CHALLENGE TO CLEMSON MEN

INTRODUCTION

1. Joke on Alumni Secretary
2. Joke on general Clemson graduate, and few other jokes
3. Honor to speak on this occasion.
4. Welcome to Alumni.

Birthdays are happy days; anniversaries are joyous affairs; festivals and feast days are impressive; these annual reunions, however, possess all these good qualities.

We celebrate Christmas because it gave us a great religion. We observe the 4th of July because it gave us a free nation. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should assemble here annually, because it was here that we received our training and learned to develop the finer values of life.

What memories these reunions revive! They are rich in memories of boyhood college days. They are rich in memories to unsealed life's secret springs—memories of home, of Father and Mother, perhaps long gone to eternity's reward—memories of play days with brothers and sisters and playmates back in the old home community. These are memories of joys and sorrows, valuable as a rich contribution to life's task and life's sorrows.

INTRODUCTION OF SUBJECT: "CHALLENGE TO CLEMSON MEN".

I. LOYALTY TO CLEMSON

Clemson men, possibly more than those from any other College, are scattered throughout the land. In a number of cities there is to be found Clemson Clubs, and I am indeed glad that this is the case, since these Clubs maintain interest and enthusiasm in our Alma Mater and her future. Even though our graduates are scattered throughout America, time nor distance, the two acid tests of loyalty—should not quench their love for Clemson. Physical contacts may be fewer, but frequent letters, unselfish devotion, and a keen interest in the welfare of Clemson should keep fresh and vivify our memories of some of the best days of our life. So I say to the Alumni, regardless of your location, be loyal to Clemson and the ideals for which she stands. She nurtured us, provided warmth, fed our appetite for learning and wisdom, surrounded us with opportunities to serve, and fitted us for the battles of life, and all that Clemson asks of us is that we be loyal.

A poet once said, "When a loyal man dies, for years beyond his kenuard—fire upon the path of men".

The most priceless of all qualities of the human soul is loyalty. Stupidity, or almost anything else, can be excused, if there is loyalty. People love dogs more than any other animal, because they are considered the incarnation of loyalty. A man may be energetic, honest and ambitions, but if he is without loyalty, he will be despised by his fellow men. A man may possess the keen mind of a statesman, or the strong form of an athlete, but if he hath not loyalty, he is bound to fall. A man may be endowed with great mental ability or have greatness thrust upon him, but if he hath not loyalty, the seeds of success are not in him. Loyalty is the best element of love. Loyalty is a quality that sets a man apart from the throng more than a kingly robe. It is the cement that makes friendships and upon which friendships, institutions and nations rise and fall. The success of big business corporations depends more upon the loyalty of its employees than upon any other one thing—without it, it is doomed to failure.
Loyalty is the one quality above all others that elevates us to the highest peaks of honor, virtue and success. It is the one quality above all others that makes manhood worthy and womanhood lovely.

A college is judged by its alumni. The success of a college depends as much, or more, on the cooperation and loyalty of its alumni as anything else. Clemson is not a college for plutocrats or aristocrats, and is possibly the most democratic in its spirit and in its action than any college in the State. When I think of this spirit and the boys that attend school here from the different types of home, I am constrained to feel that Clemson adopts the Jeffersonian rather than the Hamiltonian spirit of making leaders. (Compare these two here).

What can we do to show our loyalty to Clemson?

1. We can encourage foundations.
2. We can encourage athletes to attend Clemson. (Clemson is now on the top of the ladder in athletic affairs)
3. We can encourage students of high scholastic standing to attend Clemson.
4. Seize every opportunity to speak a good word for Clemson.
5. Help a Clemson man whenever possible (securing an ordinary job--the elevation of one to a high position or office)
6. Lend efforts in securing needed buildings (Such as Alumni Building, Community Building and others)
7. Support her athletic teams in defeat as strongly as in victory.

Just as Dr. Thomas G. Clemson had a dream for establishing a College for such noble purposes and ideals, so should we visualize how to improve it and make it one of the best in the land.

We should bend our every efforts to upbuilding and enlarging of this great institution and render it a genuine service. We should feel about it as the poet did who wrote these lines, "I live for those who love me, for those who know me true, for the heaven that smiles above me, and the good that I can do".

II. COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

A poet once wrote, "Count that day lost whose low descending sun, views from the earth no worthy action done".

I like to think of Clemson men as community builders—as beacon lights who forge ahead and take the lead in matters pertaining to the welfare and upbuilding of a community. In every community we find three types of leaders—the wants, the won’ts and can’ts. The first type accomplish everything, the second oppose everything and the third fail in everything. Clemson men should be of the "will" type.

A genuine community leader is a person of high ideals. He will work unceasingly and untiringly to accomplish the following:

1. Provide playgrounds and amusements for the children, swimming pools, athletic fields and tennis courts for the young people and parks and recreation centers for the adults.
2. Encourage home, street and highway beautification.
3. Favor protecting the health of the community.
4. Encourage safety and accident prevention (in all wars in which the U. S. has engaged, Revolutionary, 1812, Mexican, Civil, Spanish-American and World, killed in action or died of wounds—300,000. During last 15 years, a period approximating the total duration of these six major wars, killed or died of injury in automobile accident—325,000.)
The annual auto death record in U. S. is 50,000 persons (1 every 17 minutes). The annual auto death record in S. C., 408 persons (1 every 21 hours)
5. Provide good libraries.
6. Provide good schools—only 1/2 of every dollar now goes for education in U. S. (State supported term in S. C. increased from 6 to 7 months)
8. Abolish crime (crime cost the U. S. $4,000,000,000 a year, which is 11 times the cost of the army and Navy combined. America most criminal of all civil nations in the world. The criminal knows his chances are 5 to 1 he will not be apprehended, 15 to 1 he will not be convited, 100 to 1 he will not pay the extreme penalty. In U. S. over 9000 persons are killed lawlessly each year; this is 20 times more in proportion to population than are killed in Great Britain. We have 50 times more robberies than Great Britain. Our scarlet army is 400,000, who make their living chiefly through crime, mostly under 25 years of age; 1/5 under 20.
Crime is America's greatest danger and disgrace.
A good community leader is one who lives among his fellows and can see, joy in their worthy successes, respect for their honest failures, forgiveness for their human frailties.
The deeds of a great community leader may not be chiseled in stone or granite, or moulded in bronze, but they will be graven in a deeper and more permanent place—in the hearts of his fellow men.
A good community leader has faith in his community and in his people, and does not depend on luck. H. C. Gifford on his dying bed said, "Fame is a vapor, popularity an accident, riches take wings, those who cheer today, will curse tomorrow." In his later days he seemed to think things came by luck, but he was mistaken, as things do not come by luck. I like to think of the lines of that poet who wrote:

"One ship glides east and another west, with the self same gale that blow.
'Tis the set of the sails, and not the gale, that determines the way they go.

"Like the winds of the sea are the gales of fate
As we voyage along through life
'Tis the will of the soul that determines the goal
And not the calm or the strife."

III. STATE LEADERSHIP.

More Clemson men should take an active interest in State affairs. Out of the 170 members composing the General Assembly of S. C., only 15 attended Clemson, and very few of these are graduates. Some Clemson men hold administrative positions in different Departments of the State government, but practically none hold executive positions and positions of high honor and trust. I am glad to state that during the past Session of the General Assembly we were successful in passing two enabling Acts that should mean much to our dear Alma Mater: One permits the College to secure a loan from the F. W. A. to erect a new agricultural building, which has been sorely need for a long time, and Clemson has been an agricultural college without an agricultural building. The other permits a loan to erect a new dormitory. With the exception of a wing a few years back to the old dormitory, no new dormitory has been constructed since 1907, and this is badly needed. As time passes, more room is required. In 1893, the date Clemson opened its doors, 446
students were enrolled. In 1935, students were enrolled. This new dormitory should be a great asset to our institution. I cannot stress too much the importance of Clemson men taking a more active part in State affairs. To my mind, the highest service a man can render his State and nation is in public office and service to the people. Such service is perhaps not as remunerative as a private vocation or profession, but we should remember the lines of that poet who said:

"If we paint a picture, in due time it will fade
If we carve a figure from marble, it may become broken,
If we write good books, they may mould
If we build skyscrapers, temples and magnificent architectural structures, they will in time crumble,
But, if we render service to our State, these noble deeds stand forever, and time will not efface them."

There are perplexing problems confronting State leaders today. The liquor problem has always been and probably always will be intricate to solve. Law enforcement demands the best attention of our leading citizens. The question of education and good roads are two paramount issues that demand the most serious thought that can be given them. Such social problems as sterilization of mental defectives, divorce and birth control, questions to which much thought could be given, and they eventually will require a solution. The question of taxes has always been a paramount issue. A statesman once said, "he who hopes a tax to see, hopes what never was, nor e'er shall be". A great many people are considering such taxes as, the sales tax, the income tax, the inheritance tax, the gasoline tax should be controlled by the Federal Government or the different states. A great many feel that it is a gradual encroachment by the Federal Government in invading the field of the rights of States in imposing Federal taxes on those named.

One matter that deserves attention in South Carolina and other Southern states is the white paper, or news print, industry. It costs $47.24 to produce this print by the mills in U. S. and Canada. It would cost only 27.54 to produce it by mills in the South.

When I think of public office and the trust that accompanies it, I am reminded of a little poem by Joseph Gilbert Holland written a few years ago when scandal had characterized the official acts of certain public officials rather than honor and dignity. It reads:

"God give us men! These times demand
Strong minds, great hearts, true faith and ready hands;
Men whom the lust of office does not kill;
Men whom the spoils of office cannot buy;
Men who possess opinions and a will;
Men who have honor; men who will not lie;
Men who can stand before a demagogue
And damn his treacherous flattering without winking!
Tall men, sun-crowned, who live above the fog,
In public duty and in private thinking;
For while the rabble, with their thumbworn creeds,
Their large professions and little deeds,
Ningle in selfish strife, lo, freedom weeps;
Wrong rules the land, and waiting justice sleeps;
God give us men! Men who serve not selfish booty,
But real men, courageous, who flinch not duty;
Men of dependable character; men of sterling worth;
Then wrongs will be redressed, and right will rule the earth,
God give us men!"

Men are worth more than money, souls are worth more than gold culture is to be placed above rubies, character above diamonds, honor preferred to house and lands, and service to country the greatest
IV. NATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Clemson men should take a greater interest in national affairs. Neither of our U. S. Senators, or a single Congressman from this State is a Clemson man. Very few Clemson men hold high positions in Washington or with the Federal government. This should not be so. Clemson men should have a part in solving the great national problems baffling our nation today. When I think of the national, or great national leaders, I think of the lines of that poet who said,

"Men are worth more than money
Souls are worth more than gold
Culture is to be placed above rubies
Character above diamonds
Honor preferred to house and lands
And service to country the greatest opportunity to mankind".

A person who has a of public service is not one who lives in a materialistic philosophy of life, not one who magnifies money above manhood, material things above honor, but one who realizes that what makes a nation great is not her vast wealth, magnificent buildings and natural resources, but the honor, integrity, unselfishness and sacrificing spirit of her men and women.

Are we meeting the challenge to national leadership. Social security problems are meeting us face to face and must be solved. These include unemployment insurance, old age pensions, mothers aid, blind pensions, then we have the problem of veterans aid and child labor, laws, censorship of motion pictures, and distribution of wealth, 5% of population own 65% of the wealth. Our present administration has accomplished much for the benefit of the Country. Immediately on assuming control of the government, it declared a bank holiday and subsequently took steps to have banks deposits insured. The crop production campaign has been successfully carried on and the price of cotton jumped from 5¢ to 15¢ per pound, corn from 50¢ to $1.50 per bushel, oats from 30¢ to $1.00 per bushel, hogs from $2 to $9 per lb. Even with our government paying farmers to produce less, we are importing 25,000,000 bushels of oats, paying farmers to produce less meat, and paying farmers to produce less cotton, we have foreigners in other lands supplying our customers.

The G G C camps have been a great force for training young men in health and discipline and building character, and the ambitious N. R. A which was maintained to increase wages and shorten hours and calculated to help humanity in general, was declared unconstitutional. These and other problems have been and will face the national leaders today. Clemson men should have a part in solving these problems.

CONCLUSION

Roger Babson once said, "Next to recklessness at the top of a boom, the most foolish think in the world is discouragement at the bottom of a slump". We have just passed through the greatest period of depression the U. S. has ever known, but we now see and feel the dawn of a new day, and I feel that we are overcoming the obstacles and difficulties that have confronted us and the biggest thing needed today is a change in the state of mind. Twixt opportunity and persistence the difference is droll, the former sees a doughnut, the latter sees the hole. A poet on one occasion expressed in strong words the importance of state of mind. He wrote the following poem:
"If you think you are beaten, you are;
If you think you dare not, you don't;
If you'd like to win, but you think you can't,
It's almost a cinch you won't.
If you think you will lose, you've lost,
For out in the world you find
Cussless begins with a fellow's will;
It's all in the state of mind.

Full many a race is lost
Ere ever a step is run;
And many a coward fails
Ere ever his work's begun.
Think big, and your deeds will grow;
Think small and you'll fall behind;
Think that you can and you will--
It's all in the state of mind.

If you think you're outclassed, you are;
You've got to think high to rise;
You've got to be sure of yourself before
You ever can win a prize.
Life's battles don't always go
To the stronger or faster man,
But soon or late, the man who wins
Is the fellow who thinks he CAN
All in the state of mind."

I feel that Clemson is on the upgrade, that old graduates are living true to the ideals for which she stands, and so long as the rough Atlantic latches the shores of Carolina, and so long as the peaceful Potomac brooks the rocky coast of California, just so long will Clemson men be true to their Alma Mater and the ideals for which she stands.