

## CHANGE AND STABILITY

### Dr. Kitchin Administers a Parting Tonic to the Graduating Class

Though feeling that President Kitchin of Wake Forest College seemingly fails to realize fully the handicaps to the development, by multitudes, of the strong individualism which he commends to the 1935 graduating class under the economic and social regime he so vigorously champions, yet his baccalaureate address is so charmingly eloquent and of such tonic potency that we are here publishing it as an offset to the many pages of former argument in these columns for a "change" which, in my opinion, should serve to make possible the burgeoning of many individualities that will be dwarfed or utterly withered under the kind of "regimentation" which has so generally characterized the old regime.

The writer does not see in an equitable distribution of opportunities and an effective economic co-operative scheme the danger to individuality, or to initiative and enterprise, that even Dr. Kitchin evidently conceives as lurking in the shadows of "change." Even the individual ants of the communistic ant hill seem to preserve all the initiative and enterprise possible to ants under any circumstances. Each man does his level best and shows a persistence and an inventiveness in overcoming the obstacles in the path of the conveyance of his booty homeward that few of our race show. Nor do passing comrades interfere with him in the performance of his strenuous tasks unless they see that he has a burden too great for the lone comrade's puny strength, when they have a regular old-fashion "log rolling."

But Dr. Kitchin's tonic is fine for the individual under any kind of regime and its composition shows that he has the Kitchin genius in rhetorical fields as well as his own special genius in that of Aesculapius.

### Dr. Kitchin's Address

As I come to say farewell I cannot help thinking with something like dismay of the world which is about to receive you. You are entering life's activities at a time when thought is surcharged with desire for change. When, in 1929, the high fever of imaginary progress vanished, the hysteria of collapse appeared and extreme measures were employed to control an abnormal patient. The warp and woof of the world's economic life had become so entangled that millions of distressed and desperate souls were ready to follow a Moses who would lead them out of the wilderness. Then, in view of walled cities and giant problems, self-reliance failed and manna and quail were desired.

The proponents of change are preaching a religion of Modernity. "Behold," they cry, "we make all things new." As a result we have produced new international treaties and new weapons of warfare, new nationalism and a new attitude of the individual, new education which cloaks but does not destroy ignorance; new conceptions of religion, even—many of them so wild and radical that the Creator of worlds is left out.

This cult of modernity has indeed become so popular that change is considered identical with progress. Give us something new, is the clamor, anything new and different! Unfortunately, this attitude has opened wide the door to that worst of all falsehoods, the half-truth, and a legion of his cohorts. So many things are labeled new that we are endangered by a myopic view of values and a loss of our sense of veneration. You are entering a world so charmed by illusion and deception that you may be influenced to reduce truth to opinion and replace hope with futility.

May I therefore remind you, that the present hour has no monopoly on wisdom, and that the wealth of the world has not been produced by this generation. May I caution you that some things are immune to change, and charge you that the superstructure of your lives, as well as that of society, must rest upon eternal bed-rock. May we notice a few illustrations of those things which are permanent.

#### Individualism

The first is individualism. A distinguished gentleman recently died. A friend wrote of him—"He had less dust on his windows than on those of any other man I know. His was the 'understanding' that is more than wisdom—an individualism that springs from the wisdom of the ages, the wisdom which reveals that life can endure and man develop only in an atmosphere of freedom." He had the ability to adjust his opinions to his knowledge.

All individualism may be said to "spring from the wisdom of the ages" for it is concerned, not

with fly-by-night changes but with development—and it has been well said that it is only the cultivation of individualism that produces, or can produce, well developed human beings.

"He who lets the world, or his own portion of it, choose his plan of life for him, has no need of any other faculty than the ape-like one of imitation. He who chooses his plan for himself, employs all his faculties. . . . Human nature is not a machine to be built after a model, and set to do exactly the work prescribed for it, but a tree, which requires to grow and develop on all sides, according to the tendency of the inward forces which make it a living thing." (Mill.)

Individualism does not imply the libertinism embodied in claims of equality or ability and possessions. Genuine individuality is as old and inherent and unique as man's first finger prints. Every human being is, in body and mind and spirit, a peculiar creation. There is no group mind or spirit as such. Effort to efface individuality presumes to violate the order of creation itself. Unity through diversity is as widespread as the human family and as far flung as the stars.

Individualism guarantees and honors personality. Personality is, as it should be, one of the most persistent things in life. It can be dwarfed and perverted, but not effaced. Nor can it be eliminated by time, eradicated by climate, destroyed by death. Moreover, designs to reduce all men to a common denominator, in thought or in wealth, are ultimately as impossible as they are dangerous.

It is difficult to predict the effects upon personality of those tendencies designated as planned economy, collectivism, limitation, and division, and share the wealth. One can say, however, that the utmost caution should be exercised against current isms—Facism, Naziism, Bolshevism, Socialism, Paternalism—for such centralization of power may so militate against personality as to restrict and stifle it. Unwarranted, and perhaps, unsuspected, delegation of authority, as excess of liberty, could easily lead to the worst form of servitude, for it can subtly transform independence into dependence and initiative into conscienceless beggary.

#### Personal Rights

The sacredness of individualism presumes inalienable personal rights and obligations.

There is the right to work. The law of labor is as old as creation, and it can neither be abridged nor repealed. Disuse means atrophy of moral fibre, as certainly as a biological organism tends to eliminate a member which is cannot use. Labor creates the virtues of thrift, self-reliance, independence, self-respect, honor, stability. The Master Workman recognized, honored, and dignified manual toil, and the work of mind and spirit. He placed primary emphasis on the creation of those ultimate riches which rust does not corrode nor thieves purloin—the "durable goods" that endow the ages.

Also, the abundant life is a moral and social birthright. For man the abundant life cannot be had through bread alone. Man is essentially mind and spirit. He must have bread to exist, things of the mind and spirit to live. Our fathers left us a legacy, created by their ideals and established with their labors with compass and pen and sword. The legacy is a Jeffersonian principle, superior to any party, springing from the essence of democracy, and nurtured by those consecrated to faith in the divine nature of man.

It is the Palladium of our liberties—the right to think and to teach our children to think; the right to religious liberty for ourselves and our children; the right to practice thrift for our selves and our families and attain a degree of competence and independence; the right to develop individuality in the line of aptitude, unhindered by false dogmas or unjust and fettering restrictions; the right to gain character and truth and beauty through development of that measure of the Kingdom of Heaven within one. This sacred trust must be kept inviolate. It antedates the Constitution, the English Bill of Rights, Roman Law; it is as old as Noah's rainbow and God's covenant with Abraham.

So, when western civilization follows chimerical fancy and fatuous opinion, it is inevitable that sacred treaties become scraps of paper and that the social structure collapses with such force as to shake the foundations of the world. Nor can ultimate recovery be had merely through such false premises. In government, in education, and in organized religion, the essential nature of man must be recognized and personal rights must be safeguarded and developed; or we shall suffer such a declension of faith as will bring unparalleled moral upheaval and social catastrophe. Basic rights and obligations never actually conflict. Genuine progress may be had only through freedom. Only the free may be

come really strong and constructive. Witness Spartan regimentation and momentary power; witness the freedom of Greece, and marvel at her priceless and imperishable treasures of art and literature and philosophy. Through keeping inviolate the sacred rights of man there may be had a dynamic and gravitational force, stronger than the influences of the Pleiades and the bands of Orion.

#### The Greatest Permanency

But we know, in thinking over those things which abide, that religion is of greatest permanency. It is as old as the soul of man, and has helped to make it. Eternity is in the heart. Religion at its best, that is, as Jesus taught and practiced it, has given to the world a great philosophy, a great ethic, and a great source of power. It creates enduring values. It has been said, "It is not the happy death, but the happy life, that makes man happy." The way to find happiness—and let me remind you that it is the only way—is to turn back to these enduring values, these fundamentals of life and religion. Christianity is adaptable in practice but unchangeable in its principles.

A hundred years ago Thomas Carlyle wrote, "Religion becomes more and more mechanical. Considered as a whole, the Christian Religion of late ages has been gradually dissipating itself into Metaphysics; and threatens now to disappear, as some rivers do, in deserts of barren sand." But we have Divine assurance that it is here to stay. Its Founder "is the same yesterday, today, and forever." His words are more imperishable than Heaven and earth, and His words are more imperishable than Heaven and earth, and His organized truth is built upon a rock. Even if every word Jesus spoke were destroyed, His religion would recreate itself, for it lives in the depths of the heart and will continue to live through all the generations, through all the ages.

I have mentioned three permanent realities—individualism, personal rights and obligations, and religion. The way out of the chaos of uncertainty cannot be discovered through mere human expediency and opportunism; it can be found in the fundamentals of life and religion.

And so, Members of the Class of 1935, I beg you to enter this turbulent world with high courage, believing that the changes we see and fear are on the surface, like restless waves. The unsoundable depths are not disturbed, because—

"The Deep-Down Things are strong and great,  
Firm fixed, unchangeable as fate,  
Inevitable, inviolate,  
The Deep-Down Things.

"The Deep-Down Things! All winds that blow,  
All seething tides that roam and flow  
May smite but cannot overflow  
The Deep-Down Things.

"The surge of years engulf the land  
And crumble mountains into sand,  
But yet the Deep-Down Things withstand  
The surge of years.

"Behind the years that waste and smite,  
And topple empires into night,  
God dwells unchanged in changeless light  
Behind the years."

#### A Plea for the Salvage of "Should"

(Continued from Page Four)

ture from the time of the threat; "was" either indicates that the paying was before the threat, or that information as to whether it had been paid or not was lacking.

Long usage has seemed to establish the employment of simple "shall" or "should" forms instead of the perfect tense forms, "shall have" or "should have," as correct English, the equivalent of which the Latins, in their exactness of tense relations, invariably use when the conditioned act must be completed before the proposed or "threatened" act occurs. But to abandon all suggestions of the future relation seems to be going too far and introducing an element of exceeding slovenness into the construction of that exceedingly important grammatical clause, the conditional, for which, as suggested above, such concern, on the other hand, is felt for exactness in it that the double connective, *if and when*, a stranger to the language for a thousand years, is now being too generally used.

Suppose we try to preserve, at least, the partial degree of tense exactness of classic English before we try to increase another kind of exactness by a means that so frequently results in monstrosities of grammatical structure. I insist that "shall" and "should" ought to retain their former position in conditional clauses.