

The Dalhousie Law Students would be in about the same position. The men of the other faculties would have part of November, all of January and most of February. The long time elapsing between choice of subject and date of debate would enable the men to give ample study to the question without neglecting their regular work. The date could not be placed any earlier because the fall is occupied with football, neither is it convenient to make it later because the law men have completed their work. Besides, at Dalhousie no honor examinations are held until the end of the Senior year and a debate on the date agreed upon this year would practically preclude the honor men from taking part.

Again, if these debates are to continue a new system of choosing a question must be adopted. Last year there was no trouble. Committees met and made arrangements which the societies ratified. This year committees again met but the Sodales Society threw out the most important part of the agreement, viz., the subject. Negotiations then proceeded by correspondence and by telephone in a very unsatisfactory manner until finally both parties agreed that the remaining time was too short in which to prepare for the debate. How then shall a subject be chosen? The usefulness of committees is over for each merely tries to get the better of the other. Let one society submit a question and allow the other to choose its side. The men submitting the question will take ample care to have the sides balance evenly. But just at this point the recent negotiations have taught us a lesson. It is unfortunate but only too true that many of our best students are lamentably ignorant of all matters pertaining to current events. Questions arising from such events are the subjects most likely to be debated. But how can a committee frame a question when they do not understand its scope? This year just before the debate was dropped Acadia submitted a question to Dalhousie giving the latter choice of sides. The side which Dalhousie chose to defend, a certain very prominent gentleman in the House of Commons declared to be incapable of defence. In the light of this it would appear advisable for the college proposing the question to consult some person who is known to have a grasp of that particular subject.

There is another consideration. The question should be regarded merely as means to an end. For example, a condition like the following is conceivable. One college elects to support a resolution and may be considered as bearing the burden of proof. But both sides display equal talent and the judges cannot decide between them. Clearly, then, the side supporting the resolution cannot be said to have proved its case, and therefore should lose the debate by default. This would be manifestly unfair. Constructive argument should be measured with constructive argument and rebuttal with rebuttal and a decision rendered accordingly.

The conclusion of the whole matter seems to be this. If these