

## 'So Let Us Travel' – Valedictory Address

By Robert Winston

We are travelers on the high road of learning and tonight we pause at a sharp bend in the way. Until now we have shared the comfort and companionship of a closely knit group. But the sunset hour is at hand; the first lap of the journey over. From this point on there are as many small paths as individuals.

There are farewells to say; grave decisions to make; equipment mental and spiritual, to inventory; there are some unbecoming attitudes to discard and new and surprisingly awkward burdens to shoulder.

We are turning our backs upon the sheltered life of the classroom the protection of the planned way. From here forward to a great degree we make our own decisions, for good or ill; our coming and going untimed by the bell; our only discipline, our conscience.

Childhood and early youth are of the past. They appear formless and disorganized as they fade into the distance. We have shed them like used, outgrown garments, keenly aware that now more will be expected and less forgiven us. Those shortcomings and lapses, overlooked in the very young, have no place in the adult world which we face tonight in all its stark reality.

Our approaches to life's demands must be geared to the swift era in which we are living and the first step in this adjust-

ment is to make certain that our thinking is crisp and clear. In an age when man will travel faster than the speed of sound there is no place for slow motion mental reactions or fuzzy reasoning.

It will be fatal to this vital clarity of thought if we are foolish enough to consider ourselves as "educated" simply because we have completed one small phase of the endless process of learning. Deep within, so long as life lasts, each should strive to keep aglow the little flame of "divine" discontent that lights hidden passages and inspires and beckons to higher and nobler achievements.

For some, this night, of necessity, marks the end of formal schooling. But it does not follow that growth and learning stop also. They must hereafter learn by doing; keeping ever the inquiring mind, the alert attitude and the receptive heart for all new experiences each fulfilling his destiny to the best that is in him, whether in industry, at home, in field, at bench or wheel.

Others of our number will know the benefits of higher education at schools and colleges throughout the country. If that is our privilege, as we adjust ourselves to campus and new corridors, may we grasp and hold fast to that which is fine and enlightening in each course we pursue, profiting from the stimulus of contact with the exchange of ideas with fellow students; making the most of those mighty minds of the past who have left such rich harvest between the covers of books.

As we mature as individuals there crowd in upon us the crying needs of humanity demands so overpowering that they seem at first glance staggeringly impossible of answer. Where do we belong in this confused welter of problems? With but one life to live, one set of energies to use, it behooves each graduate to thoughtfully consider by what definite means she can best further and contribute to the old pageant of humanity.

We can make no better beginning than by first fostering within ourselves the quality of leadership, the warm spring of action for the unfortunate, the privileged—the neighborly right or the voice of our left.

It is inevitable that this sense of unity and understanding, the logical result, call into phase of our individual lives. (Continued on page 4)

## 'What Counts' – Salutatory Address

By Alice Hargraves

Members of the Board of Education, Superintendent Davis, Our Beloved Principal, Teachers, Parents, Ladies and Gentlemen:

Had it been possible for us, the graduating class of 1954, to hand each one of you a gorgeous rose as you entered this room, as a token of our pleasure in welcoming you here, the room would have been bright and fragrant with the eloquence peculiar to the language of flowers.

Our welcome, though unseen, we trust can still be felt, for it is just as real, and our appreciation of your interest for us is more lasting than blooms which wither after a few hours. You show by your presence that you realize the importance of this occasion. An important goal in the life of each of us has been passed. We have arrived at the diverging of several roads, one of which each one of us must take. There can be no turning back. Something has been accomplished by all of us, though much has been left undone. If accomplished, then we feel the satisfaction that comes to those who have done their work well. If the reverse is true, then only those who have had similar misfortunes can know the depth of our remorse. The great Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "a man is relieved and gay when he has put his heart into his work and done his best; but what he has said or done otherwise, shall give him no peace."

In this age, when the world is suffering terrific stress and strain, we are indeed fortunate to be graduating from this high school.

We hope that when we shall have begun our work as members of adult society that we shall be able to show our selves worthy of the noble sacrifices made by our parents and the patrons of this school that have made our training possible. We know that all must have faith in us; for it has been so evident in the progressive plans, the outlay of money for equipment, the many meetings that have taken you out from your comfortable homes in coming together to try to improve the program of education for the youths you believed in. We sincerely hope that your faith in us will in later years bring you joy and renew your faith in coming generations.

May we, as we grow older, influence those who may follow in our footsteps by our good example. May our light so

shine that we may become worthy of the reverence and respect of everyone, young or old. Let us not forget that our living example may be the beacon light that leads to higher things.

So many articles have been written recently in which all the ills of society have been placed at the schoolhouse door that I wonder if it would not be well to ponder over them a while. The warden of Sing Sing prison has said that the schools have failed and are failing to develop character in our boys and girls, but are successfully teaching the three R's and at the same time permitting the development of crooks more skillful, clever and hardened than ever.

Again, those who have most severely criticized the school have judged from only one angle. It is the warden's sad duty to care for what are really the outcasts of the school, ones on whom the school has failed to make its proper impression. An investigation of the school history of each individual would likely produce records that showed which way the "twig had bent".

Let us face our problems squarely and not try to shift our responsibility to others. When we enter the fields of industry we must be able to give a certain number of hours of standard ability per week. To fill our place in life, we must be able to develop the hidden resources of our beings.

If we wish to succeed we must help somebody in need. We must never be too busy to aid our fellowmen. It will take some of the selfishness out of our hearts, and it may save the life or the soul of one who has lost his grip on life. No one is absolutely free. We all work together for a common good that we really become free.

The influence we have upon the lives of others is marvelous. It is a wonderful thing to meet people and know that in some way we will make a lasting impression upon them as they in turn will influence us. In another way it is a fearful thing, for if we sin it may cause others to follow in our steps. We may repent of the wrong done, but we cannot stop the effect of our evil act. No contribution of ours can recall its consequence. Remorse cannot force the bullet back into the gun from whence it issued.

The power of influence is like the boulder which starts down— (Continued on page 3)

### The Lincoln Echo

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#### Objectives of the Lincoln Echo

1. To supplement reading materials.
2. To encourage free expression.
3. To interpret the life of the school to the community.
4. To note greater school spirit.