

Keynote Address by **Prof. Oliver Smithies,** **Nobel Laureate** (Physiology or Medicine-2007)

I think it would be fair to say that I have received my degree before you students - you are going to receive your degrees in a few minutes! I have already received my degree from this university.

In thanking the university for the degree and in talking to you students, I am reminded of an old university that I am also a member of. That university is the University of Oxford in

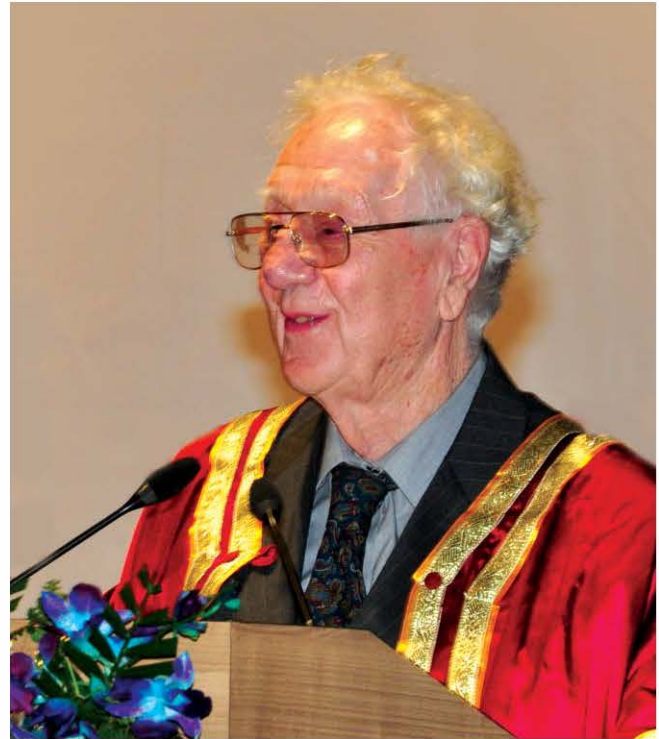
He said :-

A clerk from Oxford was with us also,
Who'd turned to getting knowledge, long ago.
As meagre was his horse as is a rake,
Nor he himself too fat, I'll undertake,
For he would rather have at his bed's head
Some twenty books, all bound in black and red,
Of Aristotle and his philosophy
Than rich robes, fiddle, or gay psaltery.
Pregnant of moral virtue was his speech;
And gladly would he learn and gladly teach.

England. It is an old university and I hope your university will live as long as mine has in the past. In fact, that university was famous for another reason.

Great poet Geoffrey Chaucer wrote about being a student of a university. And for many years I have carried part of the story Chaucer wrote in beautiful language about being a student.

And that's what I want you to think about - "gladly would he learn and gladly teach". You are going to



receive a degree or an honour or a graduation for something you have learnt. But you have not finished learning. You have only begun to learn. And I want you think about that when you leave here today. Think about the fact that somebody has taught you things that are important in understanding the world and understanding, perhaps, yourself. You should go out and teach that to other people.

But you should not end there. You should go on learning for the rest of your lives. Then maybe one day when you will get as old as I am and ancient, somebody will invite you to come and receive an honorary degree and welcome new students to the future of learning forever.

Be like a child. Continue to learn for rest of your lives.

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