

CLEMSON 1946

Address to Veterans
October 1946

Twenty-one hundred of our students have only recently returned from fighting a world war -- a war in which Clemson men contributed much toward enabling our nation to become victorious. Many of your dear friends lie beneath the sod of foreign lands. There were 371 Clemson men who paid the supreme sacrifice. Others came home maimed for life physically. The loss of Clemson men was six per cent of those who served in the various branches of the armed services. This is a loss far greater than the average for the armed services as a whole. How many of us seriously comprehend this great loss of many of Clemson's potentially great men? We shall not forget them for they were too near and dear to us.

On April 5 of this year it became evident to us that the facilities of the college were being filled rapidly by freshmen. At that time you former Clemson men who had been in the armed services began to make application in great numbers. Immediately preparations were made to accommodate seniors, juniors, sophomores and freshmen respectively. By this procedure I believe all former Clemson men ready to reenter Clemson have been accommodated. Some of you may not have quarters that you desire but at least they are far superior to fox holes and the uncomfortable living quarters some of you experienced on the field of battle. We have enrolled out of more than six thousand applicants the maximum student body that could be educated according to Clemson's good

standards. Obtaining a good education under the crowded conditions is contingent upon your attitude and your willingness to not only cooperate but become a helper. A willingness to sacrifice and to tolerate conditions, whatever they may be, are definitely important matters for all of us -- administration, faculty, and students.

By saving a place for former Clemson men, especially those of the two upper classes, the teaching load has been very nearly balanced and similar to its status in pre-war days. Approximately one hundred students will graduate in February and three hundred in June. There will be approximately six hundred juniors advancing to the senior class during this session. You men of the upper classes will soon move on out into life's adventures. More than fifty ex-service men have graduated since the end of the war. I can assure you that every one at Clemson is happy to welcome your return to college and to assist you in attaining the education requisite to a diploma.

The faculty members who remained at the college during the war years performed a masterful task. I have a profound respect for their loyalty and sincere efforts because they helped train more than ten thousand service men and maintained an accelerated teaching program favorable to the young men who wished to complete as much work as possible before their induction. Now they maintain the same accelerated program to meet your needs. Through the aid of the faculty the college has rendered meritorious service to the state and nation.

In consideration of your military service, privileges
Last year there were approximately nine hundred veterans and nine hundred non-veterans studying at Clemson. The average scholarship of the veterans was superior to that of the non-veterans. This difference may be the result of a greater sense of responsibility and seriousness of purpose in older men that is not exemplified in younger men. Even though minor problems arose throughout the year I believe at the end of the year there was a feeling of understanding existing between the administration, the faculty, and the students that clearly marked the steps of progress and a pattern for this year. The good behavior of the veterans during the year was commendable, surprisingly so to many who had feared that life in the armed service would result in irritability and impatience bordering on neurotic symptoms. Most of the veterans have behaved like normal and healthy men of their age. Many of you have returned to college with strong, manly characters and happy dispositions and only a few have appeared with the sourness that is indicative of weak character and lack of serious purpose.

Some of you experienced the fierceness of battle. Others of you saw none of its real tragedies. To the cold world from now on it makes no difference whether or not you were a hero, a high ranking officer, or a private. Your success in life, which most of you aspire to attain, depends upon a pleasant personality, personal initiative, and knowledge. In short -- having knowledge and applying it advantageously means putting your best foot forward at all times. Why not start the pattern during the remainder of your college days.

Will you let Clemson be an inspiration to your further success and life? Will you have sensible respect for each other and the efforts that are made in your behalf? Will you use your experience and wisdom to assist others who may profit by your cooperation? Will you show the faculty by your manners and actions the human consideration that stimulates effort? These are matters I want you to weigh carefully. You have been given greater opportunity than any Clemson men to exercise self discipline and exercise manliness. It is an experiment and I hope the results will be highly successful. There are no excuses for rumors and misunderstandings. Every student in this college has access to my office where you are welcome at any time.

R. F. Poole, President

Address to the Veterans
October 4, 1946