DR. WILLIAM A. POYLAN, INAUGURATED AS FIRST PRESIDENT OF BROOKLYN COLLEGE, DEFENDS FREE HIGHER EDUCATION.

warns public colleges must not be interfered with, extolls their achievements at colorful installation exercises. They repay their cost, he declares. Dr. J.A. Finley and Dr. F. E. Robinson speak. 89 receive baccalaureate degrees.

A stirring defence of free higher education was made last night by Dr. William A. Boylan on his formal inauguration as the first President of Brooklyn College in the presence of delegates of 240 colleges, universities and learned societies at the Brooklyn Academy of Music.

The inauguration was the central feature of the Commencement exercises for awarding of baccalaureate degrees of the first graduating class of 89 young men and young women. Mark Eisner, chairman of the Board of Higher Education, presided over the ceremonies and addresses were made by President Boylan, Dr. John H. Finley, Associate Editor of the New York Times, and President Frederick S. Robinson of the City College.

Representatives of 175 colleges and universities throughout the country and sixty scientific societies and museums attended the inauguration.

"The judgment of the people of this city and that of educators at the time of the launching of free higher education, and ever since, has been that higher education at the public expense has more than repaid the city's support, whether such returns are viewed from the practical, the intellectual, or the spiritual points of view," declared Dr. Boylan, after tracing the history of higher education in New York City since 1847.
President Boylan extolled the achievements of the City's public colleges. They have "given instruction to tens of thousands." The graduates of "these institutions," he declared," are outstanding leaders in many walks of life, in all the professions. Were it not for the supreme wisdom of the City in founding the Free Academy in 1847 and thereafter wholeheartedly supporting public higher education, thousands, nay tens of thousands, of ambitious young men and women, the future hope of the city, would have been denied the advantages of higher education. Our City would today be immeasurably the poorer, immeasurably less free, less happy, less loved, less respected.

The citizens, he said, voted "overwhelmingly in the affirmative" on the question of "whether or not this Free Academy should be founded," in 1847.

"The intervening expansion and progress," the President continued, "have given New York City an ever deepening faith in the value and necessity of a free collegiate education of the soundest kind for its people. The City has a well-founded realization of the fact that the necessity for a college education will increase in proportion as the common school system is extended and improved; that especially in this, the commercial metropolis of the world, there shall exist free institutions whose doors shall be open to the most promising graduates of the common schools.

"Who shall say that this great work shall be interrupted? Who shall turn back the clock of progress. Some prudent adjustment may be necessary during this period of temporary financial depression. But the work as a whole must go on. The citizenry of New York will not allow it to be interfered with; it is fully aware of the vital role of the colleges in training trustworthy leaders of the coming generations."

The double function of Dr. Boylan's formal installation and the first Commencement took place two years after the establishment by the Board of Higher Education of Brooklyn College as the third public institution of higher learning in New York. Although Dr. Boylan was chosen president by the Board in May, 1930, the formal inauguration was postponed to coincide with the occasion of the awarding of the first degrees by the college.
The college had a registration of 2700 day students when it was organized in 1930. That figure has risen to more than 4,000 and it is expected to be further increased during the coming year. Brooklyn College superseded, on a much larger scale, the former junior college branches of City College and Hunter College in Brooklyn.
DR. WILLIAM A. BOYLAN
FIRST PRESIDENT OF BROOKLYN COLLEGE

(Biographical Note)

Dr. William A. Boylan, formally installed as first President of Brooklyn College on June 21, 1932, is a native of New York City and has been associated with public education in New York for upwards of 35 years.

President Boylan holds the degrees of Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts from St. Francis Xavier's College, the degree of Master of Pedagogy from New York University and the degree of Doctor of Philosophy from Fordham University.

He began his teaching career in the academic and grammar departments of St. Francis Xavier's College. Here he taught Latin, Greek and English Literature. Later as the result of a competitive examination, he was made principal of one of the largest public schools in the City of New York. In 1913, he was elected District Superintendent of Schools. While District Superintendent he supervised schools in every borough of the City. For three and one-half years he supervised the work in the high schools of the City.

In 1927, he was elected Associate Superintendent of Schools and a member of the Board of Superintendent. In May 1930, at the time of the establishment of Brooklyn College he was chosen by the Board of Higher Education as the first President of the new institution.