

Convocation Address

By CARLETON W. STANLEY

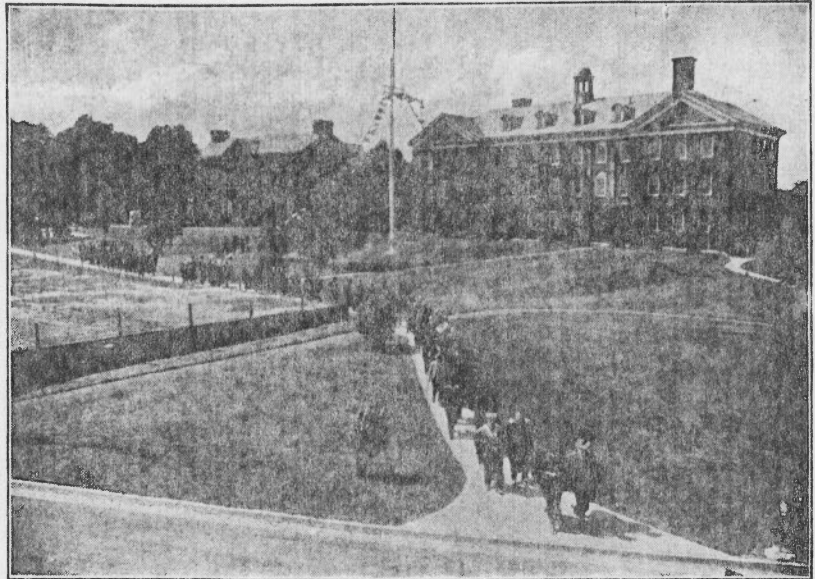
This address was delivered at the Special Convocation held on August 17th, 1938, during the Reunion.

THIS is a very joyous occasion. Twenty years ago, we celebrated the centennial of Dalhousie's birth, the year when George Ramsay, Earl of Dalhousie, "Governor in Chief of Lower Canada, Upper Canada, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and the Islands of Prince Edward and Cape Breton," established this college and later laid its corner stone, and blessed it in the most forward-looking speech, I think, that any statesman ever made on these shores. But not for twenty years, not until another great Scotsman, Dr. Thos. McCulloch, took us in hand, did real university work begin. The idea of celebrating this centennial sprang, so far as I can ascertain, from the Dalhousie Alumni. In any case it is they who have made this great Reunion possible, and I congratulate them warmly on the truly splendid success they have made of their plan.

The Senate of the University, hearing of this plan, at once entered into the spirit of it, and decided to mark the occasion by a very special convocation. This is a Scottish University far more Scottish than anything in Scotland, and consequently it gives education away very lightly and very cheaply. But nothing else. It never gives away examination marks, for example. It is very miserly in granting first-class honour standing. Above all, it is notoriously close about granting honorary degrees. It has been hinted that this is so because no fees are collected from the recipients. But that, of course, is a libel. For it is the Governors who have to do with fees, and it is the Senate, and the Senate only, who grants degrees. The Scotchman, in truth, is not close about money. But he is very stingy of praise. And sometimes a period of years passes without our Senate praising anyone. In this year of jubilee, upon which the graduates were so insistent, the Senate went to work more soberly than ever, and perhaps I should whisper confidentially to all our distinguished graduates of this convocation that it was a very close thing with each of them. After a long survey, it was decided that they alone, in the whole wide world, were worthy.

We are met, at a university convocation, in grave times. No one here, certainly no one with historic sense, would care to predict how long or

how widely universities can continue to meet, to discuss intellectual matters, science, literature, human destiny. It is a dark and doubtful moment. Many who are assembled here, this historic afternoon, recognise the danger. What can the mind, the collective human mind, do, in these dark hours? At times I am afflicted, terribly afflicted, with fear and doubt; I am conscious of all the perils. And yet, being English, endowed with phlegm, obstinacy, and, I hope, with common sense, I do not entirely



Convocation Procession, Reunion.

despair. The other side, cruel, inhuman, swaggering, seems to me so stupid. Stupidity, to be sure, is a great and awful force. *Mit der Dummheit kämpfen Götter selbst vergebens*, said a German of an older time, and half in jest. The gods themselves cannot fight stupidity. My reply to that would be that it depends on what sort of gods are meant. If the gods in question mean science, studied for its own sake, if they mean thought and philosophy divinely lead and "wandering through eternity," if they mean the humanities, that is to say the study of "the best that has been said and thought in the world", then I am not so fearful that these gods will struggle in vain with the stupidity and arrogance that are being arrayed daily in more and more menacing lines. In other words, if the universities that are left in the world, the universities of the Empire, of the United States, of France, Switzerland, the Low Countries, and the Scandinavian countries (and none of us, by the way, should forget these latter small countries, which perhaps constitute

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YOUR ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

THE Dalhousie Reunion is over but its influence on the hearts and minds of all Dalhousians cannot be estimated.

It is for the Dalhousie Alumni Association to carry on the work so successfully instituted by the Reunion committee and to exert all its influence in fostering loyalty to their Alma Mater among all her sons wherever they may be found.

One of the most important elements in the organization of Alumni activities is the systematic development of branches of the Association so that an energetic and co-operative Federated Alumni may be established. At the Annual Meeting of the Society held during the Reunion a committee was appointed to investigate this whole question. The local members of this committee have met and the problem has been before the Alumni Executive at Halifax and it is hoped that a report will be prepared soon to be sent to the representatives on the committee outside the Province.

The Alumni Executive is seized with the importance of developing the Dalhousie tradition among the student body and perpetuating their loyalties to their University. With this end in view it is planning to take an aggressive and eager part in the activities of the students. It is felt that debates between alumni and undergraduates should be encouraged and organized and that the Glee and Dramatic Club should receive the help and support of all graduates and former students.

Through continued contact with all student activities, the belief is firm among active alumni that a spirit of ever increasing loyalty to the University and respect for the Association itself will be greatly stimulated.

All Dalhousians are invited to co-operate in the work of the Alumni Association. A banquet is now being arranged for the last week of November and the importance of the attendance of all Halifax Dalhousians and as many as possible from out of town is earnestly stressed.

We solicit your advice and constructive criticism without hesitation or reserve and we urge you all to bear in mind that the ultimate responsibility for a virile and successful Alumni organization rests not merely with the handful of supporters constituting the Executive but with all former students of the University.

T. H. COFFIN, B.A. 1927, LL.B. 1929.
President, Alumni Association.

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the conscience of the world in these times),—if these numerous universities that are left remember their duty, and the purpose for which they were founded, the light of reason will not go out.

But I had not meant to at such length. I rose to bid our guests at this convocation, and our graduates assembled at the Reunion, welcome. We appreciate that so many of you have come great distances, over land and sea.

The Clan, the Dalhousie Clan, is here mustered in strength, in grateful remembrance of the past, and with, I am sure, proud hopes for the future. When I look into your faces and realise all the Camerons, and Campbells, the Frasers, Grahams, Macdonalds and McGregors, and MacIntoshs, and MacKenzies there are before me, my tongue is almost tortured into Gaelic to address you. But there comes another serious thought—and that is the feuds your ancestors fought: Macdonalds and MacLeods, Campbells and Macdonalds, the MacGregor, whose hand was against many, and whom many hunted, and how you have not only composed these feuds, but the still greater feud with Lowlander and Sassenach. If your feuds could be composed, then what feud cannot be, and what peace may be hoped for in the world still!

THE 1851 EXHIBITION AND DALHOUSIE

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the Department of Physics in the University of British Columbia.

1894-6.	F. J. A. McKittrick	1919-22.	G. H. Henderson
1896-9.	D. McIntosh	1920-2.	H. B. Vickery
1898-01.	E. H. Archibald	1921-3.	C. A. MacKay
1900-3.	J. Barnes	1922-4.	W. H. McCurdy
1902-4.	T. C. Hebb	1926-8.	R. C. Robb
1904-7.	W. H. Ross	1927-30.	G. C. Laurence
1906-8.	G. M. J. MacKay	1928-30.	Mabel A. Borden
1908-10.	H. J. M. Creighton	1930-2.	G. O. Langstroth
1910-2.	C. C. Wallace	1937-	A. J. C. Wilson
1912-4.	H. S. Davis	1937-	D. M. Ross.
1914-6.	J. H. L. Johnstone		

FORTY-ONE YEARS AFTER

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It ought to be said that in addition to the nine members of the class who sat down to our reunion dinner, another was present at the general reunion, namely, Mrs. Donald A. MacRae (Laura Geddes Barnstead), but was unable to attend our dinner. So we may say that we had ten all told at the reunion—a very good record after forty-one years. We also had letters of greeting from Prof. Eben. H. Archibald, A. D. Blair, Mrs. W. B. Parker (Winnifred B. Chisholm), Harold M. Clark, A. E. Crockett, Dr. J. R. Millar, Mrs. A. A. Morrison (Margaret Thompson), Rev. J. W. A. Nicholson, G. Fred Pearson (since deceased), Major J. M. Slayter and Mrs. F. L. Coombs (Florence Annie Wilkie).