

MR. CHAIRMAN, AND GENTLEMEN.

The fitting toast with which to conclude this perfect day is the health of the new President, and I appreciate very highly the privilege of proposing it.

As you, sir, have said, I have known Mr. Stanley longer than he has ^{else} been known by anyone in the institution over which he has been called to preside. I think it was about 1916 that I first met him, in the house of a former Governor of Dalhousie, the late Major J. P. Edwards, and naturally our first point of common interest was in Oxford memories. But I quickly discovered that his interests though keenly were not exclusively academic. For that was during the period which I might call the President's interval of dark decline -- the strange aberration which carried him temporarily from the world of learning ^{down} to the world of business. Much as we may deplore such a lapse, now that it is so remote in the past and has been so amply atoned, it is enough to say of it that the temptation was strong, the disorder was brief, and the recovery has been complete.

Moreover, sir, even during that misguided time, when his focal interest was supposed to be in business and only his marginal interest in learning, it was more and more obvious to those who observed him closely that the first would yet be last and the last would be first. Whatever the pressure of other concerns, his intellectual curiosity, like the cheerfulness of Dr. Hohnson's friend, was always breaking through. On the many occasions on which I used to meet him during those years, whatever else marked the conversation, there were two qualities he never failed to show: one was a consuming interest in education, the other was a peculiarly tender regard for this province of Nova Scotia. I shall not attempt to judge which of these qualities was the more remarkable and the more refreshing in a man of business whose training had been in the city of Toronto. But in their

combination is surely to be found the best possible equipment for the work to which President Stanley has now set his hand.

Since 1921 I have been brought into special contact with him through a little publication with which some of you are acquainted, called The Dalhousie Review. Quite early in its career he became a contributor to its pages, and for two years he conducted in each issue the exacting section known as "Topics of the Day". For that section the ideal writer has probably not yet been born. Before the imagination of the Editorial Board there ever floats a picture of what he must be: learned, yet not pedantic; light of touch without degenerating into flippancy; always provocative, but never forgetting to be urbane, and many other things which we amuse ourselves by defining to one another. I shall not say that Mr. Stanley fulfilled all these requirements; but he certainly fulfilled them so far as to make us extremely sorry when the pressure of other work required him to withdraw. My correspondence was replete with proof of the interest he aroused and the stimulus he imparted to thoughtful readers. It showed too, perhaps most clearly of all, his possession of that peculiar and nameless journalistic gift by which the minds of the other sort of readers may be irritated into activity.

Evidence of other kinds of talent I know well that Mr. Stanley has supplied, but the proposer of a toast ought I think to limit his tribute to the qualities of which he has personal knowledge. As I watched his inauguration this afternoon, I thought of what might be in store for us under this new regime. The introduction of fresh blood may set up, I am told by the physiologists, very considerable disturbance in an old organism, and perhaps some of us old fogeys have reason today, in the words of the psalmist, to join trembling with our mirth. It was said of Henry Brougham that he caused great alarm when he entered as a young minister

into an old cabinet. For, says the ~~historian~~ ~~there are few greater~~ historian it is a very serious matter for a quiet Administration to be joined by a vehement industrious man, proposing to untie papers, and not proposing to overlook errors. All the same, sir, I shall not cherish alarm until I must. There is nothing but encouragement for us all in the coming of a President of such proved zeal for the intellectual values, such catholic sympathy for different kinds of learned work, such bold clarity of ~~speech~~ expression, and I will add - such wholesome impatience with the idea that the educators of the present must preserve not only in spirit but in detail every method of the educators of the past. It is a certain apostolic note, a certain constant assumption that there is always some progress possible, some improvement that the experience and judgment of the present should be able to make upon what has gone before, that ~~leads~~ ^{special} ~~one~~ makes one look with hopefulness to the regime inaugurated today.

So, gentlemen, I ask you to drink the health of President Stanley as he stands tonight on the threshold of a great task, with difficulties so conspicuous but so challenging, and with an opportunity so great. That the intrepid spirit with which he undertakes it is joined many a misgiving, and that he look for ^{cooperation on every side} ~~the constant support~~ ~~constant and loyal support~~ ~~in a task which is in truth ours~~ in an enterprise which is in truth the common enterprise of us all. ~~It is in token~~ ~~not only~~ ~~we feel that~~ ~~today has been added~~ ~~not only as a grateful~~ ~~in grateful appreciation~~ ~~it is in token that we pledge to him~~ ~~it is~~ Not only in grateful appreciation of the coming of one who will add notably to the intellectual forces of our city and our province, but in token that we pledge to him our constant and loyal support, we now drink his health. Gentlemen, I propose the toast of President Stanley.