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War and Education

Education goes on in belligerent England, says Nancy Fifield

What happens to colleges in a warring nation? Just what is happening to the educational institutions in England at the present time? The opportunity to find a few of the answers to these queries presented itself when the British debaters George J. Bean and Victor Hugh Parkinson visited the Iowa State campus last quarter.

“Our education is being carried on much the same as in peace times,” said George J. Bean when first approached on the subject. “There has been scarcely any change or reorganization in the universities in England.”

Although the present draft is the 20 to 22 year old class of boys there is still 75 to 80 percent of the regular enrollment in the universities. Students attending college are allowed the right to postpone their draft until they have completed their course. “In fact,” said Bean, “they encourage the students of medicine, engineering, chemistry, veterinary medicine, dentistry and other such fields to finish their college careers. For it is believed that they will be better able to aid their country in their professional capacities than as just other men at the front.”

The university staffs on the whole are still going full force. “No member of the faculty at Manchester is allowed to volunteer his services,” Parkinson disclosed. “It is desired that the universities be kept intact.”

“The same is true at the University of Liverpool and nearly all other universities in England,” added Bean.

He continued by saying, “Our lectures are now being held at earlier hours than during peace times. This is to enable us to get home before the black-outs.”

There is no education for younger children in the cities at all. If the city children have not been taken to the country where they are continuing schooling, they can receive no public education. “If they were to hold regular sessions of school in the cities this would encourage mothers to keep their children at home. That is the very thing which the government does not want,” explained Bean.

Bean said the thing that surprised him the most about the American universities in comparing them with those in England is the number of students who work to pay for their college educations. “This situation is not prevalent in English universities,” he commented. This he attributed to the fact that all of their universities require “competitive entrance examinations.”

When approached on the question of home economics education in the universities of England Mr. Parkinson said with a twinkle in his eye, “They seem to turn out good housewives. Although the 'domestic education' schools do not reach the average house wife in England, there are facilities for training in this field.”

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