

Salient

An Organ of Student Opinion at Victoria College, Wellington N.Z.

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WEIR 21 TODAY

SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

IT is now 21 years since Weir House was officially opened in 1933. During that time, almost one thousand students have enjoyed the facilities which it has to offer. Commanding as it does a magnificent view of the City and harbour, and offering living and study conditions at least the equal of any other University Hostel in New Zealand, it can, in a material sense, be regarded as a fine acquisition to the University.

But can Weir House claim to be a success? An assessment does not rest upon material facilities alone. Because of the unparalleled opportunities which it provides for its members and because it allows ninety intelligent and virtually hand-picked young men to live together in an atmosphere of study, discussion and learning, Weir can be reasonably expected to play a considerably larger part in student affairs than its numbers would suggest.

Before reaching a conclusion on this basis let us first consider two points which are often overlooked. Weir House is often criticised because it does not have what many consider to be a sufficiently active corporate life of its own. We often hear the cry for Weir House Cultural Clubs and sports teams. This outlook, too strongly perused, leads to a misplaced conception of the place of the House in the College.

We must not forget that its residents are using its facilities to lead a full and active University life, not a full Weir House life. I therefore suggest that the energy of its residents should be devoted to the cause of College activities and that in general a Weir House corporate life should be developed around matters peculiar to Weir House as such.

The second point is that the contribution of Weir House should not be based upon the performances of its members only while members of the House. Existing circumstances limit the term of residence to three years in most cases and result in the average age being no more than 20 years. Few students, therefore, are

able to play a leading part in Student affairs while still members of the House. Many, however, play conspicuous parts, while others have gained academic distinction after having joined the ranks of the Old Boys. Weir House can rightly claim much credit for this.

An examination on this basis reveals that the House can look back on its first 21 years with considerable pride. It has enabled a large number of students to benefit to an extent which would otherwise have

been impossible. Its members in the past have played a very notable part in Student affairs and continue to do so. Its academic achievements are far in excess of its numbers, while it can claim several Rhodes Scholars. In short, it has produced several internationals, two former residents being members of the 1953 All Blacks.

Its great difficulty is that it is too small, or rather that there are not several other such hostels to cope with the ever-increasing demand for admission.

This not only severely limits the number who can benefit, but also cramps the ability of the fortunate few, by limiting the period of residence to their first few years of study.

We cannot, however, blame Weir House for this.

— P. M. McCaw.

From These Beginnings . . .

HISTORY OF WEIR HOUSE

WEIR has stood on the Hill for 21 years. As its foundations embrace rock that will not be moved, so its traditions have begun to crystallise and to mature. A very hopeful sentence, a very pompous sentiment; and, perhaps, the simile of Greywacke is ill chosen. Thus I must hasten to add that Weir is neither barren, unfruitful, nor are its products blockheads.

The Man

In 1928 Mr. William Weir died and under his will £80,000 became available for the purpose of building and endowing a University hostel for men students. We know little about this generous benefactor: it is recorded that he was a timber merchant and that his mill stood, till recent years, in the heart of the City business area, but he endowed an institution of greater significance and more lasting effect.

Growth of Weir

Various delays, the Hawke's Bay Earthquake, and an expected Government subsidy which was not forthcoming, caused a reshuffle in the plans of the House foundations and a separate Dining Block and one Wing were abandoned. Built at a cost of £5,000 they now support the Recreation Room, the Billiards table and the Domestic Staff's Quarters. The financial affairs of the House have always been characterised by foresight but, naturally, this has cost something.

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Salient

The Organ of Student Opinion at Victoria College, Wellington N.Z.

EDITORIAL

We have much pleasure in handing this issue over to the boys of Weir House. We believe that this is the first time in the history of the College that any attempt has been made to inform readers of the important contribution which Weir House has made and is making to the individual and corporate life of the University. Therefore, on the occasion of the 21st anniversary of Weir, we are pleased to give its members an opportunity of relating, in the pages of "Salient", some aspects of this contribution.

WEIR TWENTY-ONE TODAY

MAY I introduce myself? I am Weir House, the building with the sloping tiled roofs you see outlined against the sky as you walk towards the cable-car from lectures. You may not know me very well. You probably have not heard me speak before. But today I am breaking my silence—I am twenty-one.

I have heard that by long-established custom twenty-one years is the time allowed to a man or woman before he or she is considered to be an adult member of the community—a fully-fledged citizen with not only the privileges but also the responsibilities of citizenship. When a person passes through this gateway of citizenship towards which he has been progressing for twenty-one years, it is perhaps fitting that he should pause a minute to consider, both the past and the future. And in like manner so do I—a building given life by the men who, over the years within my walls, have lived with each other and thought for each other—pause for a minute to consider.

The complaint of Victoria College for many years before I came into being was that this College could not achieve the corporate spirit of other Colleges because it did not have a residential hostel. In my twenty-one years I have often been criticised, perhaps with some justification, because I have appeared to do little to remedy the situation.

However, what I can do for the College, in terms of immediately tangible results, may be too easily exaggerated. After all, I house only about five per cent of the students of the College and those the younger ones; of these many are part-time students and all of them are mere men.

And, over the years, I believe I have made a difference to the corporate life of the College. By the sharing of ideas, and the learning of the vital need for tolerance and understanding of those ideas and of those who hold them, the men who have walked my corridors and have lived together within my walls, have perhaps taken something back to the College which has helped to enrich the University life.

And for the future? Can I assist the University in a more tangible way? I believe I can: I have reached the age of responsibility.

Ruru Memorial Shield Weir v. The Rest

THE Ruru Shield, as all who know the meaning of football are aware, is the object of an annual struggle between Weir and the Rest. What many do not know, however, is that the shield was presented in 1934 in memory of Jack Ruru, who died from injuries received on the football field. Jack Ruru was a promising all-rounder, a Weir Houseman, and Captain of the Varsity Fifteen.

Weir has won most of the games over the past ten years, but with one or two lapses, the match has continued to be the sporting event of the year.

BROKEN BARRIER

HE was bringing a young lady to supper at the House. They passed under the cable-car bridge. "That," he said, "is the Maid's Cottage." "Oh," said she, "then they segregate you?"



WEIR CREST

THIS is Weir House crest. It adorns the Weir blazer, Weir writing papers, the Weir Magazine, Weir Christmas cards, and the menu at the Weir annual dinner.

Beneath the crest is the Weir House motto: "Ex contubernio robor." This motto was suggested by Professor Rankine Brown, who no doubt overlooked the numerous rather embarrassing translations of which it is capable. Latin students may be interested to learn that there is a considerable school of thought which believes the motto has been misinterpreted, and should read: "Ex concubinio robor." Then again there is the group who maintain that the motto was originally "Nemo impune impregnari potest," which may be roughly translated as "You can put no-one in the family way without a shotgun wedding." The House has not generally accepted this motto, however.

The translation of the true motto "Ex contubernio robor" is, broadly, "The essence of manhood comes from living together." This implies directly that character is the product of a corporate life, and the mental and psychological results of contact with one's fellows.

That is why a Weir resident may be sometimes referred to as "that character."

Economics

The Editor,
"Salient."

DEAR SIR,—I would like an explanation concerning an anomaly in the Economics I. lecture hours. On Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays the lecture is held from five to six. On Fridays, however, for some unknown reason (if indeed there is a reason) the lecture is held from seven to eight. This is a most unnatural hour for a lecture and, moreover, all of the lectures with which it would clash if held from five to six on Fridays, it already clashes with on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. The present position, therefore, seems to be highly unreasonable and illogical.

Yours, etc.,
"FLICKS ON FRIDAY."

THE FUTURE OF WEIR

By the Warden, Mr. G. S. ORR, B.A., LL.M.

WEIR HOUSE is now in its twenty-first year and it is an opportune time to take stock and more important to look at its future. Few would deny that Victoria College is the richer for the existence of Weir House; although naturally enough, its greatest impact has been on the individual students who have resided in it.

Only Men's Residence

The fact that it is the only men's residence has at once given it a special significance and a certain freakishness. The absence of other Residential Houses has, paradoxically enough, tended to isolate it rather than to draw it nearer to College life. A student at Weir House is soon aware that apart from his fellow residents he has no counterpart elsewhere in the University. The tradition and way of life of the House are self-nurtured and almost wholly unaffected by exterior influences. Had another or other similar institutions existed, the interaction between them would have been stimulating and on the whole beneficial. Petty rivalries would no doubt exist but these would, I am sure, be overshadowed by the wholesome influence of one House upon the other.

Weir House now holds ninety-four students. It was originally planned to hold approximately one hundred and thirty, but the failure of the then Government to pay any subsidy caused the plans to be modified and the House is still uncompleted. Sooner or later, a decision will have to be made as to whether or not the original plan, involving a further wing and a new dining-hall, is to be carried out. At the present time it is possible for most residents to get to know most of their fellows. This

would be impossible in a larger House. But the more closely-knit life of a smaller House has at least one serious disadvantage, namely, that pettiness and small jealousies on the part of one or two residents can have a vicious and disruptive effect on the whole life of the community within the House.

In the end, considerations of economy will no doubt dictate the decision to be made, for it is obviously more economic to extend Weir House than to build another self-sufficient student residence. If after, or indeed while that is being done, another House for Victoria students could also be built, Weir and the College would benefit greatly.

Administration

But assuming that some day Weir will be completed, what else remains to be done? If Weir is to grow, a pressing need (it already exists) will be the provision of suitable quarters, preferably a nearby house, to accommodate a married Warden and his family. This would make possible the continuity of administration which so far Weir has sadly lacked. Twelve Wardens in twenty-one years speaks for itself. The completed House could accommodate at least two single members of the College teaching-staff to act as tutors and sub-wardens. Weir would then have some claim to call itself a college in its own right. Space prevents me from discussing other developments. I hope that Weir will have attained full stature before it celebrates a further twenty-one years of service to Victoria College.

Fresher's Celebration

The Editor,
"Salient."

DEAR SIR,— I am in complete agreement with the sentiments expressed by "Agopanthus" in his letter in your last issue. I think that the sacrilegious conglomeration of religion (by Mr. Harrus) and sex (by Mr. Beaglehole) was entirely unsuited to the occasion. We at this College like to think that we are neither highblown mystics nor sexual perverts. As become those of academic endowments we preserve a golden mean between these two extremes. We regret that such is not the impression that Freshers may have gained from this year's Freshers' Welcome.

Yours, etc.,
"PRO BONO VICTORIA."

WEIR HISTORY

(Continued from Page 1)

Essentially Sportsmen!

On March 6, 1933, the House was formally opened by Lord Bledisloe and on that day he planted the elegant Pohutakawa which graces our front lawn. The first few years saw the birth of that model of democratic instrument—the Weir House Constitution. Soon all the activities which characterise the House today were in full swing. House Dances—always an "almost unqualified success", the Annual House Dinner, at which the four stages of man are paid homage to—edimus, bibimus, declamamus, and dormimus, and in 1934 the First House Picnic which has developed into another essentially Weir sport where Housemen show admiring friends what they can do out in the open, and in broad daylight. Two internal contests, generally of a North v. South nature, are the Weir Willow Cricket and the Kelburn Keg Football matches. Inevitably the winning factors are the preponderance of liquid in one side of the scrum, and the ability to bowl two balls at once.

Confidence?

The first vote of no confidence was tabled in 1934 and uplifted very soon afterwards when the mover was threatened with a bath in a very insalubrious receptacle.

Weir—Varsity

Only at times does Weir intervene en masse in the wider affairs of the College, yet individual participation in collect activities is common and of high order. Weir has provided College Blues, Winners of College Scholarships and has been the training ground for some of its most competent administrators.

Jubilee with Tradition

This year, 1954, is one of Jubilee in the life of the College. Weir celebrates its 21st anniversary; I said we had tradition—21 years of corporate life have started something of tradition in the life of the House—something that is enriching to those who dwell for a season within its walls and then pass on. We each give a part of our individuality to the House and take of its collective gift—fellowship, scholarship and service above self.

The house has no real history apart from the lives of its members. It is an adage of historians and not unconnected with self-interest, perhaps that a country is happy which has no history: therefore we are happy in the knowledge that we lack what we do not want.

Debating Society

A.G.M.

Little Theatre

FRIDAY 26th, 8 p.m.

OPERA CONCESSIONS

Opera fans will be glad to know that concessions have been made available to Varsity students for the Australian Opera Company's forthcoming productions. Original plans included no special arrangements for them, but due greatly to the efforts of Messrs. Frederick Page and Owen Jensen, alterations were made. Concessions will be made where groups of not less than 30 students undertake to attend a performance—not necessarily on the same night. We understand the concessions are: 23/- seats for 18/-, 18/- to 10/-, and at evening concerts, 7/- gallery seats for 5/4.

Weir's Reputation

WHETHER we like it or not, Weir has a reputation, and it attaches itself both to Housemen collectively, and to anyone who boldly states or otherwise makes it obvious that he is from Weir. A Wellingtonian once wrote:—

"The House stands gaunt, forbidding and dim,
Concealing from the world,
That they
Are living in sin."

Others (including neighbours) are not so sure that the "sin" is "concealed", and in particular, disapprove of the high jinks of the Haka Party and their Beasties. The refined varsity type consider a Weir man boorish, whereas to the female fresher, Weir has a certain glamour in its grim design, and just that aura of doubtful respectability which excites her interest in Weir acquaintances.

Question of Fact

However, this is neither a denial nor an apology—like most reputations Weir's is based on fact. Fundamentally, two truths are involved:—

- (1) We are males.
- (2) We enjoy ourselves.

Hakas and Beasties

"Stay, we must not lose our senses,
Men who stop at no offences
Will anon be here."

The Haka Party activities have always been an expression of Weir's youthful exuberance, artificially stimulated at times, but invariably adding to the camaraderie of a function, e.g., from "The Dominion", 9/5/1944:—

"University students have at times wild ideas of what is humour in its application to good taste. One of the pranks played at the Opera House on Saturday concerned a lad in the gallery with a rod and line from which hung a dead fish. This pungent object was waved, raised and lowered until it chanced to touch some of those in the Stalls and Dress Circle. As it swung towards the Circle, women shrank and shrieked. An airman stopped the caper when he grabbed the line and snapped it."

(See illustration page 6)

Social Contacts

"Comes a train of little ladies
From scholastic trammels free.
Each a little bit afraid is,
Wondering what this place can be."

Weir's reputation where the opposite sex is concerned is perhaps harder to discuss because it is based largely on the enterprise of individu-



Mr. William Weir

als. But we have a picnic (A great success this year at Day's Bay), a ball, and several dances each year, which are occasions of collective revelrie. The dancing at an annual ball of recent years was reported as follows:—

"Endeavours to perpetrate a few fancy dances were made by an enterprising set. The orchestra hotted it up and an intricate Big Apple was executed in the middle of the floor. Subsequent attempts at a spot of Truckin' and the Suzy Q began to tire the crowd who, lead by Hoffman and his fowl, thought it high time they resumed just then ordinary dancing steps. But the gigolo Eddie made even the ordinary Fox-trot look more like a tempestuous appassionate. Cleverly executed turns on writhing feet, decisive hip swaying, timely bends to his unusual erect posture, gained for him a position of superiority over the mob in which nimble youngsters and puffing oldsters kicked, hopped, tramped, jumped, and stomped around the floor. Gibb and Ronny managed to show the boys how it was done, but this was real dancing lacking the sensuous movements of the other shleks. Norm gave his usual exposition of bored dancing, his feet trudging impassively round a weary floor, while Bert smitten by the love-bug, portrayed a symphony of sylphlike grace."

Boisterous Cloisters

Finally, although today we do not wish to associate ourselves with the reputation acquired by some servicemen in the House immediately after the last war, we are not ashamed to enjoy ourselves with lusty vigour when swot and sport can be put aside.

Initiation Ceremonies "Welcome" to Weir

IT is a Weir tradition that freshers to the House be initiated at a ceremony for that purpose. Many times in the past, victims have been locked in a room, fear-gassed, hosed, and then singly brought before the rest of the House to be subjected to various clever forms of humiliation. One year recently, an unfortunate was stripped to his underpants and hooked by that article of clothing to the gate of a certain female hostel. But the ceremony is not always amusing and is often painful.

This year, it was decided that as the ceremony is really a token of welcome, there would be a mock trial where roughness would replace brutality and where the emphasis would be on making the fresher feel included rather than trodden down—unless, of course, he was too "fresh."

THE V.I.P.S.

THE most influential man in Weir is the Warden, at present Mr. G. S. Orr, B.A., LL.M., who has that demanding responsibility—Weir's behaviour. The leading ladies are the Matron and Assistant-Matron, who feed us, on the whole very satisfactorily, and who tend the sick and shamming.

As to House affairs, Weir men govern themselves—more or less democratically, and usually with surprising earnestness. Officers are elected to form the nucleus of a House Committee which takes the helm for the year and "With joyous shout and ringing cheer,"

Inaugurate their brief career." At general meetings, the improper and impracticable suggestions are sifted out. Controversial questions include those of House policy for various functions and those concerning the expenditure of canteen profits.

PROF. AND DENTISTS

Professor Bailey has been chosen by W.H.O., to direct a World Dental Conference here in Wellington. The conference is to enable less advanced countries to consult with world dental experts and discuss their problems in developing adequate dental service. Twenty-one countries ranging eastwards from Egypt to Japan will be represented. An interest in international understanding and co-operation is Professor Bailey's qualification for director for, said Professor Bailey, the major difficulty will be to stimulate frank and free discussion between persons of widely varied backgrounds and culture. The conference is from the 5th to 22nd May, and delegates will stay at the St. George Hotel. Before leaving, they will inspect our school dental service, which is unique in the world.

Weir Woos The Muses CULTURE IN THE HOUSE

THE O.E.D. tells me that "culture" is the improvement and development of the intellect. If that is so, there are few signs of individual cultural activity in the House.

Apart from what I shall call almanac-art (which includes *Esquire* and *Man*), 1st XV photographs and public notices, our walls are almost bare; apart from jazz and Charlie Kunz (which have their place) our record cabinets are almost empty; and apart from prescribed texts our bookshelves contain little more than Van der Velde and Walker's *Physiology of Sex*, *The Cruel Sea*, and Hunt's *Ascent of Everest*.

Pictures . . .

The average room in Weir hangs three or four pictures ranging from third-rate almanac-art to occasional Van Gogh prints. Where the House lacks in discrimination it make up, however, in originality. The acquisitive instinct finds expression in the collecting of public signs and notices. You may see that a room is "Reserved" or allows "No Smoking" or requires you to "Remember the Sick and Helpless".

. . . Books . . .

Turning from the walls to bookshelves we again see a variety, this time in reading taste. There in the House the usual number of school prizes, "Complete" Shakespeares, "Penguins", and Bibles. Authoritative tomes on sex are to be found more often hidden in cupboards than displayed on bookshelves.

. . . and Music

Of the many records in Weir, piano medleys, orchestral jazz, and dance music, "Call Me Madam", "Annie Get Your Gun" and "South Pacific" form a large proportion. Even the more popular pieces from Chopin, Tchaikovsky, Wagner, Strauss and the "Moonlight" sonata are rare. If any one section of the House is to be singled out for its cultural deficiency, figures would point to the Science students, two-thirds of whom occupy rooms which could be classified as "bare" in comparison with less than half in each of the other three faculties. A defence pleading lack of money or time may seem plausible, yet a little observation shows that in practice there is little correlation between cash and culture. We have our pianists, highland pipers, players of the guitar, one or two string specialists and an organist—some of these are musicians whilst others are merely performers.

In 1953, we had several evenings devoted to recorded music which were most successful with an attendance of approximately one-third of the House. In addition there were screenings of films borrowed from the U.K. High Commissioner, and lectures were also delivered in the common room.

In spite of the cultural bareness of some residents we endeavour collectively to "get culture". I feel that there are more people, however,

who are interested in art, classical music and unprescribed literary texts, than those who openly acknowledge their interests, but for some unnecessary shyness are afraid to show it. This is indeed a pitiable state of affairs brought about, I fear, by that strange notion that an absorption in any art form is an effeminate trait and therefore thoroughly abhorrent to the New Zealand male who by convention must be a "good chap", i.e., someone whose affections are for women, last night's bash and football. Such an attitude is neither reasonable nor in keeping with the New Zealanders' much cherished "quality" of broad-mindedness.

Memorial Service

ON Wednesday, the 17th of March, a memorial service was held in the College library to pay tribute to the memory of Robert Orr McGechan, Professor of Jurisprudence, and Winston Francis Monk, senior lecturer in History, who died in the Constellation air crash at Singapore. The Chairman of the College Council presided over the ceremony. The Principal of the College delivered a short address, followed by Professor I. D. Campbell, who spoke of Professor McGechan and his work. Professor Wood spoke of Mr. Monk and his work and then the President of the Students' Association, Mr. P. M. McCaw, delivered a short address. The reading of a passage from Ecclesiasticus, Chapter XLIV., by Mr. E. K. Braybrooke, senior lecturer in Jurisprudence, ended the ceremony.

NEXT ISSUE

Sports Copy MUST be in by
SUNDAY, APRIL 3

THE "LET US DRINK" ERS

The House it stands foreboding on the hill;
The House for which poor students foot the bill;
All day some cram for every subject known,
The rest essay to imitate the drone,
While in the minds of all seeds of revolt have grown.
We have had enough of lectures and of sweating we,
No more books, and no more "pracs," let Weir be rid of misery
(Though swollen boarding rates belie the broken-down amenities).
Let us swear an oath, and keep it like the girls we find.
In frozen Weir's confines to live and lie reclined
On Kelburn Hill like Gods together, careless of mankind.
For they lie beside their nectar, and the dead marines are hurl'd
Far below them in the bushes, and their hands are tightly curl'd
Round their golden bottles, whence the alcohol is swirl'd:
Where they drink in secret, bending over card-filled hands,
Dice and poker, crown and anchor, pitch and toss, and slippery Sam,
Drunken sprees, and smutty jokes, and cursing lips, and smoking ghag,
Surely, surely, women are more sweet than toll, the wh . . .
Than labour in the foetid studies, science, arts and law;
O rest ye, brother residents, degrees we'll pass no more.

VENNY SON.

A chance for students to earn 500 dollars for their colleges or universities is offered by a radio quiz programme in the United States. Each week, two teams of four students each compete over the air waves. Questions range from nursery rhymes to Shakespeare, and the winning team receives 500 dollars for the benefit of its university, and the chance to compete again on the following programme. The all-time record is held by the University of Minnesota, which reigned supreme for eight weeks. The members of the losing team receive wrist watches. (The Sophian, Northampton.)

Great demands are made to students at most of the Lisbon Faculties. To be admitted for further studies, students must pass every year an oral and a written examination in all their subjects. Anyone failing in one single subject only loses one whole year, for the examination may be repeated not before the next year at the same time. Failing in these annual examinations three times results in the exclusion from the continuation of studies. Portuguese students wish the schedule of courses to be altered, because the hot summer months are felt to be unfavourable to studying. So far the academic year used to commence in November and to end at the beginning of August. (Signo, Madrid.)

TOM MORRISON

153 FEATHERSTON STREET



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*It is better to have it and not need it,
than to need it and not have it.*

The O'Briens Again

MR. K. B. (BASHFUL) O'BRIEN, M.Com., B.A., has been appointed a part-time lecturer in Economics. The Carnegie Social Science Research Committee has made available sufficient funds for the lectures. For the ignorant, Kevin has had a long and chequered career in student politics at V.U.C., being Secretary of V.U.C.S.A. in 1947, was swept into the Presidency during the infamous purge of '48, was successively re-elected President in 1948, 1949, 1950, and did not stand for re-election in 1951. He has also been V.U.C.S.A. representative on the College Council, and has been sometime President of N.Z.U.S.A. It is rumoured in the usual diplomatic circles that he will be nominated at the A.G.M. in June this year for a life membership of the Association.

Demonstrations of protest against a decree of the Minister of Education which set a two-week period for examinations at Italian universities, took place in Rome. By their combined demands, the Italian students succeeded in extending the examination period to three weeks. (Burana, Padua.)

A novel fund-raising method is reported from Aberdeen Training Centre. A large bass drum (described as "the largest in Aberdeen") was left outside the Common Room. Students were invited to bang this when they passed it and to make donations to W.U.S. according to the loudness of their bang. (W.U.S. News Bulletin, London.)

Students of the University of Kiel boycotted the student dining hall for one day with methodical employment of pickets. They intended to force a lowering of the prices and a better quality in the food. The Student Aid Service of Kiel took no part in the measure because it took place without previous warning to the owner of the dining hall. (Colloquium, Berlin.)

Have YOU entered for . . .

INTER-FAC. TRACK & FIELD MEETING

on

Saturday April 3?

This year is Jubilee year for the V.U.C. Amateur Athletic Club and members look forward to doing well at the tournament. All places in the tournament team have still to be selected and performance at Inter-Fac. is essential for selection. ENTER NOW ON THE NOTICE BOARD

KNOW YOUR UNIVERSITY—No. 2

The University of New Zealand

(DR. CURRIE, Continued)

Service of The University of New Zealand

We may now consider the service which the University of New Zealand renders to the whole University system under the five heads, Academic, Finance, Scholarships, Special Schools and Research. We repeat here again something that needs always to be remembered, that of course the Colleges are the real centres of learning and the real universities in the ordinary sense, although the University of New Zealand is the only body in the Dominion which has a charter from the Crown to confer degrees.

ACADEMIC.—The teaching work is done at the Colleges and the actual content of the subjects taught is in the main determined by the people responsible for teaching them as it should be, and only the most general outline is set out in the University's Calendar. As far as I am aware, all teachers in the University can teach their subjects in the way they think best and can do such research as they think most worthy without any restraint put upon them by the University, or by its Statutes. The teacher is free to teach his proper discipline as he thinks best and to claim otherwise to-day is, I believe, only to beat a long-dead horse. In any case the remedy, if any were needed, is in the hands of the Academic Board. It was not ever thus because in the old days of the examining University, very precise prescriptions were set out for courses and examinations were carried out by examiners overseas; nowadays the teacher is also the examiner in his own subject.

In the enthusiasm for further devolution of responsibility to the Colleges, the University is now trying as fast as it can to get the Colleges to accept full responsibility for doing all the examining and keeping the students' records where they belong — close to the student body. Through the Academic Board, however, the University does set a general pattern for the courses of study which must be followed for its degrees, maintains a certain uniformity of standards and tries to safeguard the interest of students (seven hundred or more) who move between Colleges during each year. Occasionally it has a full discussion on matters of major educational policy.

It is true that a reasonable uniformity of standards can now be obtained throughout the system by the very fact that College staffs have become large enough and experienced enough to see that a good standard of teaching is maintained at each centre. The necessity for any de-

tailed central control has through this fact been reduced, though opinions may differ about the amount of uniformity that is still desirable.

The Senate is considering at present a suggestion by the Chancellor that a Curriculum Committee be set up which will have powers derived from the Senate to approve courses submitted by the Colleges even if considerable diversity of courses is suggested. This would allow Colleges more autonomy in expressing their individual philosophy of education and the Curriculum Committee's duty would mainly be to see that high standards are maintained and that the interests of the students should be safeguarded when different courses are offered at different centres. A Professor from each Constituent College, the four Academic Heads and two laymen with the Vice-Chancellor and the Director of Education is the suggested constitution.

Examination Standards

Centralisation of Entrance and other examinations as at present has at least the merit that it provides the machinery for even standards of attainment and for giving similar individual consideration to students in special circumstances in all parts of the Dominion. We have heard of cases in other countries where laymen in University Councils have been able to interfere with examination results through their over-riding authority on governing bodies; this is not possible in New Zealand since only academic men appointed by the University of New Zealand as examiners, along with other College teachers, have any final power to pass or fail students.

The University seeks constantly to maintain standards which will have world-wide acceptance, while doing everything possible to see that all students get fair play. The University also provides opportunity for College people both academic and lay to get together to discuss the educational policy generally throughout the Dominion, an all-over function which is necessary in a country which has a natural tendency to break up into separate provinces.

Finance

The funds for staffing and maintaining the University Colleges come, for the most part, as indicated earlier, from Government grants since fees from students represent in New Zealand on the average only 13.5 per cent. of the total income of the Colleges. It must be remembered also that about half of the actual fees are paid for through Government bursaries. It must not be thought, however, that New Zealand is unique in

the high proportion of Government funds which go into university education, although it is true that New Zealand belongs to a small group of universities which have quite such heavy Government support. In Scotland the proportion of finances derived by the universities from fees is only about 14½ per cent., as against New Zealand's 13½ per cent. In Wales the fees represent 17 per cent. of University income, while in Western Australia and Ceylon the proportion of income from Government grants is even greater than it is in New Zealand. Even in the United States of America the proportion of income derived from Government sources in the public State Universities is surprisingly high. In those universities only 23 per cent. of their income is from student fees, while State and Federal funds account for no less than 63 per cent. of their income. You will see, however, that students are heavily subsidised from Government funds and, of course, the proportion varies with different courses. In Engineering, for instance, fees amount at present to only 4 per cent. of the income of the Mining School at Otago; 6½ per cent. of the income of the Engineering School at Auckland and 10 per cent. of the income of the Engineering School at Canterbury, while medical fees account for 15 per cent. of the income of the Medical School. In Agriculture only about 5½ per cent. of the costs are met by fees.

The precise costs per student are difficult to assess since all Colleges engage in research and have other useful functions besides the training of students, but for the sake of computation we will assume that all income, unless especially earmarked for research, goes to teaching students. We must remember also that for the purposes of these statistics a "student" is an "equivalent full-time student" and this is a disembodied concept which may be misleading until you understand that fee payments of £18 per annum are taken to represent the fees of an "equivalent full-time student." Based on these assumptions, and remembering the rather uncertain basis of calculation, putting all costs against the student training the following costs per student in the Colleges in different disciplines will interest you:

	Per annum.
	About
Dental student	£400
Agricultural student	380
Medical student	270
Engineering student	265
Arts and Science average	120

The Community Pays

There is little need to stress the obvious privilege the community extends to students in meeting the costs of such university training. The University Grants Committee needs, therefore, to be most careful and conscientious in its recommendations to the Government for funds and the

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Colleges economical and efficient in their application. Not only do high standards for admission need to be maintained, but I believe that in cases of repeated failure only very high fees should justify students in continuing University studies.

Grants Committee

Some years ago, while discussing the grant necessary to finance six Colleges separately, the Government, through its then Prime Minister, stated that it would prefer to deal with one organisation rather than six separate organisations, so the University established the Grants Committee. Through the block grant system negotiated by the Grants Committee, the Colleges retain their autonomy and through the quinquennial grant they are able to have continuity of policy and to budget ahead. Although the College Councils have this autonomy in the use to which they put their block grant, there is still a necessity in the national interest for the Colleges to get approval from the University when new departments or new Chairs are established, since it is clear that from a financial point of view it would be impossible for every College to proliferate in all directions without considering the fact that New Zealand with only two million people is not yet able to finance four separate universities complete with all departments. Of course, all universities do not need to have all departments in order to function as universities, nevertheless, the point I am making is that for any new development it is necessary, in the public interest, that there should be a Dominion body to advise on it so that the Government will not incur undue expense.

The Grants Committee has also been given recently the responsibility for finding out the building needs of the Colleges and presenting to the Government the case for the new buildings needed to carry out their functions adequately. As you know, the Colleges are lamentably behind most British and American universities in the standard and extent of university buildings. In one New Zealand College, for instance, no permanent major university building has been erected since 1928 and in others the last so built were in 1939. During those years student numbers have more than doubled. No major permanent building is under construction at any University College at the present time, and the whole system is faced with the need at the moment to catch up with the serious deficiency in building from the past and to prepare for the future increase in student numbers. Although the sum of £5,700,000 is shown on the Government Estimates for 1953-54 for education buildings, there is no provision on them for any single major university building. As you are aware, apart from laboratory and lecture rooms, most Colleges do not have

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great halls even equivalent to those at good secondary schools and buildings for student amenities are for the most part of very poor quality. The Government has been made urgently aware of the position and it is our hope that a rational, long-range building plan for the University will be accepted shortly and finances provided for its development. At each University centre the buildings given first priority on this plan are: at Auckland and Canterbury, the Engineering Schools; at Victoria, the Science block; and at Otago, the Dental School. The work of the Grants Committee in collecting and collating information about the financial needs for running costs and buildings for all six Colleges and presenting the case continuously and cogently to the Government, is one of the major activities of the University of New Zealand, but whereas in England the Grants Committee has a permanent staff of some 26 officers, in New Zealand we have to try to manage without a single full-time officer being able to devote all his time to the work. As in other matters, the University tries to manage the Grants Committee with a minimum of financial outlay, while at the same time striving to be effective.

SCHOLARSHIPS.—There is very little to add here about Scholarships beyond what has been said already. The position of Scholarships last year in Science, for instance, was very satisfactory in that, so far as I am aware, all First Class Honours graduates of outstanding ability were successful in getting an opportunity to go overseas for further study. Our policy is to assist graduates of high merit to go as far as possible with their studies in New Zealand and then afterwards to give the specially gifted the opportunity for study abroad under recognised world authorities. On a rough calculation, over fifty opportunities were afforded last year for New Zealand students from all faculties to study abroad with financial aid and even that figure would be increased if we included all the special opportunities offered by shipping concessions, Fulbright Travel grants, grants from overseas universities and from various Foundations. In all these special and general cases the University of New Zealand plays

a major role in the selection of those who will be given such special opportunities.

SPECIAL SCHOOLS.—There is a general function which the University is expected to perform in relation to Special Schools since the conception of the University is that it should be a complete university for New Zealand, made up of Constituent Colleges, each with some Special Schools, but no one Constituent College in itself being complete with all the Special Schools. It is clear that in the present state of our economic development and the size of our population it is impossible for every College to have all necessary Special Schools attached to them, so it is for the Senate to consider whether new Schools need to be started and if they are started, where they should be located. A second Medical School at Auckland and a possible Veterinary School somewhere in the Dominion are examples of new Special Schools at present under consideration.

RESEARCH.—In this field the University manages one research grant from the Government of £15,000 a year and another of \$60,000 from the Carnegie Corporation of New York for Social Science Research; this latter fund to be spent at the rate of \$12,000 a year. In addition, the University co-operates with D.S.I.R. in allocating funds for research to teachers in the Colleges who are working in fields in which the D.S.I.R. is interested. The sum spent in this way by D.S.I.R. last year was £27,000. Whether the University should have a permanent role of allocating special funds to research workers within the Colleges is, of course, debatable, but in carrying out this function as a development stage in the University, it is very valuable indeed. Every effort is being made to finance the Colleges so that their staffing and maintenance grants will be adequate to provide for research as an ordinary proper activity. It is necessary at present to find special moneys for research, so the University in distributing these moneys is performing a valuable function in stimulating research and assisting in the training of research workers.

(To be continued)

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