

Sir Alladi Krishnaswami Iyer's Address to the graduates of the year delivered at the Convocation of the University of Delhi on 30th November, 1951*.

I am thankful to the Vice-Chancellor and the authorities of this university for the honour extended to me in calling upon me to deliver the convocation address. If I responded to the very kind invitation of your university in spite of my feeble health, it is because I felt it was a call of duty - a duty which the older generation owes the young. Delhi as the capital of India has a right to claim the allegiance and devotion of every citizen of our country to its activities. More than any other city in India, Delhi typifies the unity of Indian culture and nationhood. Her architecture is a close blend of Hindu and Saracenic art. The architectural glories of Delhi are, as is attested by well-known authorities like Fergusson and Fanshawe, famous alike in Indian and European literature. Delhi was the capital of India under successive empires and rulers from the days of the Pandavas and she continues to be such since the dawn of freedom and the emancipation of the country from foreign rule. She is on the banks of the Jumna - a river sacred in Hindu literature and hallowed by the traditions and legends connected with our Lord, Sri Krishna. The inspiring physical setting of your university is in keeping with the dignity and glamour of the historic traditions of this ancient city. The site of your university is beautifully conceived; its spacious halls, its airy college rooms, its extensive lawns and its wide open grounds will bear comparison to those of Oxford and Cambridge.

The idea of founding a university in this metropolis was grandly conceived by the former rulers of this country. In putting a powerful plea for a separate University in London, on lines different from those of Oxford and Cambridge, stress was laid upon the national life of England being concentrated in the metropolis of London. This plea equally holds good in regard to Delhi. The University of Delhi in the course of a comparatively short period of thirty years has made rapid progress and is attracting students from all parts of India. Her professors and scholars have made solid contributions in different departments of knowledge, and I am glad to note that this university has in recent times developed active schools of economics under Dr. V. K. R. V. Rao and theoretical physics under Dr. Kothari and Dr. Majumdar. It has on its staff a band of young workers in other fields of knowledge and I look forward to substantial achievements by them in no distant future. Your university has been fortunate in the successive Vice Chancellors who have guided her destinies including Sir Maurice Gwyer who has given of his best to the service of this university and the present Vice-Chancellor who is equally enthusiastic and zealous about the university occupying a preeminent place commensurate with the importance of the capital.

**Sir Alladi Krishnaswami Iyer (1883-1953), one of the most eminent lawyers of India, was on the Drafting Committee of the Constitution of India. After the Constitution was ratified in January 1950, it was Sir Alladi on the Drafting Committee, and Rajendra Prasad, the First President of India, who were conferred Honorary Doctorates by the University of Delhi at its Convocation in November 1951. Since Sir Alladi's convocation speech was soon after the ratification of the Constitution, he alludes to certain aspects of the Constitution with regard to university education, and the responsibility of universities to educate the public in order to ensure that the democratic process will function effectively.*

Graduates of the year, on behalf of the Senate, I offer you my most hearty congratulations on the academic honour and distinction which you have attained as a result of your hard work and study. My primary duty tonight is to exhort the graduates who have taken their degrees. Before discharging this duty, I crave leave to make a few remarks on the place of universities in national life and on the course of instruction and research to be pursued by our universities.

The University Commission presided over by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan and appointed to report upon Indian university education and suggest improvements and extensions that may be desirable to suit present and future requirements of the country has approached the problem from the right perspective. If the great purposes of the Constitution of India and the social philosophy underlying the preamble the Constitution are to be realised, the Commission point out, it can only be by the universities educating on right lines and providing proper facilities for educating the large number of the people of India. The Commission lay stress upon democracy depending for its very life on a high standard of general, vocational and professional education and upon there being sufficient unity of purpose in all the diversity of knowledge pursued, to produce a community of values and ideas among the educated men. The purpose must be reflected in the courses of study prescribed by the university, in the relative importance attached to scientific and humanistic studies and in the conscious aim on the part of the university authorities to emphasise the cultural unity of India while keeping abreast of the advance of scientific knowledge, political thought and current social philosophy.

The Constitution of India in accepting adult suffrage as the basis of franchise in spite of the illiteracy of the large mass of our countrymen, has demonstrated its faith in the common man and in a broad based democracy. Whether this bold experiment succeeds or not, would, to a very large extent depend upon the realisation by the educated few of their obligations to the uneducated many. The educated among our countrymen owe a duty to the rest in imparting a sense of right values. If only the educated alumni of our universities are alive to their duties to the rest of their countrymen, the dissemination of political ideas is comparatively an easy affair in a country where the family still in many respects continues to be the unit of society and where the village community is not yet a dead institution. It is common knowledge that a large part of the womenfolk in our families though illiterate, or at any rate not sufficiently advanced in studies, have imbibed the truth contained in our ancient scriptures and continue to be the repositories of our ancient culture. The head of a family who is a great pundit or scholar operated as a radiating influence and the rest of the family learnt under him by coming under his influence. If Athens was an ideal democracy in the ancient world, it is not due to universal compulsory education, but to the spread of right political ideas by the elite and the intellectuals among their countrymen. Democracy while it is the most valued form of government, is in many respects the most difficult and needs qualities which have not been always exhibited by several communities which have striven for that form of Government. There is much to learn from the working of democratic institutions in Anglo-Saxon countries which have furnished an example to the rest of the world in the modern age, and from Athens in the ancient world. *The experience of modern democracies and especially of England and the Dominions that have followed its example, shows that the proper functions of democratic institutions and responsible governments*

depends upon the existence of the healthy or genuine party system based upon differences in ideals and approach to public questions and an opposition which has sufficient unity of purpose to take up the responsibilities of government if and when the existing government is defeated. The mere hatred or dislike of an existing government by a number of parties without any common link and with no common ideas or ideals animating them will not assist the evolution of the genuine or healthy responsible government.

The present century has been frequently described as the century of the common man. The great and difficult task is how to impart the sense of right values to him. That task devolves on the educated man and the products of our university education. In every sphere of his activity, when speaking on the radio, in discharging his task as a censor of a film, in writing to a newspaper, in meetings convened for speaking on public platforms and on public questions and even in private conversations, the educated man will have to remember his duty and his obligations to society. The part played by him in the shaping of democratic thought and action, to a large extent, depends upon the use made by him of these powerful instruments for the dissemination of knowledge and information.

It is unfortunate that despair and despondency seem to have overtaken our university men in the present political context. With the introduction of universal suffrage, leadership cannot be claimed as a matter of right by them. The present age requires a new type of leadership - a type of leadership different from what we have been accustomed to all along. As it is trenchantly put by Sir Walter Moberly in an address which he recently delivered in the University of St. Andrews:

”The modern university is neither a training ground for a leisured class nor for the training of an elite of gifted individuals.”

Leadership in a democratic society must necessarily take a new form. It cannot be claimed as of right, but education for social responsibilities is still a task of our universities.

Our universities depend largely for their financial support upon the grants by the popular Governments, both at the Centre and in the States. Financial aid from the public exchequer carries with it an added responsibility to our universities. Our universities must make their service available to the community as a whole. To take only one example, here is India which is depending upon agriculture for the sustenance of its huge population. It is the main occupation for the large mass of our countrymen and yet we are suffering from starvation and want, and are depending upon the aid extended to us by other countries. The universities and agricultural institutes must therefore give primary importance to the problems of agriculture and direct their efforts to making the land yield much more than what it is yielding at present. I am reminded of the famous saying of Zoroaster to the effect that a person who makes the land yield two blades of grass instead of one does more for the good of humanity than any philosopher. While on this topic, I cannot do better than quote the words of Lord Boyd Orr who in a recent interview to the press emphasised the need for treating the problem of food production as a national war emergency.

”India to-day faces a crisis. Her people are ill-nourished and a feeble people can never grow into a great race. If India meets and overcomes this crisis, her people can obtain a vigorous creative spirit and become one of the dominant nations of the world.

”India’s land today has lost much of its natural fertility due to bad husbandry and unchecked erosion. The result is poor agricultural yield and this is the basic cause of the

present malnutrition which curbs vigour, restricts all kinds of production and thus also prevents her from buying food from elsewhere since she has little to offer in exchange.

”By the use of modern western agricultural technology, India can grow all the food she requires not only to meet the needs of growing population but also to provide them with the complete balanced high quality diet considered necessary by modern standards.”

While in the larger interests of education, the autonomy of universities has to be respected, universities, in their turn, must realise their duties to the rest of the community. They must be in touch with the dynamic forces which mould modern society. The whole future of democracy in India is bound up with the kind of education imparted in our schools and colleges, upon the training of character to be achieved in the process of education, by the discipline of the body, the will and intelligence. In the immortal words of Plato:

”Types of Government correspond to the types of human nature. States are made not from rocks and trees but from the character of their citizens which turn the scale and draw everything after them.”

Again, the universities will have to take note of the great transformation that has overtaken modern society. The social and political problems that confront the complex civilisation of the present age, the exploration and achievements in the field of science, their intimate bearing upon life in the planet, cannot be ignored. Scientific instruction must therefore occupy a preeminent place in any scheme of studies. But science in spite of its great achievements and its arresting attractions cannot possibly cover the entire field of education. Besides we must remember always that science is not her own master, and what she does depends not upon her but on the use made by human beings. As Sir Richard Livingstone puts in one of his lectures:

”She comes with poison gas and atomic bombs in one hand with anaesthetics and penicillin in the other. It is not however, the fault of science if men chose the atom bomb. The choice is nor hers but theirs.”

The Universities must therefore take care to see that insistence on scientific studies does not operate to the prejudice of the moral and spiritual values of man.

Great as have been the achievements of science, Valmiki¹, Vyasa² and Kalidasa³, Shakespeare and Milton, Homer and Dante, have not lost their hold on what is perennial in man. Nor can any progress in the field of science be a substitute for the teachings of the (Bhagavat) Gita and its appeal to what is eternal in human personality. In our quest of new learning, we have to take care to see that we do not lose grip of the culture which has sustained us for ages. In Sanskrit language and literature, going back to the Vedic period, are enshrined the culture of our ancient land. There is an unbroken history of Indian culture and it may be legitimately claimed that it is still pulsating with life. It is that culture that has sustained us in spite of political enslavement and internecine feuds. In the words of Prof. Nilakanta Sastri in a recently delivered address: ”Our epics and puranas are veritable storehouses of wisdom and social morality.” Indian culture is bound up with the history of Indian philosophy which can take a legitimate place of pride among the philosophic systems in the world. Of what use is it that you gain the whole world but lose the soul? I would therefore plead for a place of honour being accorded to Sanskrit and Indian philosophy by university authorities in every part of India in any scheme of reorganisation of university studies. With the growing output in the world of letters and science, while our universities

have necessarily to specialise in certain departments of knowledge, too great a care cannot be taken however, in seeing that they do not dehumanise man and prevent their alumni from seeing the whole realm of knowledge in its proper perspective. We have to guard against the attendant danger in all specialised knowledge.

In any scheme of university reform or re-orientation of university studies, there is no use of ignoring the fact that more students pursue their studies for its utility in life. The only effort of the educational reformer can be to see that these studies are pursued not without regard to their utility for life but not merely for the sake of their utility. There is nothing per se wrong in the alumni regarding a university degree as the avenue of a desirable job which promises a measure of economic security and social consideration.

There is one other point I should like to dwell on, before I close my general observations. Having regard to the increased numbers that are taking to university education, the constitution of the different universities, the strata of society from which students are recruited, the linguistic and geographical differences that exist in our country, the great problem in our universities is, how to instill into the students the advantages of a corporate life. From my knowledge of hostels and colleges in Madras, I can say there is an unfortunate tendency for people from a particular district or from a particular taluk congregating together so that when they leave the university, it cannot be said that they have formed new contacts or friendships. The members of a university ought to come in close touch with those whose professional interests and upbringing are different from their own. University life gives a chance to its alumni of coming into close association with persons of varied outlook and experience which ought not to be lost under any circumstances.

In this country, more than in any other, for the welding of our nation, for imparting to the youth a genuine sense of pride in their being Indians first and then only as belonging to this State or that State, this linguistic area or that linguistic area, ways and means must be devised by university authorities for bringing together students from different parts of the country. Otherwise our communal, sectional and geographical differences are sure to sap the foundations of our national existence. Something drastic must be attempted to impart a genuine community life among the students. University unions, representative councils, common halls, cultural and sports associations may help a great deal to promote the team spirit. But in a matter like this, the professors and teachers who are in intimate contact with the students, can suggest ways and means better than a lawyer in an occasional address to the alumni of a university. In regard to the spirit that should pervade the university atmosphere and regulate the relations between the teacher and the taught, nothing nobler can be conceived or said than the immortal saying of the Upanishads (English letters for a Sanskrit verse below):

*Sahanaa vavathu, sahanau bhunakthu, saha veeryam karavaavahai
Tejasvinavadhi thamasthu, maa vidvishavahai.*

I do not know if I will be in order in touching on a controversial topic - the place of Hindi and regional languages in university education. While I yield to none in recognising the need for having a common language for welding together the people of this country, I would like to sound a note of caution. Scientific knowledge in the world today is progressing at a giddy pace and India cannot afford to stand still when other nations are progressing. The student and the teacher alike must be in touch with the latest discoveries

and treatises both in the pure and applied sciences. It would be almost impossible task to attempt translating into Hindi or the vernacular language all the great works that are being produced in the world of science from day to day. To a large extent, my remarks hold good even in regard to law and medicine. While I yield to none in the zeal for the gradual spread of Hindi and the adoption of the Indian regional languages as the media of instruction, I would plead for the students getting a sound working knowledge of English in the high school classes and due importance being attached to English in collegiate and university education. There is no use of ignoring the fact that English is today a world language.

Before I conclude this part of my address, I would like to invite your attention to the famous concluding passage in Cardinal Newman's monumental treatise on "The idea of a University" in which he sums up the proper function of a university in the life of a nation:

"A university training aims at raising the intellectual tone of society, at cultivating the public mind, at purifying the national taste, at supplying true principles to popular enthusiasm and fixed aims to popular aspirations, at giving enlargement and sobriety to the ideas of the age, at facilitating the exercise of political power and refining the intercourse of private life."

In spite of the great changes that have come over human society as the result of universal suffrage, the spread of democratic thought and the consequent changes in the proper perspective in regard to the place and functions of a university in national life, much of what Newman wrote still holds good. This passage may still serve as a guiding light in the matter of the reform of university education.

With these general remarks, I crave leave to touch upon some matters of practical importance in the working of our universities. In view of our meagre financial resources and the undisputed fact that our universities, scientific and technological institutes, all depend for their financial support in the main on Government aid, we have to take care to see that there is no dissipation of effort or financial wastage and there is coordination among the different agencies for the diffusion of knowledge in subjects of general interest and in applied sciences which require technical knowledge and skill. There must be a close liaison between the special institutes of research like The National Physical Laboratory, The National Chemical Laboratory, The Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, The Indian Institute of Science, The Raman Institute of Science, and the recently started Technological Institutes including The Madras Institute of Technology on the one hand and the universities in India on the other. The field of knowledge is so vast and scientific advance so rapid that unless our universities concentrate their efforts on particular subjects without sacrificing the general interest of culture, there is not likely to be any appreciable or tangible result. Again, in our zeal for applied science, for the promotion of technical knowledge and skill, there is no use of ignoring the importance of fundamental sciences which form the groundwork of all technology and the departments of knowledge which are intended to harness science for the amelioration of the life and well-being of the common man.

To take one example, it is false assumption that mathematics has no special value excepting as a factor for mental discipline. No advance in physics, aerodynamics, engineering or statistics is possible without a simultaneous and parallel advance in mathematics. This

position is fully realised today in America which is pre-eminently a land of technology and industrial progress. The American universities have developed great schools of mathematics during the last few decades. While the Indian intellect has a natural aptitude for mathematics from the earliest days in the history of civilisation, it cannot, however, be claimed that we have made outstanding contributions to mathematical knowledge in recent times - the case of an isolated genius like Ramanujan who unhappily was lost to our country and to the world at a premature age, being almost an exception. I am quite alive to the fact that professors in Indian universities like Prof. Vaidhyanathaswamy, Dr. T. V. Vijayaraghavan, Dr. Chowla and some brilliant young men like Harish-Chandra have made and are making notable and important contributions to mathematical knowledge. But I venture to state that India's contribution is not commensurate with the number of universities and the graduates turned out of the universities every year.

Statistics is a science closely allied to mathematics in which there is considerable scope for research. During the last twenty-five years, statistical science has made great progress thanks to the brilliant schools of British and American statisticians on the one hand, and French and Russian mathematicians on the other. It has found application in the most varied fields of practical and scientific activity, for example, in physics, biology and agriculture. I am glad to note that the Indian School of Statistics is making considerable progress and men like Dr. Mahalonobis have made valuable contribution to statistical science.

Theoretical physics again is another field in which our universities may concentrate their effort without much outlay and expense. The present century which is the golden age of physics has witnessed, in the words of Max Planck "changes in the physical view of the world which are the most profound that have ever arisen in the evolution of any science." This radical revolution in our knowledge of natural phenomena has been the direct result of outstanding achievements in the fields of both theoretical and experimental physics. Mathematical physics is closely allied to both mathematics and experimental physics and forms the link between the two branches of knowledge. Some of the greatest contributions to our knowledge of the physical world have been made by theoretical physicists like Max Planck, Einstein, Bohr, Heisenberg, Schrodinger and Dirac. In India, we have in our midst today a leading mathematical physicist in the person of Dr. Bhabha. I am not in this connection referring to one of the greatest astro physicists in the world, Professor S. Chandrasekhar, whose services were lost to us due, if I may say so, to the innate incapacity of our former governments to discover genius and to harness talent in the service of our country.

Experimental physics has been mainly associated with the outstanding contributions of our Nobel Laureate, Sir C.V.Raman, who is *facile princeps* in the field and Sir K. S. Krishnan, Dr. R. S. Krishnan and their school. It is to their credit that in spite of the lack of large financial outlay necessary for research in experimental physics, they have been able to achieve notable progress. But any extension in the field of experimental physics say, in nuclear physics, would involve huge outlay out of all proportion to our meagre resources.

Similarly, zoology, botany and certain branches of chemistry which do not require the expenditure of large capital may legitimately demand the special attention of our universities. In the universities which are located on the sea coast, there is considerable

scope for research in biological studies. Industrial expansion is closely allied with advances in chemistry. The research in the universities will have to aid and supplement the work of the technological and industrial institutes and there must be a continuous supply of highly qualified personnel to work in and man the various industries. The country cannot afford to continuously draw upon experts from foreign countries though their services will have necessarily to be utilised on term-contracts in the early stages of our country's progress.

In regard to engineering and medicine, it can be claimed that we have in our midst engineers and doctors who do not yield in their skill and capacity to their comperes in the West. The great engineering works in India will bear comparison to some of the best works in England and America. In the field of medicine, we have doctors who are acquainted with the latest developments in medicine and surgery both in England and America. But even in these subjects, we have not made any tangible contribution to the advance of knowledge. It is up to our universities and special institutions to take up the question of research in these subjects. In the field of engineering, research in a subject like theoretical aerodynamics which is of fundametai importance for the development of aeronautics and aviation does not require very much expenditure. Students who are skilled in mathematics and physics can make substantial contribution to the.advance of knowledge in these subjects.

Archaeology and Indology afford ample scope for reseacrh and investigation without a large expenditure. In the field of Indian history and Indology, I can easily recall the names of several distinguished professors, like the Bhandarkars and Professor Nilakanta Sastri who have made notable contributions to the subject. It is unfortunate that the scheme for establishing an All India Indological Research Institute has not materialized.

Politics and Law have a peculiar attraction for the Indian intellect. They have their roots in our Dharma Sastras and in the Arthasastra of Kautilya⁴. But I am sorry to say that though under the British regime we have produced great lawyers and judges, our contribution to the developnient of legal science and jurisprudence has been almost negligible. International law and constitutional law in the present set up of the world afford a great scope for study. It is wrong to assume that international law has not very much value in view of the war hysteria which has overtaken advanced nations. It is interesting to note that both parties to a dispute whether before the Security Council or the United Nations Assembly appeal to international law and accuse each other of its breach, thereby recognising the binding force of international law and precedent in the dealings between nations. Any student of public affairs knows that there are thousands of matters in which international law is regarded as a binding force among nations and according to which nations conduct towards one another. It is with a feeling of dismay and disappointmentt that I notice when I read the American or English journals on International Law, there is no contribution of any value from our countrymen. All that is required for research in legal studies is a good library equipped with leading journals on the subject. There is the necessary human material for pursuing studies in these subjects if only sufficient scope and opportunity are afforded to students for pursuing an intensive study of these subjects. There is a continuous and incessant demand for personnel specially trained in international law in the service of the United Nations Organisation and various other bodies connected with it as also in the diplomatic service.

The Constitution of India opens up a large field for the study of constitutional law

and constitutional problems. To train up the right type of constitutional lawyers is the legitimate and proper function of the universities. Without some general knowledge of history, the political movements in the different parts of the world, the economic struggles that are going on, the changes that have come over the world in regard to the attitude of the State and of the citizen to property, neither a Judge nor a practising lawyer can bring to bear the right perspective in the interpretation of the Constitution. It is a trite saying that a constitution cannot be interpreted in a vacuum. The great contribution by the members of the Bar in the early history of the Supreme Court of the United States and of eminent judges like Chief Justice Marshall and later Mr. Justice Holmes and those who succeeded him, would amply bear out that the successful working of a written constitution depends upon the quality of the judges and of the practitioners that appear before them and the wide knowledge of human affairs they bring to bear in the causes coming up for decision. Law cannot be altogether divorced from politics and from the social forces operating at a given time. In this connection I would refer to a letter addressed by the late Theodore Roosevelt on the occasion of the appointment of Mr. Justice Holmes to the Supreme Court wherein he pointed out that a judge dealing with constitutional questions must be a politician in the larger sense of the term and he must keep in mind his relations with those in other branches of Government who are striving in cooperation with him to advance the ends of Government.

While research ought to be the fundamental aim of universities working in this country, it is as well to remember that research cannot be made to order, that it cannot be subjected to quantitative test and analysis, but that research can be promoted only by a band of professors and scholars with their main aim concentrated in the pursuit of knowledge and enlightenment.

Scientific attitude and early education: Scientific advancement in universities is not possible or feasible unless foundation is laid in the secondary courses and if I may say so, even in the elementary classes. The scientific attitude must be developed and cultivated almost from the beginning of one's studies. The mind, the eye, the ear and intellect, should be trained to observe natural phenomena from an early age and the scientific attitude must be fostered from the very beginning. If a student is not taught to observe, but merely undergoes in his early days purely mechanical instruction in particular subjects and is made to believe that the passing of an examination is the be-all and end-all of study, he is not likely to get or develop a scientific attitude in the later years. This may not apply to an outstanding genius who has an inner urge to observe natural phenomena almost from his infancy. The training ground therefore for any research work in the university must be furnished in the early years of student's educational career.

There will be no improvement in university education unless our popular governments come to regard expenditure on education as a first-class capital investment and unless ways and means are found for financing our universities in the matter of higher research for the expansion of their activities. Private benefactions must also come to the rescue of our universities, college and industrial institutes. Though in recent years, private philanthropy has been directed to educational advancement, there is still considerable scope for improvement in that direction. India has been a land of charity from the earliest times; even a poor family spends much more upon charity than people similarly circumstanced in

other parts of the world. What is needed is a concentrated and organised effort to utilise the charitable instincts of our people and to instill into them a feeling that there can be no better investment of the nation's resources than on education. Our ancients regarded *Vidhya Dhana*⁵ as of greater, moral and religious merit than any other Dhana.

No organisational changes, no introduction of newer special courses, no division or allocation of functions, no new schemes, not even huge buildings and equipment would be an effective substitute for the proper human material being recruited. In this connection, the following important consideration will have to be kept in view. It is not as if the spirit of knowledge for its own sake is foreign to the genius of our country and to its traditions. At the same time, the rising cost of living conditions at present cannot be lost sight of in any scheme to secure the services of the best talent for educational work in our universities and colleges. If man does not live by bread alone, he, his wife and children cannot live without bread. Unless the conditions of living and the rates of remuneration of professors and teachers are brought somewhat into line with those employed, say, in the learned professions, or in the Government services (by competitive examinations) and in certain fields of business, any scheme for the improvement of our universities and for the attraction of the best talent for academic life is not likely to meet with success. Administrative services will continue to drain away a large part of the available talent in the country. There is still plenty of talent available for every sphere of the nation's activities if only it is trained, harnessed, and tried properly. It is unfortunate that a teacher's or even a lecturer's job in this country is treated as one for pathetic commiseration and there is a mood of dependency in a teacher or college professor after certain years of service. The University Commission presided over by our distinguished countryman Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, who himself has brought lustre and glory to the academic profession in India, has made very modest suggestions in regard to the remuneration of the university professors. The implementation of their recommendations and the reform in that direction are more urgent and imperative than any other contemplated reform.

It only remains for me to discharge my main duty of exhorting you, my young friends, and tendering a few words of advice. Graduates of the year, I hope you realise what your graduation means. It is the hallmark of having received a liberal education, an education which must have imbued you with an outlook and sympathies which enable you to break the bondage of narrow self-interest, sectarian, sectional, linguistic and provincial prejudices. Your knowledge and training in the universities carry with them large responsibilities of citizenship and duty to the community and to the country. Whichever may be the walk of life you may pursue, it ought to be possible for any one who comes in contact with you to distinguish you from those who have not had the benefit of university education. On the way in which you conduct yourself depends the reputation and prestige of your alma mater.

Your graduation coincides with the coming elections⁶ which will, as a result of the wide franchise, open a new chapter in the history of our nation. The dawn of freedom has added additional responsibilities to the alumni of our universities. Our old and trusted leaders who have been in the vanguard of the battle for freedom are fast passing out of the scene. It is for you to take their place. You cannot rest content merely criticising them for any shortcomings of theirs. You must be ready to fill the breach occasioned by the

inevitable process of nature - of the older generation having to yield place to the new.

By reason of the education you have received, you owe a duty to yourselves, to the society of which you are members, and to your country. In the case of a good number of you, your education is a result of the self-sacrifice of parents and guardians who cannot afford it and possibly of public and private philanthropy; everyone of you owes your education also to our national and State Governments and to the common tax payer. You, therefore, owe a duty to those less fortunately circumstanced than yourself and you must put back into the pool a bit of what you got, realising that it is an accident that you have been given a chance in life which has been denied to most others. You must make a point of giving of your best to the service of your country and help the development of a higher type of society. Above all, you must remember your obligations to the teeming millions of our country who are underfed and underclothed. In public life, beware, you do not appeal to the lower feelings of your fellow-countrymen; you must cultivate a genuine patriotism which is above caste, creed or geographic or linguistic division. Do not fall into the snare of having one rule of conduct for public life and another for private life. Realise that your real education commences with your degree. As is so often said, education is a process, not a curriculum; it is a continuous evolution, and the search for truth is never complete. Remember that perpetual study has been enjoined by our scriptures and all virtues in man depend upon such study (English letters for the Sanskrit verse below taken from the *Taitriya Upanishad*):

*Thritham cha swadhyayapravachane cha
Satyam cha svadhyayapravachane cha
Tapascha svadhyayapravachane cha
Thatvidtapaha, Thatvidthapaha*

Be always guided by the feeling that you must contribute your mite to the output of human knowledge. Do realise that no great achievement is possible unless you dedicate yourself to the service of any profession, art or science, you might pursue. Excellence in any sphere is a divine attribute according to the saying of our Lord, Lord Sri Krishna. If you study the lives of great men, you will realise that it is not so much dazzling brilliance that counts ultimately, but it is a certain steadfastness, doggedness and determination of purpose, a downright integrity and a reliableness in daily dealings, that marked their career. Life is a real and earnest affair. Be guided in everything that you do by the feeling that all study is intended for the enlightenment of the mind and the illumination of the soul (English letters for a line from a Sanskrit verse below):

Thamasorma jyothirgamaya

Cultivate a spirit of fearlessness so that it may be said of you *Na bhibethi kuthakshana*. Develop a spirit of manliness and confidence in yourself in all your actions and remember the saying of Upanishads on which Swami Vivekananda laid stress when he addressed the World Conference of Religions at Chicago (English letters for a Sanskrit verse below):

Uthishtatha Jagratha, Prapya Varathibhodhatha

which is the guiding motto of the Ramakrishna Mission⁷.

NOTES

by *Krishnaswami Alladi*

In his convocation speech, Sir Alladi emphasises the great cultural heritage of India and makes references to Sanskrit scholars and Sanskrit terms. We explain a few of these here for the benefit of the non-Hindu reader.

1) Sage Valmiki is the author of the first Sanskrit epic - The Ramayana. Valmiki is thus considered as the *Adi Kavi*. In Sanskrit, *Adi* means first and *Kavi* means poet.

2) Sage Vyasa is the author of the other great epic, The Mahabharata. Indeed, the Mahabharata has so much in it by way of Hindu ideals and philosophy, that it is sometimes referred to as the fifth veda!

3) Kalidasa is the greatest of the Sanskrit poets and often referred to as the Shakespeare of India.

4) Sastras are Sanskrit treatises devoted to certain important topics. Dharma Sastras deal with adherence to *Dharma*, the right way of conducting oneself in life. The Arthashastra of Kautilya is a treatise on statecraft.

5) Dhana in Sanskrit means donation or giving. Vidya means knowledge, and so Vidya Dhana is the giving of knowledge; this is considered to be the noblest among all forms of giving.

6) After the Constitution was ratified in January 1950, India became a Republic. By public acclamation, Rajendra Prasad was chosen as the President and Jawaharlal Nehru as the Prime Minister. The first election was held in 1952. In the Constituent Assembly and especially on the Drafting Committee, Sir Alladi vehemently argued in favour of *Adult Franchise*, namely the power to be given to all adults to vote. Thus with the elections to come soon after in 1952, he refers to the importance of these elections in his convocation speech of November 1951.

7) Sir Alladi was an admirer of Saint Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda and of their philosophy. He appreciated the selfless work of the Ramakrishna Mission to society. Thus he concludes his speech with a reference to the motto of the Ramakrishna Mission:

“Arise, Awake, and stop not until the goal is reached”.