

ADDRESS TO THE GRADUATES BY  
Hon. J. G. Price

Notre Dame College

June 9th

Reverend Clergy,--Sisters,--Members of the Graduating Class,--Friends:

At the outset I wish to express the very deep appreciation that I feel at having been accorded the honor and privilege of participating at the exercises which mark the Graduation of the First Class of Notre Dame College. I have a proud interest in this day by reason of the fact that at the birth of the College, I was active with the good Sisters, who have labored so hard and whose hearts must be filled with joy today at the successful culmination of their effort up to this moment.

This class is particularly to be congratulated as the initial group of disciples that will go forth from NOTRE DAME carrying to the world at large the evidence of the labors of the good Sisters and those who have cooperated with them in bringing the dream of years to a reality. I am sure that there are very few, aside from perhaps the Rt. Rev. Bishop, and those closely associated with him in the administration of affairs, that really know the struggles that have happened along the way, until today's success has been made possible.

The members of this graduating class are fortunate indeed, and while today, appearing as the guests of honor on this occasion, are really the ones who will take upon their shoulders the great burdens and responsibilities which follow the bestowal of unusual opportunities and privileges.

Day and night,--in season and out of season, you have labored hard. You have given the best that was in you to fit yourselves for the bestowal of the honors that are yours today. This is not a mere happening,--it is something that is methodical and something that is designated for the accomplishment of greater things. We do everything that is done, by comparison,--those of us who are insignificant in the cares of the home,--of the workshop,--in the factory,-- are not expected to contribute as much as those with attributes that will enable them to do great things. We must always give in proportion to our ability, and unless we do this we are not performing our full responsibility,--we are not discharging our duty in the manner in which we should.

If we look back, perhaps not longer than a century and a half; if we will study the history of this country alone,--study the steps that have built it up, we will recognize that hard, stony paths were trod by our forefathers. If we will go back to the time when the encroachments upon the rights of the people at large were most visible, we will realize just a little of the real stern substantial character of the ones who led the way,--the ones who made the path that we are walking today,--the ones who realized that if we do not stifle the efforts of those breaking down ordinary things, then we may be able to realize just what may be expected of us. We are living in a time when the very best of heart and intellect must be forth to the fullest extent. We must realize that with every blessing that comes to us there comes a corresponding responsibility.

You who are graduating from this College today are expected to do greater things than those who have not been given the same opportunity. I dare say that most of you realize that your present joy and honor today has not come without sacrifices. You can think of a dear old mother and father, perhaps who have sacrificed many things in order that you might be given this opportunity to fit yourselves for the accomplishment of higher things in life and the only way to express the real appreciation is the human effort on your part to justify ~~everything that has been done~~ to bring them about.

We, as citizens of this government, have a great responsibility. We see the necessity of throwing into our daily life the very best that is possible. Every day should be an "open day". You should go out from this College today carrying the badge of NOTRE DAME,--always holding it high. Make those on the outside know that the efforts of the good Sisters to establish and build this college is not in vain,--those efforts are not in vain,--they have produced results and will continue to produce results, and cause the reputation to spread throughout this country.

You are the ones who will have to blaze the way, and in the years to come, when the College has grown to be a great University, it will be a special pride on your part to look back to this blessed day of June Nineteen Hundred and Twenty-six, and recall the fact that you were members of the first Graduating Class. Bear in mind, in season and out of season, the good Sisters are making sacrifices, perhaps unequalled by any other class of people in the world. They are not thinking of themselves,--they think only of the good that they can accomplish for the upbuilding of the city of Cleveland, and the country at large, by instilling into the hearts of those committed to their care, the finest traits, endeavoring to do all in their power in order that the name of NOTRE DAME COLLEGE may be impressed upon those going forth.

You will be judged in your daily life by the things you do. Let it be said that no finer blessing could be passed on to a young woman than to have the opportunity to earn the name of being a Graduate of this splendid College.

I want to congratulate you,--to express the fact that no effort that can be made by the citizens at large to sustain,--to continue,--to help to preserve and build NOTRE DAME COLLEGE would be too great. If you could only realize just how strong these burdens are resting upon the shoulders of these Sisters, you would consecrate your lives to making others recognize in Notre Dame College one of the greatest institutions of its kind to be found any where in this part of the country. I predict for it a wonderful growth.

Let us all join hands in the effort to help in order that before too much time has passed by we may join in the great glorification in the fact that the dreams,--the hopes,--the aspirations of the splendid Sisters may be fully realized, and that the State of Ohio and the country at large may be all the better by reason of the fact that there was the persistence, determination, and sacrifice on the part of the good Sisters to build this wonderful University. I feel I owe a debt of gratitude for having been permitted to say these few words in the presence of this distinguished company, and I wish for you graduates, the greatest measure of success, as I know you will put forth every effort to attain, having been trained in this COLLEGE OF NOTRE DAME.