truth as the basis for all international relations. The conception that war is the foundation of human progress will be eliminated. The older theory that governments are based on selfishness will be abandoned and a new theory set up that government is for the people. The spirit of Lincoln's Gettysburg speech will permeate the political philosophy of the future. The doctrine that the strong may rightfully dispossess the weak will give way to the law of love, and we that are strong will learn to bear the infirmities of the weak and not to please ourselves. The philosophy of conquest will be supplanted by the sacredness of contract. The right to live will not be a question of physical force, but a question of fitness to live.

A second suggestion is that the world will be reorganized on the basis of the truer and better philosophy. The activities of the world will be determined by the needs of the world, not by the ambitions of brute force. Business will be organized to meet the need of a growing and prosperous world. I am aware that a superficial philosophy teaches that an admittedly bad use of revenues can serve a good purpose. There are those who justify the spendthrift; there are those who believe that the manufacture of adulterated foods develops business; there are those who think a criminal court is a good thing simply because we have crime. To wrap the world's energy up in a cannon ball is said to make business in a prosperous country. It might be worth while to observe that private capital is not invested heavily in dreadnaughts to be rented to the government in time of war. The only agency foolish enough to make such investment is the government itself. In the modern city the traffic policeman is ten-fold more useful than any other policeman. When the business of the world has been reorganized on the basis of human needs, the regulatory power of the policeman will supplant his criminal functions and greatly enhance his usefulness. It will take a tremendous revolution of mind and a long lapse of time to bring about this reorganization, but the world is already approaching the belief that the forces of this world should be organized in the interest of the things that are right. Righteousness alone exalteth a nation. Sin is a reproach to any people. If the energy used in applying the truth of science to frauds and fakes were applied to the development of honest articles well adapted to meet human needs we should greatly increase the sum total of human comfort and relieve the world of a vast amount of drudgery. The institutions of vice and crime all over our land could well be abolished and hopeful institutions substituted therefor with an equal amount of energy. The problem is one of sound theory and adequate organization. We have been the dupes of so many falacious theories that our organization of business has greatly suffered thereby. The educated citizen must lead in this constructive reorganization. He is the man to point out to society why it should welcome a hospital and regret a penitentiary; why it should maintain an institution for the blind, and why it should legislate against causes producing blindness. His leadership must bring us a state whose chief function will be to serve the interest of the whole people. It will protect the rights of life and property and make a highway for opportunity. If the educated man of the future shall take a narrow or selfish view and use his talents for self aggrandizement our experiment in democracy will insofar fail. Our hope lies in the educated citizen who will lend his energy to the upbuilding of the state organized in the interest of truth and righteousness.

A third suggestion will be that the educated citizen will lead in the field of practical politics. As already intimated, he has been doing this in such a way as to bring an indictment against himself. He must be revolutionized in his political philosophy, reorganized in his business administration and then proceed in practical politics, to supplant the law of hate and selfishness with the law of love and good will. The whole purpose of government must be stated anew and the world protected against the war spirit and the fury of the jingo. The primitive tribal instinct for war, for personal revenge, for controversy has been eliminated in good society. The duel is a thing of the past. Our courts furnish a redress for private grievance. It is only when in attendance upon international functions that civilized people are permitted to carry guns and swords. When the ethics of good society reaches the international parties, we shall wear better clothing and fewer weapons of defense. Is it not the marvel of the age that wise men can see the advantages of peace in small areas and cannot understand it in larger areas? Is it not beyond comprehension that men can see the advantage of law and law enforcement over all the world in spots, but cannot see it for the world as a unit? We can erect courts with a final word of authority in any nation on the earth, but apparently cannot erect one for all the nations. Every nation is willing to affirm its own righteousness but deny the righteousness of the other. This is a remnant of the barbarian's instinct of unwillingness to trust anybody but himself.

This condition of affairs is probably due to two things. First we have assumed that nations were the embodiment of selfishness, and second, government officials have probably felt called upon to represent their governments by acting the part. The folly of this procedure is so obvious as to need no comment. The only explanation upon which we fall back is, poor old human nature. Assuming this to be true we should remember that human nature is not past redemption. The whole war spirit is a spirit of pessimistic helplessness. The spirit of hope, of faith in human institutions of loyalty to universally accepted ideals, would drive away many of these ghosts of fear and leave us free to live together as brethren.

A most interesting comment on this general situation is found in the fact that the men in the trenches bear each other no hostility or enmity. When they meet in the hospitals attended by the same nurses and physicians, their brotherly kindness is all that could be desired. It is rare indeed that personal enmities are developed between soldiers in opposing camps. Even the officers bear themselves with dignity and politeness. The hatred is purely official due to a condition for which no one will accept the responsibility and the logical outcome of the theory based on false premises. Has the time not arrived when the educated citizenship of the world can organize itself into a brotherhood of humanity? If the college-bred men and women of the world would stand together in a covenant of peace there would be no more war.