

THE DALHOUSIE GAZETTE

AMERICA'S OLDEST COLLEGE PAPER

Member Canadian University Press

Published twice a week by the Students' Council of Dalhousie University. Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Students' Council. For subscriptions write Business Manager, Dalhousie Gazette, Halifax, N. S.

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Vol. LXXXII FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 1949 No. 14

Letter to the Editor

To the Editor November 15, 1949
 Dalhousie Gazette

Permit me on behalf of Acadia University to express regret to your student body both for the behaviour of certain Acadia students on your campus on October 26th and for the insulting language perpetrated by a sports writer in the Acadia Athenaeum of November 8th. Neither offence can be excused. I can assure you, however, that neither is representative of this University. I have heard nothing but deep regret on this campus, both for the original unpleasantness of the 26th and for the appalling intemperance of language with which one fervent fan reacted to the second annual loss of a potential championship through a technicality.

Acadia and Dalhousie both have long and honourable traditions. Athletic rivalry should not be incompatible with mutual good will. I therefore hope that no reckless act or utterance on the part of individuals in either institution will result in general bitterness. The purposes in national life for which our two universities exist are far too important for us to be estranged in such a fashion.

Yours sincerely,
WATSON KIRKCONNELL
 President, Acadia University



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FACT and FICTION

Two weeks ago a breach of Acadia University discipline, of such magnitude that members of the Halifax police force were called in to apprehend those responsible, occurred on the Dalhousie campus.

The police phoned Dr. Kerr, informing him that the persons causing the disturbance were Acadia students, and in police custody. Dr. Kerr, president of the university, immediately phoned Dr. Kirkconnell of Acadia, telling him of the incident. He asked Dr. Kirkconnell what action should be taken. Acadia's president replied that he would look after the matter and suggested a joint cancellation of two English rugby games, scheduled for the following Saturday. Dr. Kerr replied that he could not take part in such a cancellation.

At 9 o'clock the following morning Dr. Kirkconnell again held a phone conversation with Dr. Kerr and said that, after consultation with Mr. Kelly, physical director of Acadia, he had decided that the games should be forfeited. Dr. Kerr refused to accept the forfeit before submitting the matter to Dalhousie students. He did agree, that Saturday's games should be CANCELLED, (not forfeited), notwithstanding, he had decided himself on the forfeit.

When news of the cancellation reached the ears of the Dalhousie footballers concerned, they, headed by their manager, Ernie Fredrickson, protested heartily to Mr. Vitalone, our Physical Director. Mr. Vitalone could only say that the matter had been decided above his level, but recommended that the team contact the league to determine a remedy. The team did that, and the President of the League got in touch with Mr. Kelly of Acadia, who replied that the game had been forfeited with no possibility of any change of attitude.

That removed from Dal all responsibility for the senior game.

Dr. Kirkconnell then wrote Dr. Kerr, inquiring into the possibility of playing the INTERMEDIATE game either in neutral territory or at Dalhousie. Dr. Kerr again turned the matter over to Mr. Vitalone. Mr. Vitalone assembled the intermediate team, and a vote was taken on the acceptance of the forfeiture. This forfeiture was accepted of Dalhousie's own volition.

Those are the facts of the case. Now, to correct the misinterpretations which have been placed upon these facts.

It has been said that "responsibility for the decision regarding the default of the October 29th game lies, insofar as we have been informed, directly with the Dullhousie Senior Team (?)" And this decision was reached after Acadia and Navy had played a 0-0 tie game. The Halifax aggregation often misleadingly referred to as a rugby team, slinked out via the default route by refusing to reschedule the game, instead of facing a thorough pasting from Acadia similar to the 26-0 lambasting handed out by the Axemen on October 12 in Halifax.

On October 28th, Mr. Gabriel Vitalone stated that the "honorbound" horde entered in the City League was quite anxious for a rescheduling of the cancelled contest. This opinion was expressed at a time when a win or loss either way would not have decided the League winner. But with the Navy game of last Wednesday, the fraternal Haligonians were offered a cheap opportunity for League Championship. On last Thursday morning Coach Kelly was officially informed that they had made the most of that opportunity—our "big brothers" twisted the knife, and ducked a sure shellacking on the rugby field. To themselves and all concerned they made it painfully evident that dirty tactics was their alternative to sportsmanlike justice.

Although the intermediate writer did not specifically mention the Acadia team, it may also be pointed out that their decision to accept the forfeit from Acadia, in no way influenced Acadia's standing in that league, since Tech took all honours by virtue of their uninterrupted winning streak.

As we write this, we have received a letter from Dr. Watson Kirkconnell, addressed to the Editors of this Gazette. It is reproduced in the third column of this page, and we believe that it does, in all probability, express the general opinion of the Acadians. Nevertheless, one more fact should be revealed. Through no compulsion or request on the part of either Dalhousie or Acadia University authorities, the Students' Council and the Dalhousie Gazette saw fit not to publicize even a small portion of the story. It was felt that any such publicity would do neither Acadia nor Dalhousie the slightest degree of good.

However, we have now been forced to bring to light a very unpleasant incident. The sole motivation for this editorial was to present in its proper light the position of Dalhousie university, its students, and its teams.

The Haligonian horde exults in petty victory. Our dull-minded Dullhousian Protesters sound out a yell of triumph which soars to a high screech, like that of a hungry vulture. Their little minds have conceived a meagre means of conquest—and now they stand and wail outside the Citadel walls. Harken to their cry! It is the small spoils of a destitute mob of the unenlightened.

Fresh to memory is the pain of double knife-wounds in the back administered by this same host of degenerates in connection with the City League Championships of the 1948 season. To the Very Dullhousie Gazette comment "In the past Dal has not been one to carry technicalities too far. Because of that Dal in the past has been a big brother in many instances on many past occasions, a victim on even more"—we say: look Brother, the knife has been inserted twice, and now you're caught twisting it. Don't try to wash the filth from your hands, 'cause, Brother, "truth will out".

We also remember yet visits we, too, have had from non-representative groups of students wreaking small havoc about the campus. We fail, however, to recall having accepted any damning forfeitures in such cases. Though no one can deny that the recent escapade of some of our group was out of order, how that episode may be made a justification for the misplaced misanthropy shown in awarding the 1949 Senior City League Title is hardly understandable.

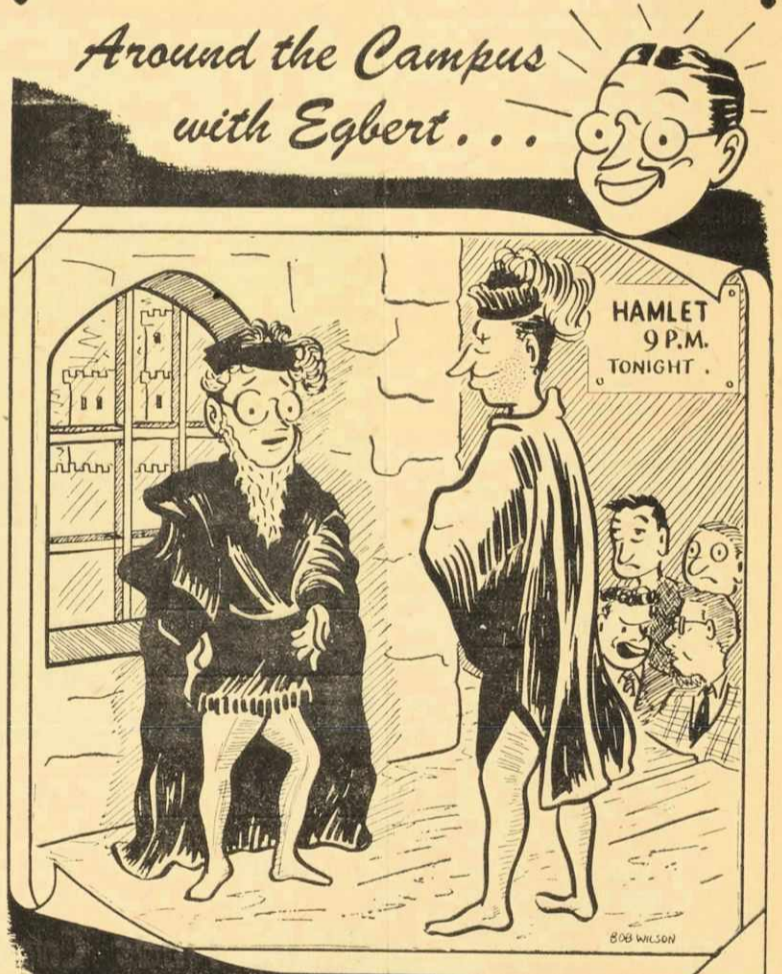
If I may cite a parallel—there is located in the southeast corner of the Loyalist Room of the main building at Fort Anne, Annapolis, N. S., a figure representing Justice. The remarkable feature about this small statue is that from its hands have been taken, through the ravages of Time, both the Sword and the Scales. It might be well to suggest to the curators of Fort Anne that this masterfully ironic figure be sent to rest among our Dullhousian demagogues.

It is evident that our Haligonian "big brothers" conceive of justice as a form of naked stupidity, bordering on the obscene. It would seem shameful to deny them such an appropriate representative figure as the model at Fort Anne.

Concerning this matter of justice, we wish to make pointedly evident the fact that responsibility for the decision regarding the default of the October 29th game lies, in so far as we have been informed, directly with the Dullhousie Senior Team (?). And this decision was reached after Acadia and Navy had played a 0-0 tie game. The Halifax aggregation often misleadingly referred to as a rugby team, slinked out via the default route by refusing to reschedule the game, instead of facing a thorough pasting from Acadia similar to the 26-0 lambasting handed out by the Axemen on October 12 in Halifax.

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