

DALHOUSIE Gazette

CANADA'S OLDEST STUDENT PUBLICATION

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POLITICS AND DALHOUSIE

In a recent cross-Canada poll of student opinion the Canadian University Press has discovered that Maritime University students in general are not interested in politics. While Dalhousie is notable by its absence, reports from the other colleges of the Maritime block indicate no political clubs on their campii.

At Dalhousie, however, there is an organization known as the Co-operative Commonwealth University Federation, which has been functioning since its inception on October 22. Although the group is affiliated with the National C.C.F. party, it has urged students of all leanings take part in its debates and meetings.

Several years ago the Progressive Conservative party made an abortive attempt to organize a political club in this University, but the group soon foundered and sank in the general antipathy and inertia of the war years.

Today the question, "Shall we have Political clubs on the campus?" has emerged as a current controversy. At Queen's University recently the dispute waxed so warm that a student plebiscite was held, at which 85% of the approximate 50% of the student body voting rejected Political clubs.

There is much to be said for both sides. Politics is often considered a racket. If students can equip themselves, now, with a knowledge of political issues, they will be better equipped to play an effective part in the politics of the nation. It is apparent, however, that a wide knowledge of political issues cannot be gained by membership in a club directly affiliated with any of the national parties, as such membership will automatically mean association with those of the same political faith, and exposure to party propaganda.

The party system has become so firmly entrenched in the Canadian governmental system, however, that for immediate purposes a knowledge and support of one party is the only practical way that Canadians can have a share in government. It is indisputable that this is contrary to all the principles of a University training and a liberal education—but such is the case. A knowledge of the party system could be best achieved by an objective and impartial study of all party programs—a study which could be facilitated, theoretically, by Political clubs. It seems hardly probable or possible that interested students would have time to attend all meetings of all clubs—or that, time being no obstacle, would permit themselves such an experience in impartiality.

The party organizations in Canada are keen to recruit young people. The students of today will be the influential citizens of tomorrow, and as such are respected by those now in politics. Highly organized political groups might succeed in gaining control of student organizations—and making political faith a discriminatory factor in the choice of student officers. In the event of any group attempting to exert such an influence, the student should be of sufficient intelligence to recognize whether it is an influence for the good, or merely a political manoeuvre. If the student is unable to diagnose between the two he has no place in a University.

Freedom of thought, of speech, of activity, freedom to form an independent opinion must not be hampered by the requirements of an outside authority. Concurrently, freedom of the individual to belong to an organization of his own political party, freedom to present his own opinions and to hear those of others are his inalienable rights.

These are some of the facts. The choice remains with you.

The GAZETTE acknowledges material for this editorial, which was published in the Queen's Journal, Friday, November 18.

EDITOR'S MAIL

The Editor-in-Chief,
Dalhousie Gazette,
Dear Sir,

I would like to know whether or not the Council of Students intends to amend the Gazette Constitution in proportion to an enlarged Gazette and Student Body beyond further reports from the Business Manager and vague

hints regarding doubling the number of points required for a Gold D. There are certain sections of the constitution which, in view of the four page increase, are hopelessly out of date. I shall concern myself only with the Literary section.

The constitution provides for the Literary Editor's taking all

published literary material to two professors of the Department of English to have points awarded to them "according to literary merit." Presumably this is supposed to happen at the end of the year. Last year, to my knowledge, the contributions were not "marked" at all, and this year there is from four to six times as much literary material in the Gazette. Which of our professors will have the time or inclination at the end of the year to award points to some hundred contributions?

Furthermore, opinions on what is of "literary merit" differ. It is ridiculous to imagine that the average contributor is a polished literatus; what criterion is there on which to judge the contributions unless it is the average literary worth of the whole? To submit the articles to judges as they are published would leave no standard other than the literary perfection to which the judges are normally accustomed, which I consider would be unfair to our contributors, in that it sets up a standard most undergraduate students are unable to reach. The average standard should be the "fifty percent" on which to judge the individual contributions.

Considering these points, if the Council, as has been hinted, raise the required points for a Literary D to sixty, the average undergraduate would not be able to attain the standard necessary to obtain one; and more senior students, their literary ability notwithstanding, would be unable to have their work recognized in

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NEWS FROM OTHER U's

Money-hungry McGill veterans still consider baby-sitting the most popular past-time occupation. Provided baby is good and doesn't do things it shouldn't, the "profession" pays a reasonable dividend. In place of monetary remuneration, the "sitter" often receives some of that homecooking that he misses while away from home.

Cards of appreciation, similar to the following, are sent to the employees:

Dear Mr. and Mrs.:

A belated thank you for the lunch, especially the raspberry jam. It was good.

McGill Daily.

We noticed in a recent edition of the "Queen's Journal" that a symphony orchestra is in the offing. Practices are being held with an average attendance of thirty-five but with a decided weakness in the brass and the Windwods section.

Also, from the Journal comes word that the C. O. T. C. is still fifty members short of its complement of 144. Age limits have been raised to admit veterans up to the age of thirty-five and an accelerated course is being offered to final year students.

The blasé, dignified skins of McMaster are now (under a penalty of fine) wearing gowns at all lectures. It seems as though this is not the idea of the faculty but rather the wish of the majority determined by a ballot held last spring.

Much has been said and written concerning the form that the University Memorial should take. From the "Varsity" comes word that McGill Graduates have collected nearly \$570,000 for the purchase of a rink-auditorium, which will serve as a War Memorial to the McGill men killed in the second World War.

What are the Dal students and graduates doing concerning such a project at this campus?

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Women students live in Shirreff Hall — one of the finest Women's Residences in the Dominion. Residence is provided for first year men in the University Men's Residence. Other men students live in either of two affiliated institutions or in selected and approved homes. Special arrangements are being made to accommodate married and single ex-service students.

Meals for all students are available at the University.

For full information write to THE REGISTRAR.