

Address by Dr. John William Harris, March 2, 1940. 702-A

Honorable President of the Board of Trustees, ^{Gos.} Mr. Beverly, and fellow trustees;
President Morris, Faculty and Student Body;
President of the Alumni Association, Dr. Rodriguez and Alumni and friends:

32
art
1 It is an unexpected joy for Mrs. Harris and me to be here today, on the 28th Anniversary of our college. We have been so royally received by you all. The reception of the city of San German, led by its band and escorted by the Boy Scouts and some 5000 friends of San German on the day of our arrival, was most kind and touching. Had we known how much the people of our adopted town cared for our college and for us, we might never have left the Polytechnic. We knew we loved the people of our town and island but did not know they really cared much for us till we returned the other day and saw the great crowd at the station and learned since of their increased support of and interest in our college. The warm, filial love of the Alumni under the leadership of their President, Dr. Jose M. Rodriguez Quinones, expressed first by their making it possible for us to be with you on this occasion and secondly by your many kind attentions and thought of our comfort since we arrived here as your guests have made us most happy. The welcome you have given us into your beautiful and well-kept homes, from one end of the island to the other, convinces us that coeducation in this college has been a success, for most of the homes are fathered and mothered by graduates of Polytechnic Institute. Our dreams for you, our spiritual children, in finding you happy and working hard in your service for God and man, in Puerto Rico, have been realized. The paternal and increasing love of overflowing hearts go out to you all: alumni, faculty, ^{students} and to the town of San German, ^{and to the people of Puerto Rico,} We thank you.

This school was conceived in prayer and communion with God. The Lord commissioned me to the presidency of this school before there was a school. I never forgot that commission. It enabled me to stand up under trials, and to endure hardships. The thought of that commission to serve here as founder of this school made me overcome the pentup

II

feelings of resentment, when misrepresentations came my way. It was a great joy to work with God ^{and you} here in planning and building up this school.

I began as president of the school having never been appointed nor elected as such by the trustees, for there were no trustees when I first signed my name as president. I left the college March 2nd, 1937 without resigning and of my own free choice, convinced that such was at that time God's will for me to do. To begin as president without an election, to serve 25 years and then to end without dismissal or resignation, is a distinction probably no succeeding president can ever claim.

I organized two boards of trustees, during the twenty five years of service. Both boards especially the last, or present Board, gave me much appreciated help and enthusiastic support. The Board of 1920 left me free to work out policies, standards, requirements, curricula, to fix salaries, "to hire and to fire", and to raise the money to develop the school. One of the main reasons for my leaving in 1937 was a desire to have the trustees take a more personal and active part in the support and direction of the school. It had always been a one man's work. Such a condition could not continue without jeopardizing the future permanent life of the school. I made it clear to every trustee whom I secured on the Board organized in 1920, that he would ^{not} be held responsible for raising money to support the school. (This was my first great mistake in dealing with the trustees). Their work was to endorse me in raising money and to guarantee to donors that such money would be fully accounted for, and rightly used.

^{The} ~~By~~ loyal and hearty endorsement ^{by} ~~of~~ the trustees (many of whom are now in Heaven) ~~I was~~ ^{me} greatly helped in securing money to carry on. They gave personally of their own money and that liberally. The largest single gift, ^{came} ~~coming~~ from Mrs. Caroline S. Phraner, of \$60,000 for Phraner Hall, in memory of her late husband and treasurer of our college, Mr. F. S. Phraner. I certainly appreciate to this day their loyal help and benefactions to the

III

Institute. Grateful mention is also made of the generous aid of the Carnegie Corporation from time to time, beginning with \$250,000 in 1923. I hope you who are now alumni and you who live here and the others who will live here will always show your gratitude to these many donors both in the U.S.A. and in Puerto Rico, by your wise ^{use and} care of the grounds, of the buildings and of the endowment they provided for your welfare and advancement in the service of mankind. To them, one and all, I find it impossible to express in my own words, my gratitude. I therefore quote the last lines of a poem written by Mrs. Harris, many years ago:

"The echoes of feelings unspoken,
The strongest of all to lose,
Gave one purpose to the many,
To be 'meet for the Master's use."

Let us not forget that this college is a private institution, erected and endowed by donations of christian men and women. Let us always remember that the purpose of this college from the first, and later stated in the articles of incorporation of 1920, is a Christian institution. The continuance of the Polytechnic can not be justified by monumental buildings and picturesque landscape. The excellent curriculum of academic courses in the arts and sciences and a large enrolment of eager, bright students, can not justify its continuance. The training of the students in industrial arts was once the pioneer work of this school. Such training is now being given in a more efficient way in 96 Second Units on the Island.

The distinguishing mark of the Polytechnic is found in the religious standards and life of those who, as trustees, teachers and students, worked ^{and now working} together in building up this college.

They purposefully built this curriculum for the discipline and guidance of the head to think logically, of the hand to respond skillfully and of the heart to inspire and to sustain the just equilibrium of the head and hand in service to God and man.

IV

The purpose of all that is done here and all that is standard here is to build Christ-like character in those who study here. The basic duty of man to man is found in Christ's command - "As ye would that men should do to you, do you also to them likewise"; and of man's duty to God, in Christ's command to Saint Peter: "Follow thou me." The open Bible is to be used as a text book for all students. Its precepts to be inculcated by instruction and by example of those who teach here.

As we have visited our graduates in their homes and in their work, during the last few weeks, we have found that these christian principles are the distinguishing marks in the personalities of our alumni. This institution therefore is a college whose distinguishing mark is ~~xxxx~~ an exponent of true religion.

"The charm of true religion", says my old college professor of Greek, *J. Z. McAfee*, "is that it supplies dynamic for high achievement and spiritual triumph. The charm of youth is its capacity for such achievement and triumph. True Education wed the two in holy wedlock."

This, then, is what differentiates the Polytechnic from other school — its emphasis upon true religion in Christ Jesus. The continued improvement in methods and means for the application of true religion in the Polytechnic, to the lives of each succeeding generation, will always require renewed and prayerful consideration by those directing this college. In order to keep the emphasis on the dynamic in religion rather than on the form and rituals of religious services, The Faculty as a whole will have to live as though Christ died yesterday, rose today and were coming tomorrow, *forever wide awake and watchful.*

Let us always remember that there is no such cleavage as: This is sacred and that is secular-- for life is one. All of life and of life's contacts, including the material as well as spiritual world, are sacred and are to be used for the glory of God and for the good of man.

Here stands Pope by my side as he stood there on those Steps 28 years ago today. Let him, for the time, be the representative of the more than 3000 ~~students~~ students who have been enrolled in this institution since March 2nd, 1912. Let us here today assembled ~~and~~ dedicate ourselves, and let all this great number of old students and graduates, rededicate themselves anew to the accomplishment of this work. Let us here resolve that daily we will work and pray for and serve the Polytechnic Institute, in this our Father's world, till the day arrives that the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man in Christ Jesus unites all governments and all creeds into the one and only true government, the Kingdom of God on earth.

You, Trustees, Faculty, Alumni, Students, and Friends of this college must give of your money, of your time, and of your purified and matured thoughts in service for the perpetuation of the original purpose of this college as a Christian institution. Others in the past supported this college. Let us sustain our Alma Mater as a college where all, rich and poor alike, may find expressed here, (in the clean, pure examples of christian teachers, and in the contagious aspirations of students for higher and nobler living) a new way of life adapted to the needs of a growing, Christian civilization. ^{Anti-Ricci}

Let us here and now dedicate ourselves to making:

The mind of the Master of Galilee

The master of the mind of all men.

Angel Fernando - 18 yrs. ^{Apr. 10 - 1923}
 Lemuel (Luiten) 17 "^{March 10 - 1924}
 Zerebundo (Zene) 16 "^{March 20, '25}
 Argimiro (Argis) 15 "^{July 5 - 1926}
 Maria Amelia (Yaya) 13 "^{Sept 1, 1928}
 Freira (Pegui) Jan 7, 1933.
 Ivan — 7 "

Mrs. W.