A Parting Word to *The* Graduates *of* Marlin High School

By W. T. Betts

IT HAS been said the world moves slowly, but it moves. Civilization has been on a continual, progressive march since the beginnings of history. The hosts of creation have marched from darkness to light, ever looking forward to the dawn of a new era when ignorance and superstition would be trampled under foot and intelligence, learning, free speech and freedom of religion should be elevated to a pedestal to hold high the burning torch that lights the way for its triumphal march of progress.

Where the vanguards march today, the rearguard camps tomorrow. Carrying bold and dauntless spirits, man, in his upward and onward climb--in his search for freedom and opportunity, sought the shores of a new world, and America was discovered. The tide of civilization, from the birth of history, has ever flowed from the east to the west, and the march did not cease when our Pilgrim fathers inhabited the shores of the Atlantic coast. The intrepid spirit that inspired the Mayflower pressed on and on over hill and plain, mountain and valley, forest and prairie. It traversed the great tivers, forded the streams, and relentlessly blazed the way for human habitation until it reached the shores of the mighty Pacific.

And here, where the East meets the West, our forefathers lightend a new torch of civilization. This vast expanse of God's own gift to mankind, conquered by the indomitable efforts of our progenitors, is truly our land of golden opportunity--ours to have and to hold. We are the heirs of all the ages in the foremost files of time. What are the graduates of Marlin High School, class of '25, going to do with their opportunities? You are about to venture out on life's highways. Whither will you go? We were not put on this sphere to drift about without chart or compass. We did not come here by chance, but as a part of the infinite plans of One who holds in the hollow of His hand the destinies of mankind, of the universe, of all creation.

Therefore, graduates, let your aim be high, your purpose steadfast, your determination always to shoot straight and hit the goal. Put a high price on yourself and prove that you are worth it. Emulate the deeds of heroism which made rich the traditions of our country, and give to the world a class of high-minded, public-spirited, noble citizens that will bring reflections of credit to old Marlin High in the days to come. The outside world beckons you to come on. It is yours to conquer! What a beautiful world it is when you face the rosy.fingered dawn of life, standing on the threshold of achievement! But the world is not to be conquered without an effort. Neither is success to be attained without a price. There will be discouragements all along life's pathway, of course; obstacles must be surmounted; difficulties must be overcome. But remember that the polished stone gains its lustre only through contact with the grinding surface, And every time you hesitate some one on the same road is slipping past you.

What more appropriate words, then, could I write than those of Gladstone when he said "Believe me when I tell you that thrift of time will repay you in after life with a usury of profit beyond your most sanguine of dreams, and that waste of it will make you dwindle alike in intellectual a d moral stature beyond your darkest reconing." Character and opportunity are co-workers. Remember that, regardless of your station in life, regardless of the dark shadows and bitter disappointments, character can be developed and opportunity can be improved. It is our hope that the traditions of Marlin High School are so indelably impressed upon your minds and consciences that you will always hold high the banners of intellectual and moral freedom, truth justice; and that memories of the days spent within these walls will ever be an inspiration to you to press onward and upward, always giving expression to the best there is in you, and to the highest ideals of the race.

Thus with the approaching commencement, we will close another chapter in the book of life. And so, our dear young friends, graduates of the class of 1925, we bid you farewell from the portals of our institution, and God speed in your journey through life which is just begun.