



J.M.BARRIE SPEECHES

INTRODUCTION

Barrie's Edinburgh Related speeches

- 1.Stevenson Memorial Meeting December 10, 1896
- 2.Memorial to Mrs Oliphant (St Giles) July 16, 1908
- 3.Freedom of Edinburgh July 29, 1929
4. The Entrancing Life October 25, 1930
- 5.Grant Institute of Geology (Edin Uni) Jan 28, 1932
- 6.Opening Edinburgh Health Exhibition (Waverley Market) Jan 27, 1932
- 7.Edinburgh Institute of Journalists (Dinner North British Hotel) Jan 30, 1932
8. 350th Anniversary of Edinburgh Uni, (Assembly Rooms) October 27, 1933
9. Honorary Graduation Ceremonial, McEwan Hall October 30, 1933

Introduction

These speeches by J.M.Barrie are all connected to Edinburgh. They are wide-ranging in time and content. Please read them with the aim of offering some form of reflection (or analysis) to them. Remember there is also the work 'An Edinburgh Eleven' which has scope for further comment/activity especially perhaps via the University.

Our goal for JMB160 is to raise awareness of his significance in literary and cultural senses beyond *Peter Pan* and we hope to do the following:

- 1) Include reflective or analytical articles in our 2020 Journal on specific speeches, or those drawing comparisons. (Deadline for proposals Dec 2019, and delivery Feb 1st, 2020)
- 2) Engage with the organisations and institutions mentioned in the speeches to see if there is some commemorative activity, linked to the speeches and/or their themes which might be undertaken during 2020.
- 3) Promote these articles singly and as 'collections' online at the society website and look for opportunities to create and include them in other relevant collections.

Please note: We do not have funding for any projects, and so we are looking for clever collaborations where we supply information and expertise as part of events organised by the partners.

For more information and to share feedback contact Cally Phillips at jmbarriesociety@gmail.com

1. Stevenson Memorial Meeting December 10, 1896

AT THE MUSIC HALL, EDINBURGH, December 10, 1896

(Mr. J. M. Barrie said)

He was so little accustomed to public speaking that he had been watching Lord Rosebery and Mr. Lawson Tait to try to find out what they did with their hands when they were speaking. He asked them as a favour that they would allow him to put his hands in his pockets to keep them at rest. (Mr. Barrie thereupon put his hands in his trousers pockets and kept them there while he was speaking.)

One of the inducements with which Mr. Stevenson used to try to allure his friends to Samoa was a waterfall, which the natives had turned into a very remarkable and fearsome plaything. They sat down on the top of it, and were washed down with the torrent into a pool beneath. The ladies went down as well as the men, and Mr. Stevenson used to say to his friends when he asked them out that they must do so also, just to show the fortitude of the Briton. He always promised that a native lady would go down with them the first time. Now, if Lord Rosebery had given him (Mr. Barrie) a lead down that waterfall, he was quite certain he should have followed his Lordship with a lighter heart, and certainly with less alarm than he felt in following him that afternoon. Nothing would have induced him to face this meeting; nothing would have dragged him into the daylight had the cause been less dear to him, and had he had less love and admiration for Robert Louis Stevenson, who was loved far more than any other writer of his time. Those of them who were his adorers; those of them who were Stevensonians — for it was a form of freemasonry — those of them who made almost an idol of this man, were very willing to admit that he had imperfections, that he had failings, that he was

only mortal. But they had all read in novels that a man when he was really in love wanted the lady to know him as he really was, and told her all that was to be told against himself — what all his failings were; and he said to her that now she could not love him so much. Then he turned away from her in passion when she admitted that she did not. That was how they regarded Louis Stevenson. They knew that he had his imperfections, but if they believed it they were all willing to turn themselves into Alan Brecks and to become ‘braw fighters’

There was only one other novelist of modern times who called forth such a -passionate devotion — a woman, a darker spirit than he, one who died at a much younger age even than he did, the author of ‘Wuthering Heights’ Everyone who had come under the spell of Emily Bronte would fight on till the end.

It was no one single class that loved Stevenson. All classes did. There was a beautiful story of a little native boy at Samoa. When Stevenson went there he built a small hut, and afterwards went into a large house. The first night he went into the large house, he was feeling very tired and sorrowful that he had not the forethought to ask his servant to bring him coffee and cigarettes. Just as he was thinking that, the door opened and the native boy came in with a tray carrying cigarettes and coffee. And Mr. Stevenson said to him, in the native language, ‘Great is your forethought’; and the boy corrected him, and said, ‘Great is the love.’

That love which they had for him was just as conspicuous across the Atlantic. He (Mr. Barrie) was in America lately and he found that they adored Robert Louis Stevenson there just as much as they did here. There was a window, as they knew, in San Francisco, where his works only used to be exhibited: and there were always great crowds round that window. He was told that there were women there as well as men, although Stevenson once wrote to him, ‘It is little the ladies fash about Tusitala and all his works. The ungrateful jades!’ But that did not seem to have been so. Stevenson’s chief appeal was to young men; it would be by young men he would be best known, and longest remembered.

It had been said that he cared little about his old University in Edinburgh. But that was not true. The other day he heard of a letter written by Stevenson to one of his oldest friends; it was written from the South Seas, and he said he was lying in a boat, thinking of old days at Edinburgh University, and the dreams he had dreamed in those days, and how little he thought at that time that they would be realised. And now that they had been realised, it had occurred to this friend that out of gratitude he might have put up at the corner of Lothian Street a tablet on which that little story might be inscribed, so that students who had grown down-hearted might perchance look upon it and be cheered. He (Mr. Barrie) did not know whether that tablet would ever be put up, but he dared to say that many would seem to see it there and take courage.

He knew another body of younger men — younger men than Mr. Stevenson, at all events — who took him as their model, who looked up to him as their example — he meant the younger writers of to-day — of all classes, not merely the Romancists, but the Realists, as they were called: the Idealists, as they were called: the Pessimists, as they were called. They all agreed on one thing. They all saw with different eyes, but they were all proud of Stevenson, who, beyond all other writers, was the man who showed them how to put their houses in order before they began to write, in what spirit they should write, with what aim, and with what necessity of toil. They knew from him that, however poor their books might be, they were not disgraced if they had done their best: that however popular they might be, if they were not written with some of his aims, they were only cumberers of the ground. They were only soldiers in the ranks, but they were proud to claim him as their leader, and when he called his muster-roll they would be found answering to their names, 'Here, here, here.' Stevenson was dead, but he still carried their flag, and because of him the most unworthy among them were a little more worthy, and the meanest of them a little less mean.

2. Unveiling of Memorial to Mrs. Oliphant

IN ST. GILES' CATHEDRAL, EDINBURGH, July 16, 1908

When there is such a function as this to be gone through with in Edinburgh, how you must all miss the presence of Professor Masson. It must come upon all his old students, as it does upon me to-day — Edinburgh, but no Masson! And now Mrs. Oliphant has come back to you. It has seemed good to the people of Scotland that her face and lineaments should be carved on the walls of their capital. She used to stay here at times — it was her romantic town too — and now she returns — at your request.

It is only a few halting words that you can expect me to say of her. I am no speaker at all; and besides we are not here for speechmaking. We admire her as a woman and as a writer. The woman was the greater part of her. Throughout her life she had other things and better things to do than to write, and she was doing them all the time; they were the things that made her heart glad or depressed — never her books. But with that part of her we have little to do to-day. The last time I saw Mrs. Oliphant — very shortly before she died — she said to me, 'For the first time for fifty years I have nothing on my mind.' She was not referring to her work, but take it at that; and what a mind it had been, how splendidly alive, for all those fifty years. One shrinks from using extravagant words about her; to no one would they have been so distasteful as to herself, and we are not met to compare her with this writer or with that.

She took to literature for the most honourable of all reasons — to make a livelihood; but she took to it as some finely equipped ship slips for the first time into the water. I dare say there was some such ship launched on the very day the publishers launched Mrs. Oliphant; however good a ship it was, one may wonder — Was its machinery in more perfect order than hers — its stored-up energy, was it greater than the energy events proved to be stored up in that one quiet woman? It

carried its hundreds of human beings; I don't know how many, but not more, I dare swear, than the human barque was to carry, the men and women of her pen; and however gallantly it fought the elements, not more gallantly, I am sure, than she. If it had had to come to a fight between the woman and the ship, her force against its force, I believe the ship would have gone down.

Which was her best novel? Doubtless we all have our favourites, and none stands as a pillar among the others. Of Mrs. Oliphant it could never be said, 'One moment only was her sun at noon.' But I suppose we would all agree that amongst the best are the various chronicles of Carlingford; and that Mr. Tozer and Miss Marjoribanks and the perpetual curate and many another of Carlingford are as near to us as some of our friends and relatives. And there is one other series, destined perhaps for a longer voyage than even 'Salem Chapel' — those magical stories of the unseen.

She did so much and did it so well. Put the novels aside, and there are biography and history that might keep a reader busy for years. Put them aside, the better to see the very river of essays that flowed from her to the magazines. Put all aside except those that appeared in 'Maga,'¹ one of the mothers of literature, and there is still an impressive record. If you have forgotten, re-read them. She was doing those things because she was chosen by 'Maga' from a list of famous names to do them because 'Maga' knew she could do them best. To her fellow-writers, in particular, the sheer quantity of her output has a splendid quality. It is no special proof of her industry — others have been far more industrious — but of how gloriously her mind was cleared for action, and how rich was the soil.

The soil, of course, was her imagination. It was not one of those imaginations that have carried some writers in a single flight to the very vaults of Heaven, to play hide and seek with the stars — often suddenly to leave them and let them fall to earth. It was rather a friendly familiar, who sat with her — on the back of her

¹ Blackwoods Magazine

chair — was always waiting for her there — never deserted her once even in the month of May, for all those fifty years — watched her growing old — heard the doleful bell emptying her house — lured her back into her writing-chair — faithful as if proud of what she had done with him — like one grown to love the white-haired lady in the pretty shawl and the white cap. I am not quite sure about the shawl, but she was fond of all beautiful things, and I think she wore a shawl, and that her familiar grew fond of it too, as he sat on the back of her chair and played with it and the cap and whispered pretty thoughts to her, like one child left to her when the others were gone.

It would ill become me to say more. We are here for a special purpose, to do honour to one of our illustrious dead, her ‘task accomplished, and the long day done.’ It is for the future to sum her up; we know that she was the most distinguished Scotswoman of her time, and a steady light among the band of writers who helped to make the Victorian reign illustrious. A national memorial in this historic pile means that here is another of its children by whom Scotland has said ‘Well done.’ By your wish, and it is a solemn thought this, Mrs. Oliphant joins the great shades who take care of Edinburgh, and patrol the city, inaudible.

3. Freedom of Edinburgh July 29th 1929

IN THE USHER HALL, EDINBURGH

My Lord Provost¹ and Town Council and Ladies and Gentlemen — This honour from Edinburgh! Yesterday I happened to see in an English newspaper an account of what this ceremony would be like. Also, it told what the two new burgesses were like. It is said that no mortal man could conceive two people — two Scots — more unlike each other than Mr. Adamson² and the other man. Now that is my misfortune. It went on to praise his many qualities, and wound up by saying that he also possessed what we all here know to be the grandest attribute of a Scotsman, namely, that he had all the dourness of his countrymen.

I want you now to watch me, and find out whether I am not dourer than he is. He said various things in what I am sure we all thought was a most beautiful speech; he has said many touching things that voice my feelings to-day as well as his own. Like him, I cannot imagine ever having anything I can value so much as this fine casket and what it means. Well, yes, I can. I would value it even more if I had seen in it a private key to Holyrood. That is the beginning of my dourness. That key and a candle, and all the rest of Edinburgh to go to bed... and what do you say to it, my Lord Provost? He said that some people are never satisfied.

If I could only be as satisfied with myself to-day as I am with my burgess ticket, but, despite the moving words of the Lord Provost and the very generous words of the Secretary for Scotland, I know very well, with the poets, that all my life I have only been trying to catch the wind with a net. I suppose all the howes and hills and waters of Scotland which creep nearer to Edinburgh in the night look upon her as

¹ Sir Alexander Stevenson

²Mr. William Adamson, M.P., Secretary of State for Scotland, who was also being presented with the Freedom.

their Royal Mother, and now to be told by her leading citizen that somehow she is pleased with the contents of my net, and just a few withering leaves left behind by the wind! All I can say is that I am at her feet.

I think, from what the Lord Provost said, that he rather expected me to say something about the old days, when I really was, although very insignificant, a part of Edinburgh — my student days. I am afraid I was unduly interested in myself in those days, because, although I remember myself vividly, I cannot remember the Castle at all. It is so long ago that perhaps there was not a Castle in those days. At any rate, there was a magazine — just about the best in the world then and now — Blackwood's. No one can now tell whether it or the Castle came first—'Maga' or the Castle — and no one knows which will outlast the other. But I had not been very long at the University before I sent to Blackwood's my very first manuscript. I am afraid it was a satire on my Professor, not the little thing I published afterwards — just a satire, and with some rather strange portraits of the Professors, done by another and a better hand. Well, we finished it off, and we sent it to Blackwood's.

The scene now changes to George Street. Two youths might be observed, walking up and down, past the famous literary portals of that firm. Who could they be there? At first the Blackwoods received us most courteously, but, after a time, they became a little dour. This was because we were so loath to have them miss such a good thing. Looking back on it now, I don't think I am tremendously exaggerating if I say that, by the end of this touching visit, the Blackwoods were hurling that manuscript out upon the street from their upper windows, and we were down below, catching it and passing it in again by the door. I cannot remember now what it was called, but I can see very well that they were doing me a service. That manuscript has gone, screeching down the wind many a year, but some of the portraits, I believe, are still possessed by sympathetic friends, and several of them I framed and took with me for my first year in London. But it was a cold winter, and the fire burned low, and you know how beautifully those thin wooden sheets at the back burn. My tale is told. I only mention the incident lest perhaps to-day some

voice in George Street is crying out:—'Ye Gods, he will have brought back the manuscript.'

I should like to say a word to you of the men under whose spell I fell in my student days, especially about one who was the 'man of men' to me. Without throwing discretion to the winds, I shall tell you about the woman. I would rather have had her here to-day than almost anyone I can think of. If she had been here, I am sure she would have been wearing a black silk dress, or something she considered uncommonly like it. She kept lodgings — fortunately for me. She was an old and poor widow woman, without kith or kin, but I think it would ill become me to stand up in Edinburgh without recalling the fragrant memories of Mrs. Edwards. In after years, when I used to go and see her, she would shake a playful fist at me and say:—'Yer play wis here, being acted by the play-actors, and I wis fain to go, but oh Mr. Barrie, I couldna daur!'

If she had lived into the war, I can conceive her forcing her way on to the Castle to fire Mons Meg at the enemy. I can hear her pausing after each shot, to shout out:—' Count your men now, Mr. Kaiser!' A short play of mine, 'The Old Lady Shows her Medals,' was written entirely thinking of Mrs. Edwards. Why is it that landladies are so much maligned? I think all we old Edinburgh graduates, who had good ones, might do worse than raise a statue in Edinburgh to the students' friend.

My Edinburgh 'man of men' was Professor Masson. For one of my calling, a University, however pleasing, is just a stepping-off place into the void, with nothing to step on to. I remember, when I was a boy, once showing a set of photographs of the poets to a group of young women. They did not know anything about the poets, nor had they ever seen their pictures before. I spread them out and invited them to choose, and then the hand of every one of them laid grip upon Byron. One expressed the general sentiment by saying:—'That's the billie for me!'

Such is the importance of physiognomy in the calling of letters. I do not know whether any of you noticed, but I noticed, that the Lord Provost, though he spoke in

such an extravagantly kind way about me, took precious care not to say one single word about my personal appearance. Well, at any rate, Masson was ‘the billie for me.’ Do those of you who were under him remember the terrific appalling frown when something passed over his usual benign countenance. I was the student who found out what that frown meant. I have seen it on many Edinburgh men; I have seen it on some of you to-day; I have seen it on the Lord Provost. What it meant was that Masson, though favoured in many ways, had never met Walter Scott. The only charge I bring against Edinburgh is that it never managed somehow — I can see that the thing needed some doing, but it surely could have been contrived somehow — that David Masson should pass one evening with Sir Walter.

What fun, ladies and gentlemen, to choose the rest of the company! You do it. What age would you like? You can have them in which you like. Let us have them all young, and in the days before they were famous, at the time everyone could have got into Darnley’s waistcoat. And where should they meet? The White Horse Inn is too full of swaggering Jacobites to-night. Baxters Close? They may go on there later, because Burns, of course, is one of them. I think in Castle Street, at No. 39. Of course, it cannot be there; but it is; and the great thing about it is that the Shirra is in the Chair. Who else would you have? Drummond of Hawthornden? Pass! Hume — they come from all different ages — Robert Fergusson, Carlyle, the Ettrick Shepherd, Lister? We must have Robert Chambers, and we must be careful because the table is only seated for twelve. We cannot have any of our famous divines or merchants or scholars, and only the Shirra to represent Parliament House. We must have Dunbar and Gavin Douglas. They come in, looking as if they had come a long way. James Boswell, and he says he must bring a guest. We cannot have guests; but who is the guest? — and he gives his name. Pass! And I think I should like to choose a name representing the Edinburgh of to-day, though he has lately left it. I choose my beloved Walter Blaikie to join that company, sponsored, of course, by Prince Charlie. He sits down without waiting to be passed.

There is only room for one more, and, of course, we all agree it must be our

Robert Louis. In such company, and with such a dearth of accommodation, he would be very willing to-night just to be the boy who runs backward and forward with the hot water.

There they are at dinner! Let us look at them. How much jollier they look before they were famous! They fade away if we look long at them, and longest at the Shirra. Ah! ladies and gentlemen, it is not they who fade away, but they who remain!

Now I have got through with it without once mentioning Mary Queen of Scots. You know that was a pretty near thing at the beginning, when we got on to Holyrood, and just now, at that dinner of Professor Masson's, I got rather a scare, because, of course, if Edinburgh's greatest inhabitants through the ages do ever meet together it must be in Holyrood, and all the invitations must come from her royal hand. Now you see why I wanted that key and the candle.

Up to this point the speaker — this is not meant for the company in general as much as for the gentlemen of the Press, just to help them a little — up to this point the speaker had been only noticeable by the woodenness of his face and his raucous voice — but at the mention of Mary Queen of Scots an extraordinary change for the better came over his appearance; his face lit up, his voice became dulcet, and all of us sitting beneath the platform saw quite clearly that his eyes were either hazel or blue.

So, ladies and gentlemen, good-bye! I am proud, indeed, to be one of you, and so to have the right with you to say to the mighty brood who make this city immortal—' Hail, but never Farewell!'

4. The Entrancing Life October, 25th 1930

I was uplifted – how could it be otherwise? – when I found that my Alma Mater wanted me to come back for another course. But now that the lightnings are upon me I am riven with misgivings. What have I dared. Oh, why left I the eery of a solitary to go wandering in the great unquiet places. This college of renown – for wherever I find myself today I feel that I am in the old College ; these walls dissolve, it is more like Masson’s lecture room, Campbell-Fraser raises his beard again, I hear Blackie singing – what has my old College been about in remembering me, she who was once so noted for her choice of pilots? All I can say to you in my defence is, yours the wite for having me.

My anxious desire is to follow, very humbly as needs must, in the ways of my illustrious predecessor Lord Balfour. That word has a tang to it that is sweet to the Scottish ear. I once had an argument, across the waters that lie between us and Samoa, with Robert Louis Stevenson about which was the finest-sounding Scottish name. He voted for one who was a kinsman of his, Ramsay Traquair. But I thought, and still think, that Balfour is better. How like our great Chancellor to have the name as well as all the rest. I first saw him here, I mean in the old College, in my student days. He was addressing one of the University Societies on Philosophical Doubt; I cannot now recall with certainly which society, but it was the one I tried to become a member of, and they would not have me. However, I did contrive an entry that night, and the abiding memory is the dazzling presence of him, his charm; though, as Dr. Johnson never said, is there any Scotsman without charm? Lord Balfour’s charm has been talked of by some as if it was the man himself; but oh no, it was only his seductive introduction to us, playing around him, perhaps to guard against our ever getting nearer to ‘the man himself.’ It still played around him when he faced the blasts in his country’s cause. It loved the great adventure. Did

you ever notice how much ground he covered with his easy stride? It was so also with the stride of his mind. So many offices did he adorn. I was once speaking to him about some past event, and he said, 'Yes, I remember that – I was Prime Minister at the time – or was I? – at any rate, I was something of that kind.'

So light apparently his knapsack. I have seen him, towards the end, writing the memoirs of his early days that have just been published. It was in one of the loveliest of English gardens, and he was reclining, under a great tulip tree, on a long chair, swallows sailing round, jotting it down as if the life and times of Arthur Balfour were only another swallow flight. As for myself, I vowed, as the alarming day of the august ceremony drew near, to model my installation address on his: and on sitting down to read it, I found he had never made on. Instead, I see him today smiling charmingly at my predicament.

The University is not now as it was when I matriculated. Even on that day the old College, which perhaps never wore an alluring beam of welcome on her face, seemed so formidable that a famous Edinburgh divine, Dr. Alexander Whyte, had to accompany me to her awful portals and thrust me in. For some time I hoped he would do this every day. I learn from the University of Edinburgh Journal, itself a notable growth, that since ten years after they got rid of me (they did not put it in that way) seventeen new chairs have been added. Many vast academic departments have arisen. The methods of lecturing, of examinations, have been overhauled. This magnificent Hall has sprung up, and all the avenues leading to graduation in it have been made appropriately stiffer and steeper. Unions and Hostels such as, alas, were not in my time, now give Edinburgh students that social atmosphere which seemed in the old days to be the one thing lacking; the absence of them maimed some of us for life. The number of students has increased by over a thousand. Perhaps greatest change of all, Women – yes. 'Female forms whose gestures beam with mind.' What a glory to our land has this University been since the first acorn, when one man – but what a man – Principal Rollock, did all its work single-handed near by the site of the Kirk of Field. No wonder that we in gratitude have erected a

monument to him and called a chair after him. Or have we? I learn now, for history sleepeth not, that the Kirk of Field is famous for a marital rumbling close by, in which the aim of a husband was to blow up Mary Queen of Scots. That is the new theory. A more fitting one for us would be that some fearful Scot, himself on fire for a degree, made that explosion to clear the ground for a University.

Whoever was responsible, a Queen or a Prince, or Andrew Souter M.A., a fire was lit that will last even longer than the controversy. Since that small beginning, Edinburgh of a daughter, the University has risen nobly to the grapple; she has searched the world for the best everywhere, to incorporate it in her own. How parochial if she had done otherwise. And now so much has been accomplished that one may ask what remains to do. It is easier to cry 'onward' than to say whither. We might go onward till we got clean out of Scotland. Many of our students are from across the Border, they come from every civilised land; and it is our proudest compliment, for it means that they think they get something here which is not to be got elsewhere. They are all welcome so long as we can contain them, and so long as they are satisfied that what is best for us is also best for them. But our universities must remain what our forebears conceived with such great travail, men of our smiddies and the plough, the loom and the bothies, as well as scholars, they must remain, first and foremost something to supply the needs of the genius of the Scottish people.

Those needs are that every child born into this country shall as far as possible have an equal chance. The words 'as far as possible' tarnish the splendid hope, and they were not in the original dream. Some day we may be able to cast them out. It is by Education, though not merely in the smaller commoner meaning of the word, that the chance is to be got. Since the war various nations have wakened to its being the one way out; they know its value so well that perhaps the only safe boast left to us is that we knew it first. They seem, however, to be setting about the work with ultimate objects that are not ours. Their student from his earliest age is being brought up to absorb the ideas of his political rulers. That is the all of his education,

not merely in his academic studies but in all his social life, all his mind, all his relaxations; they are in control from his birth, and he is to emerge into citizenship with rigid convictions which it is trusted will last his lifetime. The systems vary in different lands, but that seems to be their trend, and I tell you they are being carried out with thoroughness. Nothing can depart more from the Scottish idea, which I take to be to educate our men and women primarily not for their country's good but for their own, not so much to teach them what to think as how to think, not preparing them to give as little trouble as possible in the future but sending them into it in the hope that they will give trouble. There is a small group of the Intelligensia very much afraid of any such creed, because its members are so despondent about their fellow-creatures. They are not little minds, they contain some of the finest brains in the country, but they are as gloomy as if this were their moulting season. They think their land may endure a little longer if they new generations are plied with soporifics. All they ask of us, especially of youth, is a little all-round despair. No more talk about hitching your waggon to that star. Few of us have waggons and there are no stars.

How do you like it, you new graduates? Are those the resilient notions you are carrying away with you in your wallets? Is it Lochaber no more for you? I don't believe it. The flavour cannot have gone out of the peat. The haggis can still charge uphill. I'll tell you a secret. Have you an unwonted delicious feeling on the tops of your heads at this moment, as if an angel's wing had brushed them half an hour or so ago? It did – I speak from memory; and it carried with it a message from your University; 'All hopelessness abandon, ye who have entered here.' She trusts your wallets contain, as her parting gift to you 'those instruments with which high spirits call the future from its cradle.'

She hopes that you are also graduating in the Virtues, in which, being an old hand at granting academic honours she knows better than to expect more than a pass degree. It is quite possible that your time here has done you not good but harm. If it has made you vain, for instance, of your accomplishments, too solemnly serious

about their magnitude. I have seen Lord Haldane sitting with his head in his hands because he knew so little. Mr. Einstein has a merry face; he looks at us almost mischievously, and no wonder. Has your learning taught you that Envy is the most corroding of vices and also the greatest power in any land? Are you a little more temperate in mind? Have you more charity? Do you follow a little better, say about as much as the rest of us, the dictates of kindness and truth? You may be very clever, destined for the laurel, and have smiled at the unfortunates who fought for bursaries or to pass in, failed, and had to give up their dear ambitions; but if their failures taught them those lessons, they may have found for themselves a better education than yours.

You may discover in the end that your life is not unlike a play in three acts with the second act omitted. In the neatly constructed play of the stage each act moves smoothly to the next, they explain each other; but it may not be so with yours, it is not so with many of us. In less time than I hope you now think possible, for I would have you gay on your graduation morning, you will be far advanced in the final act. There has been a second, your longest one, but how little record you have probably kept of it. All you know may just be that this man or woman you have become is not what you set out to be in the days of the Firth of Forth. That may not even damp you much, if prosperity has made you gross to some old aspirations. You may not know how or when the thief came in the night, nor that it was you who opened the door to him. But something bad got into you in the middle act, and lay very still in you till it was your familiar. Slowly, furtively it pushed, never stopped pushing slowly, for it never tires, until it had you out and took your place. You may sometimes roam round the earthly tenement that once contained you, trying to get back. Perhaps you will get back. That sometimes happens. We may hope, however, that by the grace of God what entered was something good. All I can assure you is that in the second act, now about to begin, something will get in which is either to make or to destroy you. It has got in already if an uphill road dismays you. Would you care to know my guess at what is the entrancing life? It sums up most of what I

have been trying to say today for your guidance. Carlyle held that genius was an infinite capacity for taking pains. I don't know about genius, but the entrancing life, I think, must be an infinite love of taking pains. You try it.

One word more. The 'Great War' has not ended. Don't think that you have had the luck to miss it. It is for each one of you the war that goes on within ourselves for self-mastery. Those robes you wear today are your Khaki for that war. Your graduation day is your first stripe. Go out and fight. Don't come back dishonoured as in many ways I do.

Are we not all conscious, fitfully, of a white light that hovers for a moment before our lives? It comes back for us from time to time to the very gasp of our days. Come back for us – to take us where? So quickly fades, as if unequal to its undertaking, like an escaped part of ourselves. Are stars souls? The inaccessible star. If any one of ours has reached his star, it was our Lister. The inaccessible friendly star. If we could follow the white light.

How I have been preaching. It is not usual to me. It is against the 'stomach of my sense,' I feel that it has gone to my head. I look around for others to preach to. My eyes fall on the honorary graduates. I refrain with difficulty. For the present it is goodbye. I wish I was a little less unworthy of this gown. I will do my best.

5. Grant Institute of Geology (Edin Uni) Jan 28, 1932

LADIES and Gentlemen, the University is very fortunate. We are here to acclaim the splendid generosity of Sir Alexander Grant and to hear something about it from the man of all men most worthy.

As for myself, I am here for several reasons — one that I could not stay away when I heard what doings were going on. The other is a reason which, when I speak of it, the Prime Minister (The Rt. Hon. J. Ramsay MacDonald) may hear of with a little misgiving. I propose to take this opportunity of presenting the Prime Minister with a little New Year gift of my own. The time-table of a Prime Minister at any time must be heavy, but never so heavy as now. All those aeroplanes make it worse. 6.32, great national gathering in Aberdeen; 6.51, Cabinet meeting in Downing Street. Nothing would give me greater pleasure now than to turn and address the Prime Minister on the political situation. Instead of doing so, I mean to present him with my gift. Before I tell you what it is, may I keep him for just one moment in suspense? I have the right as Chancellor to speak for another five minutes. I mean to give those five minutes to him. He has many glorious possessions nowadays, but it is a long, long time since he has had five minutes of his own. I give him mine, not necessarily to expend it all here. He may do with it as he likes. He may squander it in a moment, or he may give it into someone's keeping, someone who will look after it properly for a great occasion, do with it as he will. But I trust he will use it wisely. And so having, I hope, heartened and relieved him, I call upon the Prime Minister.

6. Opening Edinburgh Health Exhibition (Waverley Market) Jan 27, 1932

If only some illustrious servant of medicine could now push me aside and take my place how much happier all of us would be — especially one of us. If some of the great shades of our medical school could return. ‘Lord Lister then rose and addressed the meeting.’ If our newspapers could say that! ‘Sir James Young Simpson, in replying, stated’ — If we could hear what he stated. Probably something about the Maternity Hospital. But you know these great ones — and there were many others — are here to-day in a very real sense.

Let us reflect for a moment about that. Every great healer lives on though he may be long dead. As the saying is, he lives on in the lives he has saved. He lives on in us in the Waverley Market to-day though it may be some distant forebear that he saved. For it was such men as these who once upon a time founded what was then a very-small hospital in this city just a few years before the ‘Forty-Five,’ which made more stir, but was really a smaller affair. Similar men of the same calibre in an unending line have gone on until they have raised that little hospital to its present pinnacle. Ladies and gentlemen, a part of these great ones lives on in us if we have any gratitude, any pity. That part is in us to-day in some inner chamber of our soul. It is only asking one thing of us, that all the other parts of us should combine with it in bringing to its fullest fruit the brave little effort of 200 years ago, the now world-famous Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh.

As for myself, I would not venture to address you on so great a matter were it not that I had once a little hospital of my own. It was in France during the war, on the Marne, not very far from Verdun, and it had some little peculiarities that made it, I think, rather different from any other war hospital that you may have heard of.

Perhaps you would like me to tell you a little about it. It owed its existence to my lamentable weakness for children and old ladies. It was staffed largely by voluntary help, and I dare say its ways were less like those of the Royal Infirmary to-day than like those of the little hospital started so long ago in Robertson's Close. But I must not disparage my hospital. I must stick up for it. The Edinburgh Infirmary started with six beds. I started with eight. Our progress was also much quicker. In two or three months we had about 100, although, I dare say, some of you would not have called them beds. It was a hospital for children wounded by the guns, French children, many of them very badly maimed, without a leg or an arm, very young. The oldest, I suppose, was not more than ten. Many of them were almost babes. On the very first day that we opened the hospital those eight were all asleep in one room, which was afterwards called, more finely, No.1 Ward. It was in a château which had been lent to us, rather damp, and that night, unfortunately, part of the ceiling fell down. The nurse rushed into the room, wondering why she did not hear the children screaming, and thinking it was a bomb, for it sounded like a bomb, and they were used to bombs. When she opened the door she found all those eight little Roman Catholics kneeling by their bedsides praying.

When the hospital was at its fullest a Zeppelin fell into the grounds of it, brought down by the guns of Bar-le-Duc. I think it was one of the first Zeppelins brought down in the war. It had been coming and going, dropping occasional bombs all day, and I am quite sure that the airmen had no idea that there were these small people below. The children were put to bed very early, while it was still light, the blinds pulled down, and they were told it was night time and to go to sleep. Next morning when they woke they knew, though we kept them away from it, that the airship was lying in little pieces in the grounds along with some fragments of airmen who had once been as brave as ours. The children were very terrified at first, but some one had the happy thought of giving them an equivalent in money of threepence each. Then they all danced and sang with glee and, with the awful sarcasm of early years, they called their threepences 'The Tears of William.' They

gave little financial gifts to 40 old ladies who had been living mostly in holes in the ground with some planks over them for a roof and to whom we were afterwards able to give 40 beds in another château. I was not there that night, but it must have been great fun seeing the children tipping the old ladies. The children themselves managed to get a good deal of fun out of the hospital. They invented games in which to have one leg or one arm was not a disadvantage but rather an advantage, and if I was there they got me to invent these games for them, and to play in them too.

They were really dreadfully sharp little children. They did things none of your children would have done. When they were playing, and nurses were in the offing with their thermometers, these children used to stop and hold their breath so that their temperature should not go up. I also taught them cricket with a ball of lint taken from the surgery, purloined from it, and with a bat that had been a crutch. I was sort of thinking now that it was I who purloined that lint. They had a very artful way of trying to get me to come out to play with them very early in the morning. They learned a few Scots words, taught them by a nurse who did not know the language, words like ‘Reeky-reeky,’

‘Tam Shan ter,’ and ‘pot-ae-toes,’ which they thought so very Scots. They did not tell me about that, but they gathered under my bedroom window in the early morning and all shouted out those words to lure me down, usually quite effectively. They had a name for me. They called me ‘Monsieur Auld Reekie.’

Now you see why I have told you this story, and why you come into it, and why it comes about that we are back again at the Edinburgh Infirmary.

I am not going into the history of the Infirmary. It must be so well known to nearly all of you from the days of those famous six beds up to recent times when I understand that £150,000 is about the yearly expenditure, and there are 100,000 beds, counting ins and outs. In other places, they are used to having a pageant nowadays for the glorification of their great times of the past. If Edinburgh were to go in for pageants, it would need to have so many. Most cities find they can cover

the ground with one. In Edinburgh you might have a great pageant illustrating the glories of the Royal Infirmary. I think it should be a night-piece, because I want to have a students' procession in it, a torchlight procession. That is the time when, in my memory, Edinburgh — the fairest of all cities to me — is also the most mysterious. Also, I was a student once in one of those torchlight processions, and nothing, ladies and gentlemen, could persuade me to tell you what happened towards the end of it.

Our students would not appear on this occasion as themselves. They would be representing great figures of the Infirmary. All sorts of people would be there besides students, women students, of course, as well as men. We would have — why, everyone here ought to be in it. All the people who have contributed to the Infirmary, made it great, who are helping just now.

The things that individuals can do. All those sitting on the platform would be there and some of them, I dare say, would get so excited at the end, what with the glare of the lights and the feeling that they were in another triumph, that perhaps by the end of the procession they would find themselves in hands in which they had never been before. Do you know, we cannot have the procession or the pageant just yet. There are so many people who ought to be in it who cannot be in it. For instance, there are all the nurses of the Royal Infirmary. Those nurses have earned their torches and many a one of them has been a torch herself, and yet just because they have given up so much for the sake of the patients the accommodation is not what it should be — very much the reverse! Are we going to allow them to make all those sacrifices and not make some more for them?

And then again you know there are 3000 waiting cases, mostly surgical. What are we to do about them? Have they to go on waiting interminably? We cannot bring them into the procession. We could not bear to bring them in any more than the nurses until we have done more for them. We should have to douse our glims as we were passing along their way, and slip by them in silence.

There are even great figures in the past whom we could not presume to impersonate, because, well, take the case, for instance, of Sir James Young Simpson, how could we ask anyone to be him until we had brought to somewhere near accomplishment his great and glorious dream of a fine maternity hospital for this city? These are the three great objects for which there is now a big attempt being made to raise £500,000. Not so much less than half of that has been already raised, and it remains for the others to raise the other half. Not in Edinburgh alone. This is a national hospital. Can we do it? Do we feel in these hard times that it is impossible?

There is a story of a man who came to the decision that life itself was impossible in these times. He was a Londoner, and he climbed on to one of the bridges over the Thames and got on to the parapet to fling himself over into the river when a passer-by seized hold of him and dragged him down and said, 'I see what you mean, and if you must do it you must, but before you do it you must come with me to the Embankment for half an hour and let us argue about it.' The other agreed. They went to the Embankment and talked the matter over, and then after a good talk they got on to the parapet, both of them, and went into the river together. Nothing is known about these men except that they were not Scots.

Let us put it in this way about the money. Let us agree it is impossible, and then let us go and do it.

I said I was not going to give you the history of the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh but, ladies and gentlemen, after saying it was impossible and then doing it — that has been the history of the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh for 200 years. Surely we can follow the example. While I have left myself no time to speak about the Health Exhibition there it is and you can all speak about it for yourselves. It can speak about it for itself. It is one of the many splendid ways in which the attempt to raise this money is being made. Much is being done by many.

I know what is being done by the shopkeepers, splendid things. All sorts of

people are doing it, but if all the others would come in it would be done. Besides this Health Exhibition — you must certainly keep coming here, for every time you look at it and then look inside yourselves you will see that the more you come here the less need will there be for you to go to hospitals later on. So we are going to raise the money which is still needed, and when that is done then we can have our procession. The last glorious culminating scene on that day ought certainly to have for its central figure the old iron charity box of the Infirmary which, I am told, is still in action. We should be shown — I am going to ask him to do this as soon as I sit down — we should be shown the Lord Provost dropping into that box the last of the 500,000 pound notes. By special arrangement with the Prime Minister to-morrow we shall have that this shall be not paper money but a golden sovereign, so that Scotsmen all over the world can listen in and hear the once familiar clink.

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much for listening to me so patiently. I have now the honour of declaring the Health Exhibition open.

7. Edinburgh Institute of Journalists (Annual Dinner North British Hotel) Jan 30, 1932

Mr. Robertson,¹ ladies and gentlemen, the power of the Press is enormous. When we compare the power of the Press with that of the Pulpit and of Parliaments — I hope you are not making any mistake and thinking this is in my speech. This is just to test the loud speaker. Of course, I should begin in that way, ladies and gentlemen, and I know that it is the proper course when addressing a gathering of journalists, especially when you want to get round them. You know it too. Heavens, how well some of you must know it! Shall we give all that a rest to-night?

It was not my own proposal — it has been officially suggested to me that, in your hour of dalliance, you would prefer me to try to go back into some of the by-ways that I once trod long ago and see if I could pick up some little of past journalism, which, indeed, when I came to Edinburgh, was partly on the Dispatch, but also on some other Scottish newspapers of which we may say a word by and by. Of course, I am very glad to get on to that old subject. But we must not just be too daring. There are some things that are talked of at meetings of journalists when this toast is proposed that must be spoken of again, and there is one in particular we cannot pass by. We must say something once more about the vexed question — What is the difference between journalism and literature? It so happens that I cannot perhaps exactly tell you what the difference is, but I can say what sort of difference there is in it, and to do so I have got to go away back to the earliest recollections of my childhood.

¹ Mr. W. S. Robertson, Chairman of the Edinburgh Branch of the Institute of Journalists.

When I could not have been more than four, another little boy came running to me — he was about my age — to tell me that an old man we knew had ended his life rather terribly and that, if I came running quickly with him, I would see the blood. Off we both went at full pelt, and I did see it. Well, in running so promptly to the scene of the tragedy did I not — O, you wives of journalists! — did I not prove that I had the journalistic instinct? On the other hand, did not my friend, in so generously coming and sharing his news with me instead of keeping it to himself, show that he had no journalistic instinct?

Another memory of past days. The years roll on, and I am now six — this memory is not one of my own. It was told me by a friend who assured me of its accuracy. A few of us boys were playing out of doors at a very messy game, but one was not allowed to play in it because he was in mourning, he was in his 'blacks,' and I suppose the sad way in which he looked at us in play appealed to my better nature, and I offered to change clothes with him. We went up a passage and did this, and then he disported himself playfully and messily in the game, while I sat on a cold stone and wept sadly for I never knew whom. That, O mothers of poets, was literature.

Well, a good many years roll on now, and I have just left Edinburgh University. I had not a complete dress suit at the time, but I could look properly arrayed if I backed against the wall. And it was thus I stood while the gown was being put upon me in an ante-room in preparation for the graduation ceremony. That being over, journalism was now my oyster. All journalists — this includes every one of you — must be very familiar with correspondents who write to ask what is the best way to get on to the Press. In the present state of Governments I should not wonder though Sir Archibald Sinclair may be asking us that question to-night. Of course the correct answer to that is that there is no way of getting on to the Press, and I hope Sir Archibald will remain where he is. Well, I did not know that the Press was barred to humans, and so I got on to it. And the way I got on to it was this — I read an advertisement in the Scotsman applying for a leader writer on a newspaper in the

English Midlands — it was really Nottingham, and I must have applied with a good deal of journalistic instinct, because I got a letter back asking me to send some samples of my leaders. Then I realised that I had never written any leaders, and, indeed, so far as I could remember, had never read any. In these difficult circumstances I sent them an old college essay. It was, I remember so well, on ‘The Fool in King Lear.’ And so, ladies and gentlemen, it was Shakespeare who got me on to the Press.

I was in Nottingham nearly a year, and, after that, I never was on a newspaper again. All I did was freelance work. And even during the time I was there I was sending articles occasionally to London papers, most of them returned, but some used. On one which had been rejected, the editor — Greenwood of the St. James’s Gazette, the man who was my saviour — perhaps, just to soften the blow, wrote, ‘But I did like that Scots thing’ which I had sent him some days before. Well, when I wrote ‘that Scots thing,’ I had thought I had exhausted the subject; but when I found an editor who liked it, I sat down to write Scots things, and I may be conceived for some months afterwards sitting at my loom weaving them. It is strange to me now to think — I was up then in Scotland again — it is strange to me to think that when I left my beloved little native town — a weaving town then — I little thought that I was going to be a weaver all my life. All the others have now given weaving up, and I am the only weaver left.

Very soon I wrote to Greenwood that I was very anxious to get to London, where I knew I could live on a pound a week, but that I left the issue with him. If he said ‘Come,’ I would go. If he said ‘Stay away,’ I would remain. He hurriedly replied ‘Don’t come,’ and so I went. That burning of one’s boats! That night train up to London! Looking back upon it there is something rather glamorous about it. There may have been some glamour in it even at the time, but there was some danger too — a very few assets except just a penny bottle of ink to fling at the Metropolis. I do not know; perhaps when one goes up there — many of you may have been, many of you younger ones will probably go — I think there is sometimes a kind little god sits

up unseen on those little places above which are for light articles only. He may sit up there, and perhaps pipe his eye for such adventurers as you and I. He would help us if he could, and sometimes he does help us.

Now, I am going to tell you about the most romantic affair in my life. It passes the love of woman. Ladies, if they like, can go out for about the next five minutes. I hope no man will be jumping up to tell us his love-story, because it is all too public for that, and besides, you see, it could not come up to this strange romance which would appeal to no one except, perhaps, journalists. When my train reached St. Paneras in the early morning, I was dragging my wooden box to the left luggage, when my eyes alighted on the most beautiful sight in London. It was the evening bill of the previous night's St. James's Gazette, and in large letters on it were these lovely lines, 'The Rooks Begin to Build,' and that was the title of an article which I had sent to the St. James's a few days before, and so I knew that before I had been more than one minute in London I had made two guineas. I do not know what you would have done in these circumstances, but I sat down on my box impeding all the other travellers, and for a long time I gazed at that placard. Ladies and gentlemen, even now I will not listen to one word against rooks.

Well, we won't go on with all my affairs, but during the next two or three years I commenced a number of things. I was also writing for the Dispatch, but it was not the only paper I was writing for in Edinburgh. There was a paper in Edinburgh called the Scotsman, and I wrote a good deal in the Scotsman for a long period, and I question whether even to-day's editor, who, I am glad to know, is here to-night, knows anything about my contributions. I believe there was a secret. I don't know why. Cooper was editor at the time, and I believe it was known only to him and myself. Why we kept it secret — he did it, not I — I suppose nobody knows; it always remained a secret. If you like to go delving in the Scotsman office, of course, you would not find any names. Besides that, there was Henley's paper, which I wrote a good deal in. Henley, who came up with such a brilliant list of contributors, so brilliant that it would have killed any journal. And there was, of course, the

Dispatch, with Riach, most of all. Riach was one of the greatest friends of my life. I never come to Edinburgh even now without seeing him more clearly than any one else. There is no one who remembers those days of our little party except, I think, one man, a man who, as we all know, is an honour to Scotland, and Scottish journalism in particular, my friend John Geddie.

Mr. M'Michael²¹ has come back, I understand, and is here to-night. I am glad to hear he came back; but, of course, he is now a Londoner. Mr. M'Michael, like a cautious Scot, went to London, taking his rooks with him, but there must be many young journalists contemplating that rather dangerous journey, and I hope they will find their rooks waiting them at a London station. I would give them a rook apiece if I could. I believe in the end, however they may rise, they may be this or that, but ultimately I am pretty sure they will think the best time of all was when they had some such experience as that of mine in the days when they were young.

Even the rooks — of course, they are thinking mostly about their nests, but if you could get hold of a candid old rook, which is perhaps questionable, but if you could, I dare say he would admit to you that the best fun of all was in his successful manipulation of the first twig.

And now I have really finished, and feel that perhaps I should not have mentioned the old rook, in case you think I was referring to myself. I want you to forget this evening as it is, to forget all my dullness and wrinkles and all the rest of it, and think of me instead, not as an old rook, but as a gay young bird sitting on that box at the station hailing all those who come up from Edinburgh.

Here, ladies and gentlemen, is to Journalism — she was a very good friend to me, she was — and here is to the anonymity of the Press, the young journalist's best friend. Any poor student would be inviting starvation if he went to London and had to be known, and cut a figure in certain papers. Let him never forget that most of

² A member of the Scotsman Staff

the big things that have been done by the Press have been anonymous. That little god sitting up in the train, though he is there piping his eye for us — I cannot tell you his name, because he is anonymous.

So, ladies and gentlemen, I now thank you very sincerely for the kind way in which you have listened to me. I now propose the toast — a toast I ought not to propose, seeing I have been so connected with Edinburgh journalism. It seems to me I have qualified to be a member of this branch of the Institute which I am now proposing, the Institute of Journalists.

8. 350th Anniversary of Edinburgh Uni, (Assembly Rooms) October 27 1933

I

My Lord Provost and City Fathers (that is a name I love well), — It would ill become a University so exultant to-day if it did not thank with pride all of you for your warm and fatherly reception of us. You, my Lord Provost, in the warmth of your welcome, have forgotten that you — all of you — have a right to celebrate a little anniversary just now of your own, not so old as ours, but still, broadly speaking, one hundred and fifty years old.

I see you don't know to what I am referring, and I hope some of you are beginning to be a little anxious. I remember the matter well; not that I existed at the time — but because I reside in London in a romantic garret in the Adelphi, just a few steps from the erstwhile home one hundred and fifty years ago of the only mortal who ever terrified the Town Council of Edinburgh.

I am not asking you to commemorate that anniversary for that reason, but because of the Town Council's glorious recovery from it, which, II — calculate, took about ten years.

The man was one Graham, a quack doctor, who you may begin to recall once treated young Walter Scott for lameness. He set up an establishment in the Adelphi — a somewhat doubtful establishment — for medical men, which he called the temple of health, and for some considerable time that temple flourished exceedingly, so much so that Dr. Graham came up to Edinburgh and suggested the propriety — if that is the right word — of establishing a branch here. To think of anybody daring to propose to establish a mere branch in Edinburgh!

The Town Council was magnificent, partly perhaps because they did not quite know what they were up against. They refused to allow him to lecture on this subject. He then attacked them in letters and speeches and with lampoons of the most terribly eloquent character. All he said about them I cannot remember, but I have Sir Walter Scott's authority for telling you one thing.

He said: 'I look down upon you as the meridian sun in its glory looks down upon an expiring farthing candle, and as God Almighty himself might regard the impertinent twitchings of the little animals in a rotten cheese.'

My Lord Provost — As I say, in ten years the city had recovered and was itself again, and I can assure my Lord Provost, in the name of the University and the many illustrious delegates who are coming here to grace us to-morrow — many here at this moment — I can assure him that if ever the Town Council of Edinburgh is in need of help — I cannot picture it ever coming about — but, if it should be, all he has to do is to call upon the University. Together we are invincible.

II

AT THE HONORARY GRADUATION CEREMONIAL IN THE M'EWAN HALL,
October 30, 1933

Madam Edinburgh University, only for a few moments will I venture on this high occasion to come between you and your battalions. At ordinary graduations — if such a thing there be — it is customary for the Chancellor, if he be present, not to speak; he is only here of stern duty, and doing the deed with the cap. But, to-day, Madam — I am still addressing the University — Madam, I do believe that you who know so much do not know until I tell you that this is your three hundred and fiftieth birthday. How time passes, does not it? Grandmama, your sons and daughters are here to salute you. You remember your lowly beginning — in just a pinafore, was it not? and now you have sixty professors to carry the train of your gown. Is that enough for glory?

But let us try again. We are gathered here to see you cut your birthday cake, and in front of us are such a row of distinguished graduands as can seldom have been seen, all here about to enter into your service. They are the candles on your cake. Does that suffice you? She is hard to please — woman!

We have here with us distinguished delegates from nearly every University in Great Britain and Ireland, and some famous cities in other lands. They are here to pay you homage — homage from all the lands where the flags of learning fly. Is your cup full now? She did not shake her head that time. I think the delegates moved her — I think that a tremor passed over as she dropped that pretty old-fashioned curtsy.

And now, ladies and gentlemen, if you noted the smile cross her old face — no, no, her young face — just now. Let us say, simply, face that is so dear to you and me, though we shall never see it. If a smile passed her face it was because we, her

children, seem to think that three hundred and fifty years were a long span of life. 'Go to, ye ancients,' she says, 'I do not intend ever even to reach the drowsy years of discretion.' Never for her to reach the full meridian; and yet, see, watch how she makes around her an atmosphere of light. Her eyes — her improbable eyes that you and I shall never fathom — they are fixed not on those three hundred and fifty years, but on the next three hundred and fifty that are now beginning. She knows very well that the rack of the tough world must still be her portion. But she is undismayed, stands full target for all the winds of the future.

She says, 'For a University there can be no harbour.' That, ladies and gentlemen, I understand, is her syllabus for the years between 1933 and 2283.