FOR THE ASSOCIATION OF RICE ALUMNI

I HAVE been looking forward gratefully and with enthusiasm to enjoying the hospitality of the A. R. A. on this occasion. I was pleased when the President of the Association wrote me that he wanted me to come, but that you did not want one of my speeches. The avoidance of formal speeches is, I think, an altogether humane arrangement, and quite as wise as having the meeting on Friday before the game, rather than on Saturday following the game, as used to be the case. Indeed the wisdom of this change was unwittingly avowed by an English doctor not long ago, when he said that food should never be taken after you have been emotionally upset. Faithful observance of that rule, however, would lead me straight to death by starvation, because the mere sensation of hunger always means for me an immediate emotional upset. The rule explains, says Punch, "why the bill doesn't arrive until the meal is over." The rule also affords, I suggest, as good a reason as any why after-dinner speakers are not before-dinner speakers.

Among the happiest of after-dinner speakers was Lady Maude Tree, who passed away lately at an advanced age. As an actress she had retired from a long professional career before the footlights of a generation ago. Her success in this amateur rôle off the stage she attributed to following

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1 For their homecoming meeting, November 12, 1937, at which Mr. William M. Rice, Jr., was the guest of honor and recipient of a unique medal from the Association commemorating his recent gift in excess of three hundred thousand dollars to the funds of the Rice Institute.
faithfully the following threefold formula: first, I purr; then I orate; and finally I purr-orate.

The publication of the latter skit brought to recollection one almost as brief of which the author was her husband, the distinguished actor, Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree, whom she survived many years. Out of sheer kindness of heart he had read by request a manuscript sent by a total stranger, to whom he wrote: “My dear Sir: I have read your play. Oh, my dear Sir. Faithfully yours.”

We salute the memory of the founder of the Rice Institute, Faithfully yours. We hail the faculty, trustees, and friends of Rice, Faithfully yours. We hail the on-coming generations, Faithfully yours. We salute ourselves, Faithfully yours.

I know of no phrase quite so pat for the A. R. A. as is this phrase, Faithfully yours. For the phrase is characteristic of the spirit of this Association and of the life of this institution. It is neither a matter of form nor a survival of fitness. Whether as salutation or as subscription, it is thoroughly sincere. Its sincerity is matched by its simplicity. It is invariably a preface of something to say because it is at once the password to our fellowship and the pledge of our friendship. It has and holds the respect of everyman, this symbol and sign of our loyalty and fidelity in personal devotion and public service, Faithfully yours.

Your Association represents a cross-section of the traditions to which Rice men and women still remain true. As in the days of the earliest of you, so in the days of the latest of us, we expect of ourselves and our associates clear and downright thinking; candid, lucid, and businesslike expression; stout hearts and strength for any fate. We think of ourselves in politics as peacemakers and patriots; in religion, as of firm conviction, but generous tolerance; and of un-
Several Addresses

swerving loyalty to principle in every aspect of the social scene.

By every one of these half-dozen tokens your guest of honor is one of you. I share your pride in his presence at this table. By every interest of mind, every gentleness of hand, every instinct of heart, Mr. William M. Rice, Jr., is Faithfully ours.