I assume that among your many interests one is how you are to make a living. I wish to state a few facts which relate to that interest. You, who are about to graduate, have certain advantages. It is of practical advantage today to be a college graduate. The industries, as well as the professions, are using more and more college graduates. Last June one group of employers took into service 6,000 college men and women. Some of these will fail, probably have failed already. Some who were never in college would succeed in these employments if given a chance to try. These employers believe as our army leaders in 1917 believed that they can get more brains and better service at less cost by taking into training for higher positions only those from the college group.

There is a second chapter to this story. These employers of 6,000 college men and women examine the college records, keep the records on file. They want only persons who rank in the upper levels. They want men from the upper third and if possible from the upper tenth. They do not want men from the lower levels. Some of the high rank men will fail. Some of the low rank men would succeed if given a chance to try. But again these exacting employers count that they will get more at less cost brains and better service by taking into training only those who have shown ability and industry in college.

Here is a third chapter in this story. Some employers are giving preference for the higher positions to men whose general education did not end with the high school but went on into the college and if possible through the college before professional or technical studies were undertaken. That is to say the highest success in every business and profession requires much more than technical or professional knowledge. One needs wide and sound knowledge of many things
as one condition of the alert adaptability which our swiftly changing world requires.

And now chapter four. Flaming youth may be indignant to learn that those who have the best opportunities to offer want to know all about any fire with which they have played. Two years ago a young man of my acquaintance got a most desirable foothold in one of the largest banking houses in America. He found later that the bank had a kind of detective system. They had hunted him down through college, and back to the high school in this town, before allowing him inside their doors. The Mayo Foundation for Medical Research offers sixty-five fellowships so desirable that there are many hundred applicants from all over the country every year. The head of the Foundation said to me: "After investigating everything else about a candidate we go to the bottom of his moral habits. Any vice shuts a man out. It is not simply a question of morals," said he. "Any vice lowers the man's efficiency as a research man. We will have none of him."

I believe I state a fact of 1931, that the best of opportunities are coming more and more

To college men and women
To college men and women who excel in scholarship
To college men and women whose education has been wide and general as well as technical and deep
To college men and women in whom the fire of youth is good fire so that their lives are honest and clean

But this is not the whole truth for this or for any date. We must not overlook the fact and the significance of the fact that many men win success though they had low grades or no grades and though they never saw the inside of a college.
We must not overlook the fact and the significance of the fact that the three greatest Americans, Franklin, Washington and Lincoln, had not altogether enough schooling to admit a boy to high school. There is a condition of success which the schoolmaster can neither give nor measure. Call it persistence. Call it will, the will to live, to work, fight and never give up. It is not something apart from intelligence. In motion they are one. Human success comes from intelligence and force fused into one.

I have told you that because you are college graduates you have opportunities which are not open or which are less open to others. But opportunity is not bread and butter. Opportunity guarantees no kind of success. Opportunity may rain gold upon you for nine days but if you have not the right wit and the right will, the gold will slip through your fingers and leave you a wreck as it has left many another man. Some go down when the trouble is least. Some bear up when it is worst. Something inside man has kept our race through a million years alive upon the earth. In spite of ice and fire, earthquake and volcanic fire, in spite of tiger, serpent and spider and the invisible ministers of death in the air, something has given men the undeniable victory of being still alive and therewith another victory. For out of his battle with the beasts, man has come to be something above the beasts. He has risen to see as well as to share in creation. He has risen at his highest to know that the power which has brought him up out of darkness into what light we have is the power of the living God.