

The Dalhousie GAZETTE

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A myth destroyed

In Antigonish last week the McGill Red-men defeated St. F.X. 21-7 in an exhibition football game. But for us, as Dalhousie students who are constantly being told how apathetic we are, the game had another interesting aspect. As we watched the X-men go down to defeat for the first time in three years, we also saw the myth about the great X spirit destroyed at the same time.

Except for the opening minutes of the game and again midway through the 4th quarter when the home team scored, the stands were silent. There was no cheering, no great support from the fans to urge on their badly out-classed team. There was just silence.

The alumni, and the student body failed to cheer primarily because there was nothing to cheer about. Like fans everywhere they deserted their team when they were being beaten.

In recent years a great myth has been built up about the school spirit at St. F.X. This happened only because the X-men have been winning for so long that people have forgotten that X fans too are apathetic when their team is losing.

Here at Dal we are equally guilty of this two-faced attitude, but we suggest that, contrary to popular opinion, all other groups of fans are guilty as well.

Bookstore action needed

Why space on the Dalhousie campus should be occupied by one of the most flagrant examples of bad business procedure that ever beset a University is a question that has long plagued the Gazette Editors. But why criticism should be as effective to the owner of the bookstore as water is to a duck's back is a question that apparently has no logical answer, other than the owner's refusal to do anything except conduct his business in the obstinate, outmoded and disgraceful manner to which he has accustomed himself.

It may be said that the measurement of a Gazette Editor's patience is directly proportional to the length of time during which the Editor is able to restrain himself from commenting on the infamous bookstore. It may be said, too, that the Gazette Editors have suffered the loss of their restraint too often, and enough has been published on the subject. But no situation that ever came under serious editorial attention was ever altered by mincing words. We have directed editorials in the past at the bookstore; they have had little or no effect. We give notice at this moment we shall continue to do so with more and more frequency until something adequate is done to meet the problem.

In this direction, the Gazette is not acting as champion of an already concerned student body; it is merely counting itself among the building barrage of protests, fast growing desperate against the store's shoddy retailing.

February of last year saw publication of the findings of a committee appointed to look into the bookstore's activities and recommend appropriate alterations. A sample of the recommendations:

"(1) that Mr. Atwood be approached to hire extra help during the rush period, and (2) that the university be asked to study the problem further in the hopes that the operation of the store might be turned over to student or administrative control. But the committee was not particularly optimistic, indicating that the university is satisfied with present arrangements."

We leave it to the student who has waited 45 minutes and more to buy supplies needed to facilitate his studies, who when passing through the old men's residence has had to shove his way through a bookstore queue that has not grown any smaller for a week, who once in the store has seen needless delay as a result of inadequate numbers of sales personnel, and in the laborous itemizing by hand, the price, type, etc. of each and every article purchased — from paper-clip to text book — who has waited while clerks search for a needed book instead of picking it out himself from a conveniently located shelf . . . we leave it to that student to decide how effective were the bookstore committee's findings, and to pass judgment on the administration's paternally blind "satisfaction" with a condition that exists virtually under its nose, that has no right to do so.

We do not argue the right of university fathers to lament about too-low education standards and student acceptance of mediocrity, and then take steps to improve same. But we vigorously argue their right to apply such a policy arbitrarily: to express concern over student study complacency on one hand, and then allow a student's efforts to begin work and study early to be frustrated immediately and hopelessly, at that loose-excuse for a retail establishment, known as the bookstore.

So far the university has failed in its duty to provide adequate bookstore facilities. The time is fast approaching when the student body will have to take action itself.

A sign of the times

On the evening of the first day of classes a light over a week ago, an amazing sight greeted our eyes as we entered the library reading room. There, bent over desks and working feverishly, sat more than forty students.

That anyone on campus should begin to work so early in the term was a hitherto unheard of situation. But that forty people should be studying on October 2nd we found almost unbelievable. What added to our surprise was that most of these people were freshmen.

Could it be that those who entered college for the first time this year are prepared to work harder than the classes that preceded them? Or is it just that they are far more scared of exams than we were when we began college?

After talking to several of those who were studying, we concluded that the latter reason was the chief cause of their early drive. They had heard of the great masses who had failed courses such as History I and Math. I in previous years. They had been told that vast numbers of those who were due to graduate last spring had not succeeded in doing so. They had been made very aware of the new university regulation which says that freshman too must pass 60% of their final exams.

And they were scared. The Gazette views with pleasure this changing attitude. Regardless of why these people decided to work hard, whether it be a love of knowledge or a fear of failure, it is important that everyone realize that the prime purposes of a university are knowledge and education.

Many of us have lost sight of these purposes during our stay at Dalhousie, and we can only hope that the same thing does not happen to the class of '65.

LITTLE MAN ON CAMPUS



"HOW'S HE COMING ALONG ON TH' COURSE DESCRIPTIONS FOR THE NEW CATALOG?"

The Critical Eye

LET'S ABOLISH THE D SYSTEM

The platforms of candidates for the presidency of the student council, like those of politicians the world over, change very little from year to year. One point which has been mentioned with unflinching regularity in recent years has been the issue of a Dalhousie honour society.

It seems that most people on campus who enter organizations merely for the sake of getting points for a gold or silver D would like the status quo to remain unchanged. While those who feel that they deserve to be recognized more than most of their fellow "wheels" would prefer to have a more restrictive honour society formed.

They give many reasons why such a move would be a good one. The chief one is that it would provide a suitable reward for those who have spent much time and effort working for their fellow students. They argue that a D is too easy to obtain and that the point system is unequitable. For example one person can get many points by working for a stagnant, inactive organization which does nothing for the student body except to serve as a means of getting points. While another person, in order to get an equal number of points may spend many hours working for one of the more active groups on campus.

The argument then continues that an honour society would provide a suitable reward for those who have done a great deal of truly worthwhile work on campus because there would only be a few members admitted each year and this honour would only go to the most deserving. In this way the unfairness of the present system would be eliminated.

Those in favour of this society also point out how useful such an organization would be. It would provide a campus police-force; it would enable visitors to tell the campus leaders at a glance because they would be wearing the distinctive uniform of the honour society; it would add a touch of pomp

and pagentry to our all too dull campus.

It would seem to us that these arguments are not only ridiculous but they are merely a cover-up for the real reason why many "wheels" want such a society to be formed — prestige. The campus leaders are not content with their 4th and 5th engravings; they want something more special, something reserved for people of their own elite social stature.

We find such an attitude disgusting and urge that no honour society be formed. Let us not give the campus "wheels" another opportunity to impress us with their own importance. They do enough of that already.

The effect such a society would have on the already oversized heads of such people can easily be seen when one views some of their comments on the D system. They have been known to complain loud and long because they felt they should have had an extra 5 points simply because they wanted to get yet another engraving.

But what is perhaps most disgusting about the idea of such a society is that people think that they must be rewarded for doing a good deed. They claim they work for the student body because they enjoy it and they like sacrificing their time and efforts for the benefit of other people. Yet at the same time they insist that they get some form of recognition in return for their labours.

Such bribery in an institution of higher learning is disgusting. It is sickening to realize that "the future leaders of our country" are asking the question "What's in it for me?" before they will work graciously for the student body.

By all means abolish the D system. But let us put nothing in its place. Let us give no reward for campus service.

It may make it hard to find students willing to fill important positions but at least we will know that those who do accept will not have been bribed.