

ONLY OUR OWN OPINION IN CONGRATULATION.

By Edwin A. Frederickson, LL. B.

Members of the Law Class of 1921, I congratulate you. Your position is surely an enviable one, for it is only in recognition of your now being undeniably qualified to plunge into the realities of life that Notre Dame passes you on; and I am sincere in my best wishes, for I am honestly of the opinion that, because of the particular training you have had, your genuine success can mean only the exertion of a wholesome and beneficial influence upon all those with whom you come in contact, in short, that your progress not only can be, but unquestionably will be, a power for the good of your fellow-man.

But, even so, notwithstanding the fact that you have "so well merited as to be proclaimed publicly and solemnly, and so forth," let me admonish you: this is truly and literally but your commencement, and the way is not easy, and there are no short-cuts. No, this is not pessimism, rather the friendliest of encouragement, for is it not implicitly the promise of a goal most desirable, are not always the things we prize most in this life the things especially cherished by us because of the difficulties experienced in their attainment? And, furthermore, I want to assure you, that if you have found mere study of the colossal science fascinating, its practice will eclipse even your fondest expectations. And now, merely in a spirit of helpfulness, and even at the risk of being deemed presumptuous, I humbly submit the following suggestions, to-wit:

Don't grow impatient—Rome was not built in a day;

Don't forget the statutes—most of them are constitutional;

Don't despise your old text books—it's amazing what twisted ideas old lawyers often have of the fundamentals of some subjects;

Don't give snap judgments—be justly proud of your legal opinions;

Collect briefs—not books;

Read the authorities against you most carefully—they are easier to distinguish in the office than in court;

Use the opinions of other attorneys as leads—not as the law;

Cross-examine cautiously—"two-edged swords" must be wielded with care;

Cross-examine your client every time you see him—the things he keeps secret are the most dangerous;

Let no man waste your time—it's more valuable than that of the most prominent member of your bar—you have yet many of the things to learn that he already knows;

Don't worry about underpay now—you'll be overpaid later on;

Urge any settlement within reason—defeat is ever a possibility and satisfied customers are the prize assets of any business;

Remember—the law is a business and service its first requisite;

Never take the other lawyer for a fool—he may not be paying you the same compliment;

An array of keen counsel across the table is not a disadvantage—rather, an education;

Don't antagonize the court—he is human and possesses discretionary powers;

Know your Evidence—it is safer to be weak in International Law;

Think twice before you close your case—pleading isn't proving;

Put your whole soul into the argument—but don't depend on it;

Don't let a jury surprise you—no one has ever yet solved that riddle;

The size of a case may regulate your fee—it never governs the amount of law possibly involved:

To know all the law is impossible—to know all the law on the point is not only possible but absolutely essential;

Consider that day wasted upon which you learn no new law;

Either love the law or leave it—for truly "the law is a jealous mistress."

But now, worthy graduates, lest I seem needlessly profuse in the matter of mere congratulations, permit

me in conclusion to assure you that it is not without regret that Notre Dame witnesses your departure, and that the Hoynes' College of Law will feel keenly your absence, but that supreme consolation there is in the thought that you cannot help but realize that mere graduation does not serve to sever completely the ties that link one to an institution of learning, that you must understand the hearty welcome that awaits you ever at your Alma Mater, and that you must fully appreciate the genuine pleasure your future visits, however short, will afford those who stay on after you, those who have learned both to know and to respect you, not excluding

Your sincere friend,

EDWIN A. FREDRICKSON.