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THE
PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

At the Opening of
SESSION 1937-38



DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY

October 21, 1937

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At the Opening of
SESSION 1913-14



DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY

October 24, 1913

ADDRESS BY CARLETON STANLEY

President of the University

IT has been my custom to meet the University in this informal way at the very beginning of the session. This year one accident and another has postponed our meeting, but this morning, I give you all a cordial greeting; and, if it is not carrying things back too remotely in your memory, I hope all—newcomers and old-timers—have this year had a holiday, and a refreshing one. For most of us here this opening of term is another mile-stone on the way, but for many it is a threshold to a new and great adventure. We all wish you new adventurers happy fortune. It is a pleasure to meet with you this morning, because we catch the infection of your enthusiasm and share in your joy and hopes. "A child brings hope with it and forward-looking thoughts." You freshmen too bring hope with you, high hopes. We believe that among you there will be some who may retrieve some of the lost hopes, and half-fulfilled ambitions, that have fallen to us, who are older.

I am sure you will wish me to welcome also those teachers and professors who join us this year. In the Medical School, these are Dr. Rhoda Grant, in the department of physiology; Dr. Taylor in pathology; Dr. Heard in biochemistry; Dr. Saunders will join the department of anatomy in January. In the Arts and Science Faculty, Mr. Dore joins the department of botany; Mr. Escott Reid will take the place of Professor MacKay, who will be absent on leave this year. I call particular attention to Mr. Korning, who has become our physical instructor. Many of you students have long felt that our physical instruction has left something to be desired. The University has taken great pains over this appointment, and I believe that with your

assistance the appointment will be a great success. Dalhousie University is famed for its hospitality. I bespeak your friendly reception for all these newcomers.

The University has this year undertaken, in collaboration with the Halifax Conservatory of Music, to sponsor a series of concerts. Unfortunately, through circumstances over which we had no control, the first of this series had to be held before the entire University was assembled. We have in the past made every attempt to promote the cause of music in this city. But we wish to do more, and above all we wish, in music as in everything else, to aim at excellence. Those of you who heard Miss Flood play the violin at the first concert will agree that our new effort shows an ambition for the very best. Now, you must support this effort. Every student should attend these concerts. The tickets for students are very cheap indeed. If you all bought them we could go on to an even more ambitious programme next year. I believe that you will regard the plan as a great opportunity for yourselves.

More than once from this platform, I have adverted to public questions. Once or twice what I have said has been misreported, and made to serve a partisan purpose. But we are not partisans here. We are here in quest of Truth, and that means that we must be free. Upon truth and freedom the university is based. A certain Canadian college has carved over its doorway the text: "Ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free." It is become a commonplace in the last few years that the frontiers of truth and freedom are being further and further encroached upon. And even in lands devoted to peace and science and knowledge, fear and suspicion stalk abroad, like haggard apparitions, disturbing our thought. The whole world seems to have become nervous, apprehensive, if you will allow the word, *jumpy*.¹ What can we do about it? Perhaps you will think we can not do very much. But at least we can behave like educated men and women; we can remain cool, cool and very sceptical. If the saying: "Truth lies at the bottom of a pit," had any force in the days before the telegraph was invented, be-

fore the newspaper was invented, it has very much more force to-day, when the very sky is filled with booming propaganda. Truth lies indeed at the bottom of a pit to-day; only with great patience, only by sceptical spirits, will it be found.

About a year ago I explored the Island of Skye, one of the most beautiful places on earth. It is now served from end to end with excellent schools; science is more and more applied to its agriculture; its people are the kindest, most hospitable imaginable, revealing in their speech and appearance a blend of Norse and Celtic stocks. But it was not always so. For centuries the land was disputed by two clans, the McLeods and the Macdonalds. Time and again one clan almost extirpated the other. A favourite time of attack was when people were gathered in church. There is hardly an acre of the island that has not at some time reeked with blood. For many hundreds of years man, woman and child on that island lived on those terms. To-day Europe is hardly larger than the island of Skye was, say, in the fifteenth century. The pacification of Europe is no more an irrational hope than was the pacification of Skye, or, if you like, the pacification of the Scottish Highlands a short time back. Men are sneering to-day at the League of Nations. Do not join their sneers. Read some history. Men are using the name of religion to-day to justify the bombing of women and children. Let no such doctrine poison your thought.

Our own land is a land of many races, creeds and languages. Just one hundred years ago, when we had but two creeds and languages, civil war threatened this land. In a country like ours mischief can always be made by reckless talk and foolish arguments. But violence settles nothing. What we need is patient understanding and goodwill all round, and above all we need to be undistracted from a wise and resolute settlement of certain social problems. Some of them, unemployment, for example, are pressing. Little, poor, countries, Sweden and Denmark, have in these last difficult years wrung out of their very difficulties such achievements in social amelioration, and at the same time produced

such works of art, that their fame rings round the world. About the turn of the century we Canadians took up glibly the saying of one of our political leaders: "The twentieth century belongs to Canada." Well, more than a third of the century has gone. I shall not say that we have not done much in that time. Materially we have done extraordinary things. But what permanent and immortal achievements stand to our credit in the promotion of humanity and civilization? What poems, what music, have we written that men will remember forever? What ideas have we given to the world? Have we even dreamed dreams, or had visions, that will cause posterity to think we had any nobility of soul? Those are high matters and hard questions, but not too hard nor too high to address to ourselves in Dalhousie University. Our founder dedicated us to the service of this country; and if we serve this country as we should, with mind and heart, with laborious thought and courageous action, unselfishly, in a ceaseless quest of Truth and Beauty and Justice, we shall make this country the fairest habitation on earth, not for the few, but for all our citizens, and an example to endless generations of men.

I conclude by wishing you all good health and a happy year's work.

October 21, 1937.

