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The Baccalaureate Address

TO THE

Class of '88,

JUNE 17, 1888.

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—BY—

JOSEPH F. TUTTLE,

PRESIDENT OF WABASH COLLEGE,  
CRAWFORDSVILLE, IND.

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## EBENEZER.

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“Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.” 1 Sam. 7:12.

My purpose to-day is to set up a stone with grateful inscriptions, recording the mercies of God to this College.

In the year 1838 three notable events in the history of Wabash College occurred. The new building—now known as South Hall—was occupied for the first time that year. In that year South Hall was destroyed by fire. But chiefly in 1838 the first class of Wabash College was graduated.

In 1833 the first building was put up a half mile west of the Court House. In 1835 the present Campus was bought, and a new building begun with money chiefly given at the East. Two years and a half after its corner stone was laid it was so far completed in the spring of 1838 as to furnish a chapel, library, recitation rooms, and some dormitory rooms.

The partial occupation of this building in the summer term of 1838 was a great event. I have often heard the men who had toiled to put up that building speak of their joy as they saw it so near ready for use. To them it was a happy occasion. They had sown in tears and they were reaping with joy.

In the midst of this joy came another which added greatly to its sweetness. I refer to the coming of a President. Indeed the two joys had been closely identified. In November 1832 the founders had resolved to build a Christian College, and in December 1833 they had opened its doors to receive its first students.

To realize their faith in results was—so it seemed—to create a great something out of nothing. But they had faith which could remove mountains. The words of the great Missionary were the expression of their heroic confidence in God,—“what ought to be done can be done.”

It is an old but grand story and to-day we reverently recall it. The result of a year's work was an unpretending and unfinished building on which there was a debt. But in less than a year the

College was in desperate straits, and Professor Hovey went East to solicit help. At Cincinnati even Dr. Beecher "slammed the door in his face." The churches of Philadelphia, New York and Boston, gave him not a word of encouragement. In two months he had not raised a dollar and he resolved to return home. But he had used up his money, yet in meeting an appointment that he might earn money to take him home he plead for the young college with such effect as to save its life. It was an eventful engagement. The darkest hour had come and the dawn followed. On the 23d of June 1844 Prof. Hovey received sixty dollars, the first drops of the early and the latter rain, which within fifteen months poured thirty thousand dollars down upon the spot which had been consecrated by the prayers and faith of the founders of this College.

When Professor Hovey sought admission to the churches of New York he was earnestly advised to secure a President for the infant College, and his attention was directed to the pastor of a large church in the city of New York. His success was so remarkable that his missionary church had become one of the largest in New York, and he had secured the affections not only of his own church but of the ministers and churches in the city. And such were his personal loveliness and pulpit gifts that he was regarded as one of the most popular ministers in the great city.

This was the man who had been recommended to Professor Hovey as a suitable President for the young College. He often spoke of his feelings as he went along East Broadway on this errand. The street was then one of the finest in the city, and as he halted before the residence of the popular pastor in such a locality he, with sinking heart, contrasted it with the humble village in the Western woods to which he was to invite the occupant. In Dr. Hatfield's memoirs of Dr. Baldwin we find Prof. Hovey's account of the interview. He described to him "the Wabash Country," and especially the village of Crawfordsville. On the map he traced the outlines of the region in which a "few poor Home Missionaries" had founded a College. He candidly stated the advantages and the difficulties of the undertaking. He told his interested hearer of the beautiful beginnings of the College, and the scene when the founders dedicated it to God. As he proceeded in his presentation he warmed into a glow of enthusiasm as he exclaimed, "we want a college building; and more than all we want a college-head. In short we want a *President* for

our infant institution. Will *you*, my dear sir! Come over and help us. *Will you be our first President?"*

This interview occurred in the autumn of 1834, and on the last day of the year Dr. Baldwin was unanimously elected President of the College.

In connection with Professor Hovey the President-elect did effective work in raising the pledges in the city of New York and its vicinity which enabled the Board to secure the present Campus and commence the new building of which I have already spoken as occupied in the summer of 1838—the first notable event which occurred in that year.

Shortly after that new building—so splendid in their eyes—was occupied for the first time—occurred another event of great interest in the history of the college—the *graduation the first class*. As already stated, on the 3d of December 1833 Professor Caleb Mills opened the institution with twelve students which number was doubled the first term. The whole number enrolled the first year was forty-one. On the 24th of September, 1834, the first annual exhibition was given. Thirteen young men delivered original orations.

The second year—1834-5—eighty-five names were enrolled and the same number the third year—1835-6, but the two great facts of the third year were a Freshman class and the inauguration of President Baldwin.

The appearance of the first printed catalogue of the college at the close of this year was a further sign of progress. It was a humble document, resembling the first blossoms on a young fruit tree.

The fourth year—1836-7—showed a loss in the number of students, but this was compensated by the presence of three regular college classes, a Freshman class of five, a Sophomore of five, and a Junior of two.

The fifth year—1837-8—showed a great increase in the number of students. But this did not overshadow the greater fact that for the first time the College had a Senior class in addition to the three lower classes. It was not a large class, but its material was excellent. As our interest now gathers about the first graduating class, let me reproduce so many of the circumstances which surrounded its life as to illustrate its graduation.

If possible let us picture to ourselves the *town* in which the College had been planted. In 1838 it was still only a town of fif-

teen hundred people and three hundred buildings. Nature had done great things for the country, but seventeen years were not sufficient to clear it up, and give it the houses, bridges, and other equipments of a well settled community. Even in the town itself were some log-cabins, and it had two log taverns. Its most pretentious buildings were very plain. The court house, school house and churches were no exceptions. The streets at times were bad and almost impassable. As late as the Spring of 1838 there was a mud hole of depth unknown at one of the most frequented street corners. It is said that a few stumps still remained in some of the streets. It had few pavements.

The roads were bad, and many of the streams unbridged. It was no uncommon incident for a traveler either in private or public conveyance to be two or three days in making the journey from this town to Lafayette or Indianapolis. The town and country about it were by no means "out of the woods."

The educational outlook of the State also was not attractive. There was a deplorable and revolting illiteracy in this State and an unspeakably bad system of public schools.

If we turn to the higher schools of learning we find but few in which advanced studies were taught. In 1832 there were only two colleges in Indiana—the State College at Bloomington, and Hanover College. In that year Wabash College was founded, Franklin College in 1835, and Asbury University in 1837. In 1838 there were only three institutions that graduated Senior classes. That year the State University graduated its ninth class. Hanover its fifth and Wabash its first. The three colleges that year graduated twenty students.

Thus we see as Professor Mills declared that "the common schools were a mere mockery of what they were designed to be and probably the poorest of any State west of the Hudson." He further said that even in 1838 the colleges of Indiana were few and inadequately prepared for doing advanced educational work.

But the surroundings of Wabash College when its first class was graduated cannot be understood or appreciated without also considering one fact more. In May 1838 the Presbyterian church in the United States of America was divided into two Presbyterian churches. This disruption of the church in its highest judicatory, the General Assembly, at once extended 'tself through the

Synods and Presbyteries until it reached and split in twain a multitude of individual churches.

This calamitous division reached the Crawfordsville Presbytery the day after the first commencement, and the same day the church of Crawfordsville was also divided. I mention the fact not to arraign the dead or anger the living, but to show you some of the surroundings of Wabash College when two young men received its honors at the hands of President Baldwin.

I should wrong history and the grace of God if I do not add to this gloomy picture a more cheerful coloring. The day of prayer for colleges in February of that same memorable year of our Lord 1838 was made glorious by the commencement of a revival which brought a large number of the young men to Christ, and which also reached the church and community with its saving power. Dr. Baldwin speaks of it as "a precious visitation of God." This year Dr. Baldwin also declined an urgent call to a strong Eastern church. It was a noble act.

On the 11th of July 1838 the commencement exercises were held in the Presbyterian church. The previous Sabbath Dr. Baldwin had preached the first Baccalaureate in the history of the college. "His subject was *Eminence*—How to be attained and Secured." The *Indiana Record* of July 14, 1838, gave this account of it—"It was a masterly piece of composition, replete with sound and wholesome advice; and we cannot but indulge the hope that the young men will profit by it and become living examples of the truth, that '*Eminence*' cannot be attained without an undeviating regard for integrity and strict moral principles."

The young men who that day received the exhortations of the first Baccalaureate of the first President of "the Pioneer College of the Wabash Valley" were Archibald Cameron Allen and Silas Jessup. The first was from Indiana, and the other from New York. Both were living at the time of the Wabash Semi-Centennial in 1882, and Mr. Jessup took a prominent part in the celebration. His remarks at the banquet were among the delights of that notable occasion. How our hearts warmed up toward him as he spoke of his feebleness and "the heroic effort it required to get started to greet his Alma Mater once more! and also the four hundred younger brothers born since he left the maternal home! He scemed to himself a Rip Van Winkle come again."

Mr. Jessup described the common experience of travelers in Indiana in early times. "It was not a day of railroads or of rapid



transit." To come from his home in Western New York in all sorts of conveyances required three weeks of hard travel. Let me quote his description of his first look at Wabash College.

"And after a night at Ristine's Hotel we started for the college. Our line of march was west over a fence into the woods into a field—down by the Dunn spring, round into the woods by a path somewhat worn. Soon we came in sight of an unpretentious frame building, unpainted, directly in the line of the path we were in. "Where is the College building?" we asked. 'Down here,' was the answer. And soon we passed into the building and into a room twelve by sixteen, with very primitive desks and seats."

And this was Wabash College as Jessup saw it in the autumn of 1836. He also saw in the new campus the signs of better things which he was permitted to enjoy in the "new brick building" which was occupied the last term he spent in College.

Our dear elder brother—the survivor of the class of 1838—is still living. I am sure his younger brothers will heartily unite with Alma Mater in sending him their greetings on this jubilee day of his graduation.\*

A single incident connected with the commencement of 1838 deserves mention as having important consequences. Two gentlemen and their wives from Terre Haute were present. They were New England people and so pleasant did the associations of that days prove, that *Mr. and Mrs. Williams* became permanent guests of Professor Hovey. And this led to the interest which *Chauncey Rose*, the brother of Mrs. Williams, felt in the College. On that eventful visit the day on which our first class was graduated fifty years ago hung the pouring of nearly a hundred thousand dollars into the Treasury of the College!

I have thus referred to two incidents associated with our history in the year 1838—the *occupation of the new dormitory*, and the *graduation of the first class*. As intimated at the outset of my remarks, there was a *third* incident to be associated with them. On the 21st of September 1838—only two months after it began to be occupied the *new dormitory was destroyed by fire*. The next Sabbath the Rev. John S. Thomson voiced the grief and the alarm of many hearts as he announced these words of Isaiah as the theme of his discourse, "Our holy and beautiful house \* \* \* \* is burned up with fire, and all our pleasant things are laid waste."

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\*The Alumni sent such a congratulatory dispatch to Mr. Jessup Tuesday evening:

It was a sad incident. Indeed it was a tremendous event. Dr. Baldwin was at the East when he heard the news of the calamity. His heroic comment was "I do not despond. The College must and will rise again. I am tried but not discouraged: cast down but not destroyed."

The fire—let me remark—came when the financial crash of 1837 had not yet spent its fury. Truly the men of 1838 in the light of their faith and their works were heroes. May their names and deeds never cease to be bright on the pages of the history of Wabash College!

But it is not needful that I dwell longer on this calamity. The reference already made to it, connected with the other incidents discussed at length in these remarks, is sufficient to show that the year 1838 was a remarkable one in the history of the College.

And now that half a century has passed I venture to ask whether the friends and beneficiaries of Wabash College have set up any worthy Ebenezer of God's Help in its behalf?

*The College itself* in the midst of these goodly grounds with its buildings and educational equipments and endowments is itself an Ebenezer which testifies that somebody has in the name of the Lord been devising liberal things and laying *foundations* that shall endure.

But at this time I desire chiefly to speak of the monument this college and its friends have built in the *men* it has educated.

I have carefully studied the fifty-two printed catalogues of Wabash College. The examination presents results which show that the founders built wisely. I dare only speak of some of these in a general way. In the list of speakers at the first exhibition ever given in Wabash College is the name of a man whose fame in the late war was only equaled by the universal grief at his tragic death by savage foes.

In these early College registers is found the name of one who subsequently reclaimed and civilized the savages of an island in the Pacific group, giving them houses, churches and schools, the spelling book, the Bible and the newspaper, in a language which he had reduced to written characters.

I find there the names of distinguished divines, and lawyers. One of them was a famous Hebraist and scarcely less famous in other departments of learning. There is the name of a man who won fame in the camp, and whose books perhaps are as widely known as the English language.

There also is the name of one of the loveliest men that ever entered the College portals, and said to have been "the most accomplished merchant in the Wabash Valley." There is the name of a political orator who in his best efforts had few peers. Another young man achieved eminence as a physician and built a noble monument in gratitude to the College which had done so much for him. And there too is the name of a man who won his way to great eminence at the bar, and in the Senate chamber. He is still a great man.

I might name scores of men eminent in the great callings of life who were educated here, but it might seem a breach of propriety to do so. These men by their success have themselves become a living Ebenezer radiant with the inscription which the College places on it. "Hitherto the Lord hath helped us."

There is no question as to what the College has done for those on whom she has bestowed her honors. Nor can there be a question that multitudes of those who have been educated in her classes but were not graduated with her honors, could say with an eminent physician, "I was not graduated by her, but to Wabash College I owe all that I am!" or with a public man who has won great distinction, "Wabash College started and taught me: she trained me and gave me the impulse which I have felt all my life Wabash College is my Alma Mater!"

In looking carefully over the graduated and ungraduated men who have been educated here since that memorable day, 50 years ago when the class of '38 was sent forth into the world, I have felt peculiar satisfaction in saying to myself, "these men and their works in life for God and mankind are the magnificent Ebenezer—the glorious stone of remembrance—which the College has set up among men. On its sides shines the record of what she has done and the divine power by which she has effected it, "Hitherto the Lord has helped us!"

Indeed it seems to me that the prayer of Jessup, the only survivor of the class of '38 has been answered in some measure. In closing his address at the Semi-Centennial banquet in 1882, he said with tender pathos, "My prayer shall constantly be that our Alma Mater shall become more and more illustrious by the deeds and lives of her sons—and that her influence may be like the stream of prophetic vision bearing in its course health and life, with trees growing on its banks, whose fruit and leaves were for the healing of the nations."

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And just here let me add to the tribute paid to the first President and his associates one to the memory of the illustrious men who took up the work that President Baldwin laid down. They were illustrious men--White, Hovey, Mills, Thomson, Twining, Humphrey, Hadley and again Thomson. Happy has this College been in these men who have done their work so nobly and then passed into their rest. Blessings rest on their precious memory to-day in the midst of the works they did here!

And thus we find in the comparison of these two dates, 1838 and 1888, facts which excite both our admiration and our gratitude. How marked the contrast! How wonderful the change! How cheering the hopes of the future! To God only where the founders worshipped be the glory forever. Amen.

*Young men of the class of '88.*

Since, on the 8th of July, 1838, fifty years ago, Allen and Jessup stood before President Baldwin to receive his advice and blessing great changes have taken place here and elsewhere. By hints rather than detailed statements I have tried to set before you the Indiana, the Crawfordsville, the Wabash College in which the pioneer alumni were trained for the first honors here conferred. The traveler through this State to-day seems in a different country from that which greeted the eyes of the Wabash student half a century ago.

If we look at our vast country what changes have taken place in its boundaries. It has doubled its area of organized territory, trebled its population, and quadrupled its wealth, until now the sum total is too great for more than a mere statement. We have fought two critical wars, one of which was on a stupendous scale. Although "at a moderate estimate it cost \$8,000,000,000" the wealth of this country between 1870 and 1880 increased enough had it been so used to wipe it all out. And so vast and rapid is the accumulation of wealth that---strange enough--- wise men are alarmed lest "the fullness of bread and abundance of idleness" which constitute the curse of Sodom, become our curse.

The men who stood before Dr. Baldwin fifty years ago thought their country a great one---and it was,--but what was it as compared with the country of which you of '88 are citizens? The men of '38 spoke of slavery with bated breath. The men of '88 speak of it as dead because 300,000 as brave men as ever fought laid down their lives to kill it. May the living never become such recreants as to forget what these dead heroes, and also the living heroes did to effect the change!

I have enlarged my vision to take in great changes. I have also spoken of changes in the immediate surroundings of this College. They have been great and we may predict greater changes as sure to be effected within the next fifty years. Some of you, my young friends of '88, probably will be eye witnesses of these changes. You may see the dawn of 1938, and perhaps witness the Centennial class of this College on the day of its graduation.

Should you be here then you will be gray headed men. You will find these class-rooms crowded with a new generation of young men---the grand-sons of this. New men will occupy these Professorial chairs. Another shall pronounce the Centennial Baccalaureate.

As I think my eyes dim with tears. The future of this College spreads itself out before my imagination. These great monarchs of the campus shall still tower the sky, and there shall also be noble buildings for the preservation of books, the investigation of science, the instruction of the young, and the elevation of mankind in knowledge and goodness. The library, and observatory, and laboratory, and museums, and dormitories and chapels and other grand buildings shall then grace these grounds. Art shall bring beauty, wealth shall bring power, and genius shall preside in every room and inspire both master and disciple. The wills of men and their hands shall help realize my dream of the future a half a hundred years hence. Alma Mater is now beautiful. In my dream she is to be a comely Queen, wearing vestments of fine needle work and wrought gold and a diadem of precious jewels. Fair Queen of 1938 I salute thee, and bowing before thee I bless thee!

It is to *me* a dream, but some of you who hear me shall see it realized. I would like to see it, but I shall not. When it comes if some lover of Wabash shall kindly mention me as one who also loved her I shall be content. It now seems to me the greatest honor the coming generation can confer on me to name me with my distinguished predecessors and fellow-workers in this great work.

I have said I shall not be here at the Centennial. And yet I shall not complain, for even now I can confidently look up into *one* face that has beamed lovingly on me many years, and say,

"My times are in thy hand!  
My God, I wish them there:  
My, life, my friends, my soul, I leave  
Entirely to thy care."

I do not doubt my God will deal with me more kindly than I deserve, and that the young men, and my brethren in office and toil, and all who love the College will care for me and my work with generous indulgence.

Pardon the egotism. It is not wrong, is it? for the workman to wish a kindly benediction from those about him as he thinks of a time when he shall fold his hands for the final sleep!

You must have noted that Dr. Baldwin in his Baccalaureate to "the class of '38" discussed *Eminence---How to be attained and secured.*" We have not his "masterly words" but the theme itself appeals to the generous ambition of each young heart. The world is still the field in which the young man is to work. Let me once more refer to the men who have preceded you in these halls. To me it has been a peculiar pleasure, closely allied to a pride that I trust is not altogether sinful, to look over the names of these men. I find some who have become eminent. They constitute a noble body of men. I have dwelt on their lives to ascertain the methods by which they became eminent. One fact has been conspicuous---these men did not win success by chance. Nor did they inherit it. The secret of their power was *work*. They were plodders. Their genius was the genius of SWEAT, the inspiration of a purpose to succeed, and they succeeded. The road was strait and narrow, but they walked in it. The genius of hard work! The goal of Eminence! The men who have attained the one have been inspired by the other.

There is one thought more and it is near my heart. I want you to attain the Eminence of Christian faith and goodness. The hardest and most successful worker in your class is not here today.\* I disparage not his success in his studies. Not at all. But I magnify before you his Christian faith and goodness. He died in the harness. He died with his arms full of the spoils of Christian fidelity and love. The conflict for you is still going on. It is possible that you may be worsted and defeated. But your class-mate has won his crown---he is a victor. And recalling him let me beseech you not to rest until you have your hearts full of Christian faith, and your lives full of Christian goodness. Then come the end when and how it may, you win victory and you receive the crown of life.

Young men of '88, farewell, and may God abundantly bless you in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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\*Herbert H. McCord died Aug. 29, 1887, universally beloved.

