**Introduction to Contemporary Civilization in the West**

**Preface to the First Edition**

**The Redbook (1946)**

The purpose of these volumes of readings is to enable the student to approach the making of contemporary civilization through the ideas and institutions which helped make it. An important aspect of any historical event or movement is the interpretation and justification of it by those who participated in it. Reflection by the student upon society and history supplies both a pattern and a perspective for intelligent control. Such reflection is impossible apart from the traditions of human thinking. A civilized person has a past and must be conscious of his own roots and growth in order to participate intelligently in his society. Each of the readings that follow has been chosen because it is a genuine source of contemporary civilization. These readings embody not historical curiosities but ideas that have persisted.

January 1919: Faculty proposes course in Contemporary Civilization

September 1919: Contemporary Civilization commences