

What a perfect and glorious day this has been. The people of  
will and  
Madisonville have spoken and their wishes shall be obeyed. The sun  
has been shining bright on the Old Kentucky Home. We live tonight  
in a clime that is as soft as a mother's love, on a soil that is as  
fruitful as God's Providence, with a future as bright as the noon  
day sun, with the rainbow of promise spanning the heavens above. Of  
course we are happy and why shouldn't we be?

Last Sunday evening Bro. Motley delivered the baccalaureate  
sermon and he baccalaureated well. Miss ~~-----~~ <sup>at Church</sup> Tonight has been the sa  
lutatorian, Miss ~~-----~~ the Valedictorian, Bro. Hulse the oratori  
an and now it falls to my lot to be the diplomatorian. That's a new  
word, diplomatorian in not to be found in Webster's unabridged Dic  
tionary. When Senator Harding was a candidate for the presidency he  
coined the word "normalcy." It is a good word. I have as much right  
to mint <sup>a</sup> my word as had Mr. Harding or any one else.

It has been my pleasure for a number of years to have the hon  
or presenting diplomas to the graduating classes. <sup>of this school</sup> Up to the present  
the Madisonville ~~graded~~ High School has graduated ~~202~~ 202. This  
evening we have twenty six more, making a total of 228, of whom ---  
are boys and ---- girls. Many of these graduates have gone out into  
the world and are making good. The class of tonight may do even bet  
ter.

In literary contests Madisonville has <sup>won</sup> ~~carried off~~ more hon  
ors than any other school in the Western portion of the state. Hen  
derson, Hopkinsville, Owensboro and Paducah, each and all with better  
facilities than we have here, have all met defeat when coming in  
competition with the Madisonville bunch. In the recent state con  
test at Lexington our three gallnat young men won even honors in  
the final effort.

We have a set of youngsters in our school that are not afraid  
to tackle anything from Maine to California that ~~wears~~ wears hats,

*Accidental copy to your letter  
I know with a few other  
to attend young to class*

caps, bonnets, pants, dresses, calico, silk, linen, jeans or broadcloth.

If Harvard, Vanderbilt, or any other educational institution in the United States offers a challenge to the world, we have a set of young Americans in our school that would accept the challenge before you could say "Jack Robertson." With them it is

"Theirs to make no reply,  
Theirs not to reason why,  
Theirs but to do and die."

One good reason for all this bull-dog pertinacity, this go-after-go-get-it is accounted for by the fact that we have a faculty, a set of teachers that are instilling into these youngsters a spirit of enthusiasm that is bringing out the very best there is in these youthful minds. From Superintendent Gatten down to Sherman park the ~~Jan~~ colored janitor--or from Parks to Gatten, which ever it may be, there has been harmony of action.

From the organization of our present graded school system, the Board of Education has always tried to get the very best teaching ability possible. In this, we have been both lucky and unlucky. In the past history of the schools, we have had at least fifty marriages among our teachers. Men from elsewhere and even here at home, knowing the choice selection we have made, have not hesitated to pay court and win many of our best. ~~Of course these women~~

Of course these women were, as we think mighty foolish to quit the schoolroom for a place in some man's ~~xxx~~ heart and kitchen. We are however determined to have no more marrying among our lady teachers until after the school closes a year from now. We have required all the single women of the force to sign a contract good for one year, subject to fine and imprisonment for violation, in which they will entertain no matrimonial proposals during the com-<sup>ing</sup> term of the schools.

Many hundreds of years ago Joel in his prophecy said: "Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream ~~d~~ dreams, your young men shall see visions." I may be old, I may dream

dream my dreams, but I am still young enough to see visions. As I stand before this audience tonight, I see a vision of our schools in the future. A magnificent school building, well furnished and ~~equipped~~ equipped, filled with bright eyed, wide awake, healthy and happy children the boys and girls of the now, the men and women of the future.

I can well exclaim now as I did when entering my ~~eighty~~ eighty eighth anniversary for my earthly existence:

"Grow old along with me,  
The best is yet to be."