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THE UNIVERSITY IN WARTIME

The continuation of universities in wartime has been encouraged by the Government, the armed services and by all practical-minded individuals who look beyond the struggle of the present day to the uncertainties of the future. The personnel benefiting from these university studies is justifiably restricted to conscientious students maintaining a high academic standard.

The accusation that university students, themselves, are "unpatriotic" or "indifferent" to the conduct of the war, is an unfair and biased misconception of the truth. They are no less patriotic than their fellow-Canadians on the fighting fronts. They are following the dictates of conscience along what appears, under existing circumstances, to be the wisest, most practical course of action.

Those who would advocate the wholesale conscription of medically-fit collegians, are inclined to let emotion triumph over reason. They underestimate the important contribution of a young, progressive generation to the political, social and economic life of the nation. They fail to realize that after this war, young men with high ideals, sincere motives and a balanced perspective of life, will be needed to reinforce the dwindling life-force of a war-strained nation.

It was a tired, disillusioned France which emerged from the turmoil of the First World struggle—a France whose youth had been sacrificed en masse to the altars of war. Consequently, throughout the problematic years of the ensuing peace, the Ship of State was run on the rocks by a conservative-minded, older generation whose outlook was blinded to the movement for progressive reform. As a result, the foundations of government, undermined from within and without, collapsed before the ruthless onslaught of the Nazi war machine.

We must prevent a similar turn of events here in the Dominion of Canada—and that is where the universities come in. Just as service-men are undergoing intensive training preparatory to combat on the fighting line, so, too, is the university student undergoing a course which should enable him to play a vital role through the period of unrest and instability in the post-war.

Canada must be prepared to face the contingencies of the future with every resource at her command. Canadians must therefore face the facts realistically. They must look to the universities, not as a melting-pot for "draft-dodgers", but as an increasingly important factor in the development and maintenance of our national life.

SODALES—
(Continued from page 1)
and representatives have already been appointed to contact different faculty leaders and make the arrangements. It was pointed out that these debates were designed to give a large number of interested people a chance to participate, with the final contestants arguing for a shield, for which Sodales has obtained the money from Council.

Medicine and Dentistry, burdened with long heavy hours of study, are not expected to enter, according to reliable sources, but it is believed Engineering and Law have already picked teams. Arts and Science years would fight out the championship in their faculties among themselves, and then meet the winner of the other bracket, the final debate possibly taking to the air.

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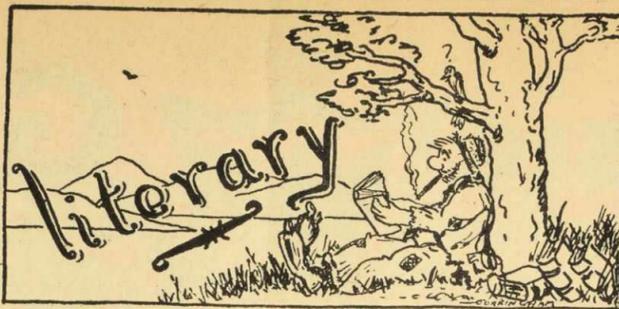
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THE GREEKS CAME FIRST

It is a tragedy of modern university education on this continent that the study of the Greek language and of Greek culture has been largely overlooked. The number of students in so-called "advanced" classes in Greek is pitifully small. Even in the elementary classes there are, generally speaking, to be found only those who must have a smattering of the language—the divinity students. The love of the Greek tongue seems to be almost extinct in the hearts of university men and women today.

This is a calamity of far-reaching importance. It is from the Greeks that our beginnings in science, mathematics, art, history, philosophy—in fact, in almost every field of human endeavour—have come. In every age in which the Western world has made great advances the light of such learning has burned bright. A true university education is a search for truth. No one, then, can overlook the magnificent contribution of the ancient Greeks.

Today, in the modern university, students of the classics are few. This in itself is cause for concern, but even more deplorable is the established fact that most of these students are to be found in Latin classes and not in Greek. Perhaps this gives rise to the question as to why this should be so. The answer is all too plain. In most of our high schools teachers can teach Latin, but they cannot teach Greek. Consequently, if a student is to learn Greek at all, he must do the hardest part of it—the learning of the mechanics of the language—in college. The result is that most students never get beyond this elementary stage—never reach the Promised Land of appreciation and love of the language.

Then, too, all too often, the finest pieces of Greek literature are reduced to a large hunting ground for obscure grammatical points, instead of being presented for what they really are—part of our priceless heritage. This, it must be pointed out, is not the fault of the professors. They are labouring courageously under almost insurmountable difficulties to keep the flickering flame of Greek learning alight. The teaching of Greek is a necessity in our high schools. As a language, Greek stands second only to our mother tongue. It must be restored to its proper place. Men must never forget that the Greeks came first.

J. B. H.

"WHAT IS A UNIVERSITY EDUCATION?"

(In reply to this question here is the 6th in a series of articles by members of the Dalhousie teaching staff)

It is worth while for university students (and also university teachers) to stop occasionally and ask themselves this question, as on the answer to this depend also the answer to others that people are constantly putting to us. For instance, inconvenient people ask, How much does a university education cost? and Do you think it is worth it? Don't you think that it would be better to get right into business? Wouldn't you make more money that way?

Let us look at the matter, first of all, from the outside. To the ordinary citizen a university course is simply the third step in public education. One goes to a public school and learns so much, and then to a high school and learns so much more, and finally to a university and learns so much more again. It is, unfortunately, necessary for many pursuits and professions. They require a great deal of learning owing to their complicated subject matter, but the business can easily be over-done.

If we shift our study to the inside of the university and survey the large and varied assortment of courses offered by any modern university, we must admit that there is much reason in the view of the average citizen. A great many of these courses are simply the last stages in the preparation for some intricate and exacting career. They are long and arduous, but even then it is almost impossible to squeeze into them all desirable subject matter.

There is so much to be crowded into these professional courses, that not only is there no time for outside material, but even inside them there has to be much specialization.

Is this all that a university course is? There is still one faculty, that of Arts and Science, which may seem to offer something different (if anyone wants it). Even here, however, we find something similar. So many Arts and Science courses are designed to start one out on a career of teaching, or municipal administration, or chemical research or some other specialty. When we examine the matter carefully, it almost seems as though the Arts and Science Faculty has become simply a collection of various professional schools in one, bundled together for the sake of convenience and because it would be too expensive to have them separate.

So again we ask, Is there nothing more in the Arts and Science Faculty? Well, there ought to be something more, for there is something very important that we have not found anywhere as yet, and which it is very dangerous to neglect. This is an informed and balanced view of the sum of our culture and the business of our civilization.

Unless someone makes it his duty to take a broad, appraising view of things, there is going to be nobody to bind all our specialties together. It is really very dangerous for learned men to go and shut themselves up into little boxes of erudition, which are not in touch with each other. In such a case we shall have doctors who can talk nothing but dentistry; dentists who know nothing but dentistry; chemists that have no views on art or government or literature, and so on. And as for politics or foreign affairs, who in the world is going to waste his time on such subjects?

Let us then in our Arts and Science Faculty of the University avoid too much specialization. Let us have a balanced course that will give us an insight into as many branches of human wisdom as possible, that will offer some general synthesis of the whole and that will hold close to the past wisdom and traditions of our forefathers and the civilization, culture, religion, and moral outlook that they have so painstakingly fashioned and bequeathed to us. This, if anything, would have the best right to be called a university education.

A. K. GRIFFIN (King's)
Department of Classics.

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