

1942

## Excerpt from Commencement address

Lloyd Kirkham Garrison

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*original sent to S. F. Shattuck, May 26, 1942, at his request.*

Excerpt from Dean Garrison's Address at Lawrence College to the  
Graduating Class of 1942, May 24, 1942.

. . . And now in closing I shall give you a vision of some things which might be worth working for. What I am about to present to you is not a prophesy or a program. It is something to think about. This is it.

Peace has returned to earth. America is part of an association of nations with a joint pool of forces ready to prevent the breaking of a new international code of order. Through international agencies of which America is a part, staffed with an international civil service in which young men and women like yourselves, drawn from many lands, are serving, a great work of rehabilitation and reconstruction is going forward. Plans have been laid for promoting synthetics of all sorts in different countries, so as to make each nation so far as possible self-sufficient and thereby to remove one of the causes of war. Colonial possessions have been put under international management by the international civil service. Capital has been pooled for the further development of these possessions, particularly to make them more habitable for people from temperate climates, in order to facilitate immigration and reduce population pressures in particular areas.

While all of this co-operative and creative activity has been going forward abroad, and the first outlines of a true world community have been laid, at home many changes have been taking place. Everywhere great housing developments have gone forward; most of the city workers have been moved into rural neighborhoods, whence they are transported to work by busses over super-highways. Because of vastly increased productivity, hours of labor have been substantially reduced; people are assigned to short shifts, and there is time, when they reach home, to work in their gardens or about their houses, to do carpentry or painting, to play games, to read. Everywhere parks, auditoria, concert halls, tennis courts, skating rinks, swimming pools, and picnic grounds have been built, or are being built, largely by volunteer community labor under skilled direction. Further plans for community undertakings of this sort are constantly being discussed, in

the schools, in the homes, in meetings. Everyone is invited to aid in something according to his talents -- painter, sculptor, landscape architect, musician, athlete, wood-carver, metal-worker, -- all are pressed into service. New skills are taught in the schools to aid in these projects. Adult education classes have multiplied. Old and young, men and women, the richer and poorer, all alike participate on a voluntary basis in one or another undertaking. Some give one day a week, some two, some several hours a day.

Slums and white-collar dwellings have disappeared from the cities. Great parks have taken their places. Crime has been reduced to the vanishing point. Health is at a new peak. Hitherto hidden talents are everywhere flowing. People are really living.

Each young man on finishing high school serves the country for a year. Universal military training has, by international agreement, been abolished, but the principle of universal service has been retained. Each civil draftee spends a summer in a camp in some part of the country which is new to him. There he receives physical training, and he helps in various public projects -- reforestation, road-building, soil conservation and the like. After that he is put to work back home for the remainder of the year in some municipal, county or state department of government. He is paid a small subsistence wage. He learns in school to prepare himself for his governmental assignment, which has been made in advance for this purpose. During his governmental period of service he is taught as much as possible, in evening classes and the like, about the work of his department and of other departments. He learns his civics by doing. He becomes a citizen by participation in government. He is a member of a democratic community and he knows it.

Each young man on leaving college is similarly mustered into the government service for a year, this time in more advanced positions, normally in some federal department or agency. For this task he similarly prepares himself in college. There is the closest co-operation between educational authorities and government. Many of the best men are recruited into permanent positions. The quality of