

Gold "D's", Executive Awards, and a Fair Distribution of Campus Offices

● CONSIDERABLE CRITICISM is being voiced on the campus right now concerning what some persons consider the unduly large number of gold "D's" awarded on Munro Day. Every year it has been so, and every year the same complaints have been heard. Those who did not participate in student activities accuse those who did of having done so only for the purpose of gaining points towards a "D".

To defend themselves, these latter exclaim that their points were earned according to the constitutions, and that when they received an award in too short a time, it was only because they were left to do the work alone.

Other complaints against the present system have also been raised; certain quarters asserting that athletics, Glee Club and Gazette should each receive distinctive awards rather than all the identical block "D"; that the qualifications for any one of these awards be made more severe; and that honorary Council "D's" be eliminated entirely.

Whether or not one thinks that each organization should receive a distinctive award depends very much on what he has been used to. Not having attended other universities, and thus experienced the distinctive award system, we have learned to regard the block "D" affectionately as an institution peculiarly our own, as the supreme campus award, given for service rendered to the student body, regardless of the nature of that service, and speaking personally as a Dalhousian, we prefer to have it kept that way.

At the present time approximately one hundred and fifty students at Dalhousie are wearing this supreme campus award; and it must be admitted that this large number somewhat cheapens its prestige. It is given—not so much to those who have outstanding ability and who have made a valuable contribution of service to the student body, as to those who may or may not have much ability, but who have made some contribution. As the situation now stands, literally any person willing to afford the time may win a gold "D" in three or two years, sometimes even one. Although this might be in keeping with the democratic spirit of the times, we think that ability as well as service should receive consideration, and that only those qualifying in both these respects should be able to wear this award. Granted that the work of the others ought to be recognized, this could be accomplished through the medium of minor awards.

But what system could be introduced that would take into account ability as well as service? Briefly, the qualifications for the silver "D" could be raised to the level of the present gold "D", and the gold "D" awarded only to the persons who have qualified for their second silver "D". This would mean that a potential gold "D" candidate in a particular activity would have to make an early start in that activity, in order to accumulate sufficient points. Only the

persons with outstanding ability would receive the opportunity to make this early start. It would also mean that the backbone of every campus organization would be made up of those who possessed this ability plus two or three years experience in that organization. There would be no resigning after the second year in order to give others the opportunity to earn their award. This backbone of ability plus experience should give the campus much stronger and more efficient organizations. Those now receiving the gold "D" would then receive the silver "D", and that, as they will be the first to admit, is recognition enough. Had this system been in practice the last five years, the number of supreme awards on the campus now would not exceed fifteen, the number of minor awards something over a hundred.

In every activity the mere doubling of the present qualifications for the gold "D" would be practical with the exception of athletics. There a man should not be expected to play on a senior varsity team for six years before receiving his major award. Instead, the system could be revised so that he receive a silver "D" after he has been a member for two years of a varsity senior team participating in the same sport, and a gold "D" when he has earned his second silver "D". The minor felt letter might be issued not at the end of each season, but only with the silver "D", a major felt letter only with the gold "D".

If desired, each activity could be given a silver "D" of a distinctive design, provided the standard block gold "D" design remained constant.

Honorary Council "D's"—now given to graduating students who have performed much executive work on the campus for which no award is given, or who have accumulated a number of points in several activities but insufficient in any to merit an award—could be eliminated by setting up a point system for all executive offices. Because they involve little real work, the number of points for some of these positions would need to be very few, indeed. It should be remembered, however, that the inauguration of this system does not entail the inauguration of a new outlet for distributing "D's". It merely places the present honorary Council "D" on a solid basis by preventing its award to undeserving persons.

The drafting of a constitution to provide a specific number of points for all these offices ought to be handled only by those who have had extensive experience with them. The new Council is planning to classify all campus positions, including athletics and others for which points are now given, from the viewpoint of the time necessary to carry out properly the responsibilities of these positions. Then they propose to limit each student only to those activities to which he has the time to give the requisite attention. Once they do make such a classification, they should be able to allocate the correct number of points to each campus office.

More Thoughts in Passing (Contributed)

LONG since a learned professor amazed me by stating and restating with emphasis that the average university is lagging along about three hundred years behind the times. He did not take pains to conceal the fact that he believed Dalhousie to be an average university. If his view is correct, Dalhousie, rather than being twentieth century, is seventeenth. This might be all right in some ways, were it not that the educators and leaders of thought are urging that the universities give leadership to these troubled days, being the moulders of opinion that they are. Serious enough would it be indeed if universities were but 30 years behind the times—if they were still living in the world of 1910; but to be 300 years behind the times places them in the world of Charles I.

"Milton, thou shouldst be living at this hour!" "Were you to come alive, Mr. Milton, and find yourself in an average university," says our professor, in effect, "you would feel that the world has remained unchanged."

Do not judge from this, now, that the study of Milton at our University (sc. Eng. 2, Eng. 17M) keeps the institution three hundred years behind, for our friend John M. was in many respects generations ahead of his age.

OUR new President, in his excellent Inaugural Address, contrasted the Bologna tradition of what the university first was, with that of the Paris tradi-

tion. In the former, the students ruled the roost, in the latter, the professors. In our age, the board of governors augment and overtops the authority of the professors. Herein, I have long thought, lies the chief reason, perhaps, why the modern university is behind the times: the students have no voice.

If the so-necessary students were to insist upon the Bologna tradition, I fear "King Charles" would lose his head—the board of governors would lose its "divine right". The Bologna tradition represents an unhealthy extreme, we know. Does not the present set-up represent, however, as unhealthy an opposite extreme? To lop off King Charles' head were foolish, but surely an American Revolution of sorts is long since due in university life.

Students are an essential part of a university and their financial support contributes much to the maintenance. It is not unreasonable, then, to ask that each section of the student body have direct representation of the board of governors and on the faculty. The students' time and the students' money make possible the professors' classes and, to a large extent, the professors' salaries. It is not unreasonable, then, to ask that machinery be set up whereby inefficient courses and professors might be dealt with.

If I am not beheaded for treason for this outburst, I may have some more thoughts in passing.

—COS

The Last Issue

● THIS ISSUE OF THE GAZETTE is the twentieth and last to be published this year, and after glancing through its contents, you will no doubt agree with us when we say that it is high time that we stopped. With the final examinations scarcely four weeks away, except for the traditional, feverish last minute cramming, there is little activity on the campus, and less news to report.

The editor wishes publicly to thank his staff for the loyal support they have given him during the past year. What we lacked in ability, they made up in enthusiasm, maintaining a high morale when work-

ing all the while under trying circumstances. Ever since Munro Day they have been casting longing eyes at their books, anxious to renew a much delayed acquaintance, and it was with a genuine sigh of relief that they delivered this week's copy to the printers. It is our earnest hope that their sacrifice for THE GAZETTE will not prove fatal.

Not wishing to prolong farewells, we take this opportunity also to thank the student body for tolerating our weak attempts at journalism during these twenty issues. You have been very gentle with us, and we entreat you to receive the efforts of next year's staff with similar patience and composure.

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Senate . . .

(Continued from Page One)
and therefore added an additional clause:

"In case of a difference of opinion between the Managing Committee and the Physical Director, the matter shall be referred to the Senate Gym Committee on Athletics."

One point pressed by the students present, was the matter of faculty recognition, and no definite answer was forthcoming. The problem of practice hours was discussed briefly and was left for a future meeting.

The annual meeting of the D.A. A.C. to be held on Wednesday, March 27 will be asked to discuss and vote on the proposed amendments.

Poet's Corner

THERE blooms a flow'r that
burns like fire
In the blackened wine of night,
Its purple plumes e'er chant
and sway
With drowsy, mesmeric rite;
And on the onyx leaves lie
drops
That glitter and seem to rise
But never move and never
change,
Like sleepless, watching eyes.
OENONE.

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