



A LITTLE TRIP THROUGH MEMORY'S BYWAYS

The Class of 1908
of the
Oregon High School
Requests the honor of your presence
at the
Commencement Exercises
Friday Evening, May Twenty-Second
First M. E. Church
Oregon, Mo.

O me, O my! How time does fly! A handsomely printed commencement program, accompanied by the card of a young woman whose mother was a classmate of the architect in the days gone by, set the chords of memory to murmuring and whispering of old times, old scenes, old friends.

Until the architect received this dainty card it seemed only yesterday that he was a pupil in the old brick school house on the hill in Oregon; only yesterday that he sneaked out at recess to go to the old Sentinel office and delve into the mysteries of the art preservative; only yesterday that he proudly tucked his union card into his pocket and fared forth into the world.

And here comes a commencement program of the old school calling attention to the fact that it is the children of his old school comrades who are graduating, and that instead of yesterday it was a quarter of a century ago that all those things happened. A lot of things have happened during those twenty-five years, too; not the least pleasing being this notice that the sons and daughters of the old school chums are graduating with honors.

Jesse Leonard Cain, Anna Helen Curry, Fred Finley Hamm, Charles Leroy Huntsman, Mabel Odessa Huntsman, Loraine Trotwood King, Blanche Cornelia Markland, Kathleen Norine Moore, Myrtle Alithy Pannel, Louie Myron Pinkston, Robert Ray Stevenson, Mary Wilhelmina Zook—just an even dozen.

With two or three exceptions every name is as familiar as that of "John Smith" or "Richard Roe," and the familiar ones recall so many incidents that the architect is confused. My, how he wishes he could take the rest of the day off and just revel in memories of those old days!

"Curry!" Why that was the name of the foreman in the old Sentinel office where the architect learned the printer's trade—rotund, smiling, good natured Tom Curry, who could "edge up ems" as fast as any of them, and who would rather fish than eat. Surely he is the same old Tom—a little older, a little slower, a little more sedate, but just as ready with his hearty laugh and just as ready to hike off to Big Lake for a fishing trip. And thinking of Tom reminds us of "Deacon" Dobyns. He has been called "Deacon" for a half century, and the only reason we could ever frame up for the sobriquet was that he neither looked nor acted like a deacon. Something like forty years ago he became editor of the then old Sentinel, and if he has missed a week since it was because he was in the hospital. He put the first "stick" into the architect's hand, and pointed out the first case of bourgeois type. He handed the architect his first piece of "copy," and pointed out the defects in his first proof. He gave the architect his first instructions in the art of "writing an item," and his first incentive to become a "newspa-

per man." Perhaps a lot of people have a right to condemn "Deacon" for all this, but the architect thanks him. And may "Deacon" live just as long as he wants to, and keep on recording the births, marriages and deaths of the community until he gets good and ready to quit. Why, he chronicled the birth of nearly everyone of the fathers and mothers of the young men and women who make up the graduating class of 1908 of the Oregon High School, and he chronicled the birth of probably every member of that class. And, alas, he has chronicled the deaths of more than one of the parents of that splendid dozen of enthusiastic young men and women.

"Markland!" Why, let me see. O, yes; we used to call him "Fred" or "Fritz," but nowadays people call him Doctor Markland. You'd little think to see that sedate professional gentleman walking up the street towards the Methodist church, to see his daughter graduate, that he used to be able to turn back handsprings clear across the courthouse square, walk on his hands as readily as most boys walk on their feet, and perform stunts on the horizontal bar that would make a professional circus performer go some to beat.

"Pinkston!" It took a moment for memory to reach out and grasp it. But now it comes. That was "Buzz." Is it possible that the Louie Myron Pinkston of the class of '08 is the son of the quiet, unobtrusive, but shrewd and capable "Buzz," whose life was cut off all too soon? Whose life work was interrupted just after he had rounded into manhood and had begun making a success in the business world? Ah, there are some sad as well as many pleasant memories stirred up as the architect studies this program.

There are some other names there, too, even if they do not appear in the impress of the types. They are the names of the girls—names that were dropped when they took the names of the stalwart young fellows who stood with them before the minister. And one of those names is recalled by the card of the young woman who sends the architect the program and invitation. Wonder if she remembers the day she perched on the shoulder of the writer and watched the "flower parade" go by? Bless you, that was just yesterday, it seems, and here she is a high school graduate! Wouldn't that make a fellow realize that the years are piling up?

The Oregon High School! Once upon a time the taxpayers who supported it had dreams of a Northwest Normal School—but not even a Normal School could do better work for its students than has been done within the walls of the old brick school house. Perhaps none has made a dazzling success, but the general average of citizenship formulated in that old school is something for its supporters to be proud of forever. One of its graduates is making a name in the railroad world; another is ranking high in the newspaper ranks on the Pacific Coast; several are wealthy farmers who are known in circles where scientific methods of agriculture are discussed; others are prominent in the educational and business world, and still others have

made their mark as physicians and lawyers. Two or three have even been successful in politics.

There is another name recalled by the printed program, although it does not appear thereon. How many of the old students, scattered abroad throughout the land will remember the name of Osmar C. Hill? It took us many years of buffeting with the world to fully realize what a man he was, didn't it? But the irksome tasks he set us proved to be splendid discipline for the days that came after, and the splendid example he set by his daily life has more than once been an inspiration to better things. The fathers and mothers of the young people in the class of '08 will sit in that old Methodist church this Friday evening and recall those old days, and when they do more than one tear will start for the memory of Osmar C. Hill.

Then there is the name of another—the name of an humble, hard-working servitor in the cause of education. We can see his kindly and smiling black (ac) even yet. He played his part in the work of educating the boys and girls who are now fathers and mothers of the class of '08. Ben Harris, the faithful old negro janitor, who fired the furnace, swept and dusted, rang the bell in the morning to call us to school, and again at 9 p. m. to warn us that we'd have to hustle indoors and do a little stunt of studying.

Let's see, what was the name of that young scapegrace who was let down a hot-air flue at the end of a rope by other scapegraces, and nearly frightened "Old Ben" into convulsions when he groped his way in to ring the study bell at 9 p. m.? And who were the young scapegraces who tied a kite string to the clapper of the bell, ran the string across the street, over the roof of the German church and on into the cemetery, and then played "hookey," and mystified Professor Hill and his staff and "Old Ben" by ringing the bell every few minutes during that lazy spring afternoon? And those other scapegraces who stole the bell-clapper—who were they? They were the same ones who used to sneak off through Russell's pasture and down into the woods surrounding the town, following the creek down to Kunkel's mills. The same ones that coasted down the "long hill;" the same ones that went nutting in the woods, skating on Brodbeck's pond and fishing in the Tarkio; the same ones who are now prone to look solemn and warn their offspring against doing those very things they used to do with so much enthusiasm.

Me, O My! Wonder if the members of the class of '08 had as much fun during their school days as their fathers and mothers used to have?

Right here is where the architect stops and hikes home to pack his suit case. He and the "missus" are going to be there when the class of '08 steps forward in a body to receive the plaudits of the assembled multitude. He is going to slip a quarter of a century from his shoulders and climb up into that old bell tower and carve his initials once more in the woodwork, going to do another sum on the blackboard, hide another "Old Sleuth" in his geography, fasten another pin in the ink well and make it hum, slip another note across the aisle, dodge around behind the German church and sneak past the old tombstones on his surreptitious way through Russell's pasture on his way to the creek. Then he is going to dress up in his best and solemnly wend his way to the old Methodist church Friday evening and look wise—as wise as possible—while the class of '08 sits upon the platform and looks uncomfortable, but happy.



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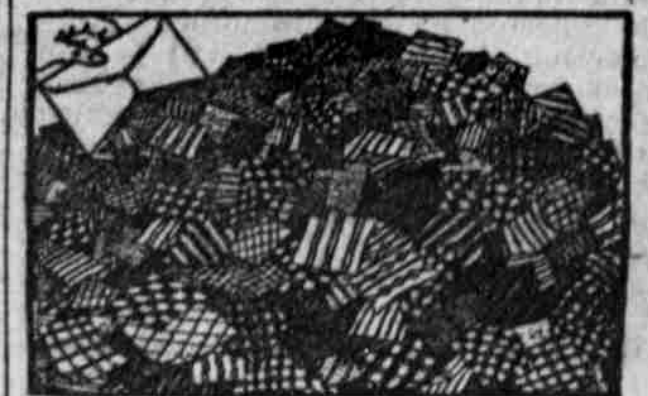
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