

number in both institutions. The purpose of this letter is to correct any wrong impressions that may exist as to the cause of the failure of the negotiations and to indicate where the fault lay in the hope that steps may be taken in the near future whereby such matters can be regulated in a more satisfactory manner than heretofore. In brief—neither of the colleges was to blame. By mutual consent the debate was dropped, though each society was willing to debate if the other pressed it. The responsibility attaches to our system, or rather want of system in making arrangements.

An Intercollegiate Debate means nothing and is but an oratorical pyrotechnic display useless from any practical point of view unless both parties have had an opportunity of making the fullest preparation and of mastering every detail of the subject. Then only can there be a fair contest. Then only the training potential of each school can be measured and victory must perch on the banner of the most deserving. This year when all arrangements were perfected, we were within four weeks of the date fixed for the debate and in view of this fact the committees having the matter in charge agreed to call the contest off.

The college curriculums are designed to furnish the student all the work he can conveniently carry : it is unjust to require him to slight that work. It must be evident that if less than a month is allowed for the preparation of a debate, the men on the teams are obliged almost wholly to neglect their work for that time if they are to do justice either to themselves or to the college they represent. Another element, too, is to be considered. After the debater has covered the ground time must be allowed in order that the different facts may relate themselves in his mind and become thoroughly assimilated, for otherwise he will not be able to use them to advantage. So a space of *eight* weeks is short enough for adequate preparation even if all the material is on hand and examinations not in sight.

It is not easy to select a date that will suit the students of both colleges. Dalhousie begins work early in September and closes about the middle of April ; the session at Acadia lasts from the first of October till the first of June. Our mid-year examinations occupy the first two weeks of February while at Dalhousie they take place in December. The Law men are an exception having only one set of examinations which end about Feb. 20th. Thus it is impossible for either Acadia or Dalhousie to have eight weeks preparation for debate without either fixing the date in unpleasant proximity to the examination season of one school or, what is worse, requiring its team to assume extra burdens during these times of unusual stress. The only fair way then seems to be this. Let the subject be arranged for sometime in November and the date of the debate fixed for about Feb. 25th. The Acadia men would thus have for preparation part of November, all of December and part of February without slighting their work either immediately before or during the examinations.