

SALUTATORY

Members of the faculty, parents, schoolmates and friends.

We, the members of the class of 1945, welcome you to our class night exercises. We want to express our appreciation, first to the faculty members for trying to bring knowledge to us, to our parents for their support, encouragement, and loving helpfulness through twelve long years, to our schoolmates for the fun and companionship that goes with our school life and to our friends for their constant loyalty. We hope all of you have an enjoyable evening here with us tonight.

This graduating class of 1945 is going out into a topsy-turvy world. We have already lost three of our members, Gerry Wilson, Bob Brumet, and Jay Morrell, to the armed forces and Uncle Sam will probably soon call others of our classmates into his service. Those of us who do not join the armed forces are also going to have hard problems to face. Shall we continue our education now or get a good job and save for the future? How can we plan for the future? And after the final victory day we will have to choose not only our vocations but also how to prepare for them. It is our job to help rebuild the world. Life does not seem as rosy, now that we are on our own, as it did a year or two ago when we were secure in our school life. We can't see into the future with our crystal ball nor can we protect ourselves from the hardships to come. But this poem by Paul Laurence Dunbar shows us how to make the load a little lighter and meet life more courageously.

I've a humble little motto
That is homely, though it's true,--
Keep a-pluggin' away.
It's a thing when I've an object
That I always try to do,--
Keep a-pluggin' away.
When you've rising storms to quell,
When opposing waters swell,
It will never fail to tell,--
Keep a-pluggin' away.

If the hills are high before
And the paths are hard to climb,
Keep a-pluggin' away.
And remember that successes
Come to him who bides his time,--
Keep a-pluggin' away.
From the greatest to the least,
None are from the rule released.
Be thou toiler, poet, priest,
Keep a-pluggin' away.

Delve away beneath the surface,
There is treasure farther down,--
Keep a-pluggin' away.
Let the rain come down in torrents,
Let the threat'ning heavens frown,
Keep a-pluggin' away.
When the clouds have rolled away,
There will come a brighter day
All your labor to repay,--
Keep a-pluggin' away.

Not only do we need the stick-to-it-iveness to keep a-pluggin' away but we need a worthy goal to work toward. There's no use working away and keeping at a job unless we achieve something. Well--what are we looking for and working toward? For myself, I am looking for success. And I don't mean fame and fortune. I mean the kind of success you feel inside yourself when you have done a job well. I don't care how little the job is--maybe it's only digging a ditch but if you dig the straightest and the longest ditch you can you'll feel a kind of content and pride, in yourself and in your work. Just doing a job a little better than someone else doesn't give this pride. It comes only when you have done something to the very best of your ability.

None of us can tell what we are going to be in the future. Most of us don't even know what we want to do or be. But no matter whether we become engineers, farmers, businessmen, nurses, secretaries or housewives, if we do the best we possibly can; if we do the greatest good to the greatest no. we can and if we live up to American ideals we will be successful--at least within ourselves.

After all it doesn't matter how big you are on the outside--it's the inside that counts as this poem by an unknown author tells:

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