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The Odyssey of the University of British Col-

umbia, reports that Dr. Forrester also feels a bit tense when his name is called out for attendance in class. The reason? Alf's the only male member of the Pyramus Home Economics course.

The 8 2/3-, 13th-form high school athlete is taking the course because it's the only one there which leads to his chosen vocation—school teaching. Alf reports that in general everything moves along very pleasantly: "Even the dress-making instructions told me not to feel out of place.

Alf's girl friend wants him to be a school teach-
er, but she doesn't especially like the idea of his taking the all-female course. However, Alf goes on: besides, "the girls are nice."

Learning By Degrees

If Alf seems to be taking an unusual course to get his degree, how much more unusual would seem certain theses submitted by academic hopefuls both past and present—e.g., the Harvard thesis of 365 which earned the first Master of Arts degree awarded in the New World was entitled, "Every Perfect Being Can Be Perfectly Defined."

Long with this classic goes an effort of 1765 labeled, "The Adam Have a Most Utilized Cell?" The author, a Cantabrigian named Belltop, took the negative and came out with something like this:

But the unusual thesis is not the sole possession of bygone centuries. Witness such recent titles as "Metamorphosis of the Nervous System in the Lumbersome and Crude Regions of the Frog" (Harvard), "The Survival of Adrealectomized Cats" (Princeton), and "A Study of a Female Cocker Spaniel" (Corday). Everywhere there appear what seems to be ridiculous thereon where are most definitely obscure subjects. The reason is, of course, the requisite of original research; and with 9,629 Ph.D.'s awarded during one recent year, it becomes more and more difficult to find something truly original.

As Clifton Broch wrote in a recent edition of the NY Times Magazine, "most students consider the process of obtaining a Ph.D. in a modern university a cross between an extended desert march and a medieval inquisition."

And indeed it is more difficult than during the early days when "all Harvard men had to do for his master's degree was to pay five dollars and stay out of jail."

Another difference between the present-day degree seekers and those of yore is that the latter were required to adopt a position and could be called to defend it: today, however, one can choose a topic regarding which argument would seem impossible, such as "Some of the Factors Which Influence the Composition of College and Their Relation to the Quality of Sauserwurst."

Thus, while the writers are in most cases completely serious, and while their products, obscure as they be, may yet be of benefit to some small segment of humanity, one still wonder when confronted with a modern version on "Uses of the Subjective in King Alfred's Old English Version of Boethius' "De Consolatione Philosophiae.""