

UNITED COLLEGE
Winnipeg

Valedictory Address,

Convocation, July 23, 1942.

by Jack Clark & Prayer by G. Sullivan

Mr. Principal,
Members of Conference,
Members and Friends of the Convocation;-

Shakespeare is not the only one who has recognized that farewells are occasions of tenderness. On almost every such occasion one becomes thoroughly sentimental. Under the present conditions it is impossible to avoid it. Some of us have been attending the college for a long time. (Six years is quite a while when one is young.) We have done a lot of growing and maturing within its walls. There we have made the kind of friendships which can be made only when young people are growing together. Within the sanctuary of our Alma Mater we have for the first time done so many things and come upon so many ideas. Many things important to us had their beginning at United College. Those of us who have not been here so long have become just as attached to the place. There is something about its atmosphere, its tolerance coupled with a noble purpose, its friendly sincerity, which is completely captivating. Every one of us of the class graduating this evening is most aware that "parting is such sweet sorrow". We are all in a mood of the greatest tenderness.

This has been mentioned by way of warning. Some people present may feel that the things I am about to say are wholly a result of sentimentality, born naturally at the occasion of parting. If I give that impression this evening I shall fail to represent honestly the class whose spokesman I am. I shall here have nothing to say that has not often been expressed by all the members of the class during periods of cool discussion. This is not sentiment, it is honest conviction. And we as a class are honored that we are able to express some of these convictions at a meeting of Manitoba Conference.

I know that I am speaking for the whole class when I say that we feel it a privilege to be stepping out into the work of the church from such a threshold as United College, Winnipeg. This for several reasons.-

We are proud of having received our education to date from a college whose tradition is as noble as ours. Fortunately, a small part of our course consisted of Canadian Church History. We learned something of the great men who founded and kept alive the two institutions of higher education, - the parents of our present school. We know a little of the early history of these colleges, of the pioneer spirit which built them and the immeasurable contribution they made to the rapidly growing west. We are proud to have connections with this kind of past. By being proud I don't mean that we hold our chins any higher, but that, in humility, we pledge ourselves more deeply to incarnate those ideals set before us.

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But we are as proud of what the college is and will be as we are of what it was. While being without dogmatism our Alma Mater stands for great principles. For these it exists. They are essentially Christian. Of two of them I would like to make special mention:-

The first of these is loyalty to the church. This loyalty is part of the spirit of the institution. While it maintains its interest in the field of the liberal arts, and in that connection does nothing that can be thought of as proselytizing, the college nevertheless manifests a strong devotion to the church in general and particularly to the United Church of Canada. It sees a worthy and serviceable future for the church and is entirely devoted to the task of making that vision come true. The fact that we are here tonight, prepared almost a year ahead of schedule for acceptance into the full rights and responsibilities of the Christian ministry is because the college gave heed to the needy cry of the church. And that devotion is contagious. I doubt if any class of ordinands was ever possessed of ^{greater} loyalty to the church and its high calling than is ours.

The other characteristic which tonight is particularly worthy of being mentioned is loyalty to its students. We are especially aware of this trait because we are living examples of it. Above all the college stood behind us in granting this concentrated course. In so doing it protects our interests. It was not easy for it. It meant a great deal of inconvenience.-But no students were to be ~~sent~~ in danger of being sent out into the work of the church encumbered with an uncompleted education. We want everyone concerned to know that we are grateful for that loyalty.

This would be a very incomplete representation of the feelings of our class if I failed to mention the faculty. It would be most embarrassing to these men if I said here all that should be said. Let me venture a remark on the more objective consideration of scholarship.- It is unfortunate that Winnipeg, that the whole West, seems to be still enough of a frontier community that it tends to ignore such accomplishments. However, of our faculty I would like to say this,- That every one of us, wherever we go, will be proud to mention the fact that we studied in the various fields under these men; and I mean that under any circumstance. We can carry the fact that we got our academic training under these men into any academic circle on this continent with just pride.

With its noble tradition and its present staff, United College, Winnipeg, given the opportunity of a few years to make its mark, will fulfil all the hopes of the great educators who dreamed and worked for its parent institutions. Give United College a chance and it will make a contribution to the West and to The United Church of Canada which shall surpass the highest dreams of its founders.

In many ways we hate to leave the college. We would like to be around for a while. There will be goings-on next year for which we would like to be present. There are still many things we would like to learn. We have many questions to ask.-- But we can't stay. There are things to do. As Robert Frost says after he has stopped for a while on an evening to watch a woods fill up with snow,-

" The woods are lovely, dark and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep. "

So FAREWELL, UNITED COLLEGE.

As we go out into the work of the Church of Christ, humble in our mission, we will carry with us enduring loyalty to you and the ideals for which you stand.

FAREWELL.

M. John V. Shaver, B.A.
Valedictorian.

UNITED COLLEGE
Convocation
and Ordination
Young United Church, Winnipeg, Manitoba.
July 23rd, 1942.

Prayer, led by Rev. J. M. Shaver, D.D.,

Our Heavenly Father, we thank thee for all thy wonderful works on behalf of thy wilful, wayward human family; for thy infinite love and patience; for thy immeasurably rich gifts in material things for our comfort and enjoyment in human fellowships and in communion with thyself as shared with us through thy Son, Jesus Christ.

We confess before thee that we have often misused those gifts and perverted them to our own selfish ends and thus belittled and stained our lives and the lives of others, even those most dear to us. Forgive us for these our misdoings. The remembrance of them is most grievous unto us at this solemn and sacred hour.

We thank thee especially for these young people, prepared and ready to dedicate their whole lives, in obedience to thy will, to the highest service of humanity. We thank thee for all the folk who have surrendered themselves in service to thee that they might be prepared for this hour:- For parents who nursed them in body and in mind and in spirit since their very beginning; For the teachers who trained their minds in discipline and self-control; For the pastors under whom they worshipped and learned the practice of fellowship with thee; For the good companions who helped them to grow because they grew along with them in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man and for those great souls who at some time have given them a vision of the world's great need and the Christ ready to supply that need through them, if they will but answer the call.

Prayer

.2.

U.C. Conf.Ord.Service, July 23, 1942

We thank Thee especially at this time for those professors who have led them through the doubts and fears and dogmatisms of youth; who have been such loving and tireless leaders of their thought and character and given them the unstinted companionship of their own experienced and disciplined lives as they studied together the deepest experiences of man in relation to God and his fellows.

We pray that they may ever be worthy of these gifts by enlarging upon them in their own lives.

That they may be kept in their own inner selves and experience an ever deepening and enriching fellowship with thee.

May they live so that they will never fear what will be proclaimed from the housetop.

Give them a clear and growing insight into the needs of the world and may they never fail to answer the challenge of what they see.

Save them from the fear of men and women of influence, whether outside the church or on church boards.

Give them a growing love for all their people and may that love make them conscious that they are debtors to the young and the old, the native and the foreigner, the learned and the unlearned unto the uttermost parts of the earth and to every strata of this bleeding broken festering humanity.

Keep them humble in success and give them courage and faith in times of failure.

Give them such fellowship with thee that they will be able to cry with Paul, "I am persuaded that neither life nor death, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other creature is able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Prayer

.3. U.C.Conf.Ord.Service, July 23, 1942

Make them conscious that they come to this hour and to this task, 'not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give their lives a ransom for many.'

Help them to bring the forgiveness of God, with all its healing and release and place it in the hearts of men.

And O God, we would ask thee to give them good homes of their own. May they be sheltered there, not only from the material elements, but may there be time taken for that greatest of all arts, home making; that with the joys and sorrows, successes and problems of others shut out at times, strength and poise may be gained to face a needy world and some of the innocent ~~gi~~ pleasurable gifts of life be enjoyed for their ~~w~~ own sake.

And now, O God, as they dedicate their lives to the work of this ministry, we who receive them dedicate our lives afresh to that same task, the salvation of mankind. Accept of us and of them, unworthy as we are, in the name of Him who alone is worthy to approach thee, Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

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Members and friends of the Convocation:-

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