

Editorial

JOHN Fisher laid more durable foundations than Caesar Augustus. The College has lasted longer than the Roman Empire from the Principate to the withdrawal of the Legions from Britain. It can congratulate itself on its power of survival and on the intelligence of the human animals who since its foundation have adapted it to a changing world—or should we say on their ‘quiet unassuming competence’?*

The conversation of Fellows and Scholars is no longer carried on exclusively in Latin, Hebrew, Chaldee, Arabic or Greek. Nor is the tonsure obligatory. There are two beds in many sets of rooms, but they are not a high bed and a low bed, occupied respectively by a Fellow and by two Scholars. The Master’s salary is larger than £6 3s. 4d.

But the College remains a charitable institution—active and passive. The Poor’s Soup is ritually distributed on the customary Thursdays. And paradoxically the College has more private benefactors in our State-aided times than ever before.

No one could have foretold that time would metamorphose *Subinde mihi subvenit* ‘it often occurs to me’ into *Souvent me souvient* ‘I often remember’—the Beaufort motto. And the change was not the work of a single individual or even of a number of known individuals. But looking back we can see roughly how it happened—the sameness in the difference.

* *The Eagle*, LVIII, p. 1.

Edward Miller's forthcoming history will record the process of the College's transformation. This number of the *Eagle* is a souvenir. We have lit another fifty candles in honour of the Lady Margaret. But we also look forward—with quiet unassuming confidence.

Editorial

OUR subscribers will perhaps be interested to have the following programme of the entertainments that were arranged in celebration of the College's 450th Anniversary.

1. Saturday, 20th May. An Evening Entertainment in the Grounds for Fellows and their wives, Members of the Combination Room and their wives and for all Junior Members of the College and their lady guests. A running buffet supper was served from 8 p.m. onwards in a marquee erected on the tennis courts in front of New Court with access by means of a covered way from the Wren Bridge. Lounge suits were worn, without gowns. The Entertainment consisted of a Recital by the Chapel Choir in front of the Cloister Gate to New Court; an illumination of the College buildings; the performance of an operetta in three scenes, music by Leon Coates, libretto and production by Charles Ellis. Some consternation was caused by the absence of the *prima donna* who turned up late owing to a misunderstanding about *tempi*. The Entertainment concluded with a display of "Crystal Palace" fireworks by Messrs Brock. During this exciting pyrotechnic display the following devices were fired:—The Blazing Gyroscopic Wheel, The Star of India, A Humorous Mechanical Device (Boxing Contest), The Revolving Fountains, The Papyrus Screen, The Fiery Pigeons, Aladdin's Jewelled Tree, The Chromatrope, The Dance of the Skeleton, *Le Feu de Joie*, The Whirligig. The following Set Pieces were depicted:—The College Crest, carried out in lines of coloured fire; The Weird White Waterfall; a special royal portrait accurately portraying The Lady Margaret, carried out in lines of brilliant fire. Interspersed between the devices came the following aerial items:—Ten salvos of SHELLS, eight SHELLS, four SHELLS, explosion of six large MINES bursting from the ground, six large TOURBILLIONS or rising umbrellas of fire, seven batteries of ROMAN CANDLES (assorted varieties). A SIGNAL AERIAL MAROON denoted the conclusion of the display and of a very pleasant evening.

2. Saturday, 22nd July. A Dinner in Hall to which the Master and Fellows invited Honorary Fellows; Former Fellows; members of the College who were heads or Fellows of other Colleges in Cambridge and Oxford and of Trinity College, Dublin; the Visitor; the Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor; the Mayor and the Town Clerk; the Marquess of Exeter and the Marquess of Salisbury; the Headmasters of certain Schools with which the College has been associated from ancient times; the Headmaster of St John's College School; and certain other Guests. The Master and Mrs Boys Smith were at Home at the Master's Lodge from 4—6 p.m. to Fellows, Guests, and Ladies accompanying them. The College offered hospitality for the night to Guests attending the dinner and provided Breakfast in the Hall on Sunday morning. In the interests of the Guests academical dress was optional, though Fellows were requested to wear gowns at the Dinner.

3. Saturday, 29th July. A Garden Party in the Fellows' Garden to Senior Members of the College and their Ladies, Supervisors of the College and their Ladies, and other Guests specially associated with the College. The weather was fine, Mr Summers' iced coffee excellent.

4. Saturday, 5th August. A Garden Party in the College grounds to which the Master and Fellows invited all College Servants and their wives or husbands, from 3.30 to 6 p.m. Since there was rain in the morning the Party was held in the Hall. Raspberries and cream, beer and claret cup were consumed in large quantities.

5. Thursday, 5th October. A Dinner in Hall to which the Master and Fellows invited themselves, Members of the Combination Room, and their Ladies, including the Hon. Mrs Charles Taylor and Mrs E. A. Benians.

In addition to the foregoing Entertainments the following Events were arranged for the Long Vacation:—

(a) Tuesday, 4th July. A Dinner in Hall to Agricultural Tenants and other special Guests.

(b) Thursday, 6th July. A Luncheon in Hall to Members of the Commonwealth—American Universities Conference and their wives.

Editorial

MUCH of this issue is criticism of the College, and many of the opinions expressed represent only that person who expressed them. But we believe that felt criticisms should be voiced, that such things should be said; and that *The Eagle* is the place to say them.

Much of this issue is discussion. We hope that discussion will not end here, that readers will write to add points of their own, or to qualify points already made. The discussion is meant to engage the whole College, past and present members, and not simply the six or seven people whom convenience brought together this Lent Term.

The transcripts of the two long discussions have been slightly 'arranged': arguments have been taken from one person and given to another, with the intention of blurring any too clear lines of character. But the discussions really took place; although the names are fictitious.

WHY Should The Aged Eagle Stretch Its Wings? or, Please Don't Throw Me Away Yet, Young Man—I'm Much Too New To Die.

By the time this issue of *The Eagle* appears, Goldie will have been forgotten (he was a brother fowl who escaped from the London Zoo), and the consequent clamour to change the name of the magazine will have died away. The barrage balloon will have been forgotten (its huge rotundity hovered over the College for a whole day). And the new portrait of the Master will look as if it had always hung above the Combination Room stairs. Yet *The Eagle* is not so dilatory as it seems. It comes out when it can, when, in other words, there is enough material available to fill it; and that happens about twice a year. It would be unkind to ask more, in this way, of those who produce the magazine. *The Eagle* cannot become more of a newsmagazine than it is already. It cannot have a stop press column; but it does try to record the history of the College and its members, resident or not, as it unrolls. From one point of view the conscientious achievement of this worthy task is enough.

But from others it is not.

A college the size of John's inevitably runs the risk of succumbing to amorphousness. Perhaps it is paradoxical that it should be so. The point of collegiate education is, surely, the sense it affords of belonging to a great and continuing community which offers the twin blessings of identity and variety. Our more than seven hundred graduate and undergraduate students ought to be able to give each other all the stimulus that intelligence, youth and diversity need or are capable of. The more, one might have supposed, the merrier. And in private they are certainly merry together, as collegians should be. But it is clear that smaller colleges often make more success of the job in public. It is in the smaller colleges that group activities attract most interest, and engage the largest number of energetic participants. Even our hallowed Boat Club is kept going more by a few devotees than by the desultory many. And even the desultory many do not amount to more than a minority of the student body.

If this is true of the Boat Club, it is even truer of the other organs of the College. It is probably just as well that we have few alcoholics on the books, but it is nevertheless depressing to

note that there are not many regular users of the Scholars, Buttery. (Here a distinction must be made: of course we are all familiar with the large, noisy, trampling crowd that invades the place for ten minutes before every Hall; and everyone gets some supplies there. But as a social force the Buttery's success, like that of the *Mitre* or any other pub, must be measured by the number of people who go there frequently to drink and enjoy each other's company.) Where are the Lady Margaret Players? How many go to the Debating Society? Where are the contributors to *The Eagle*? And where, above all, are our missing readers?

It is strange how clear a picture one has of the *Eagle* readership. Typically, one copy will be carried by a virtuous headhunter through miles of festering swamp to the last outpost of civilisation, where a haggard Englishman will read, with tears in his eyes, the news that dear old Tom Snuffbox has got married at last. Another copy will be ruthlessly inspected for mistakes by a Fellow of the College at the same time as he enjoys a glass of good claret. Yet another will arrive at breakfast-time as a second-year man is turning his attention from cornflakes to bacon. A cut-rate copy of *The Times* waits disdainfully on the corner of his table for its moment; Radio London thunders past his shoulder into the unoffending air of Second Court. What happens to the *Eagle*? It is too painful to relate. But it certainly does not get read.

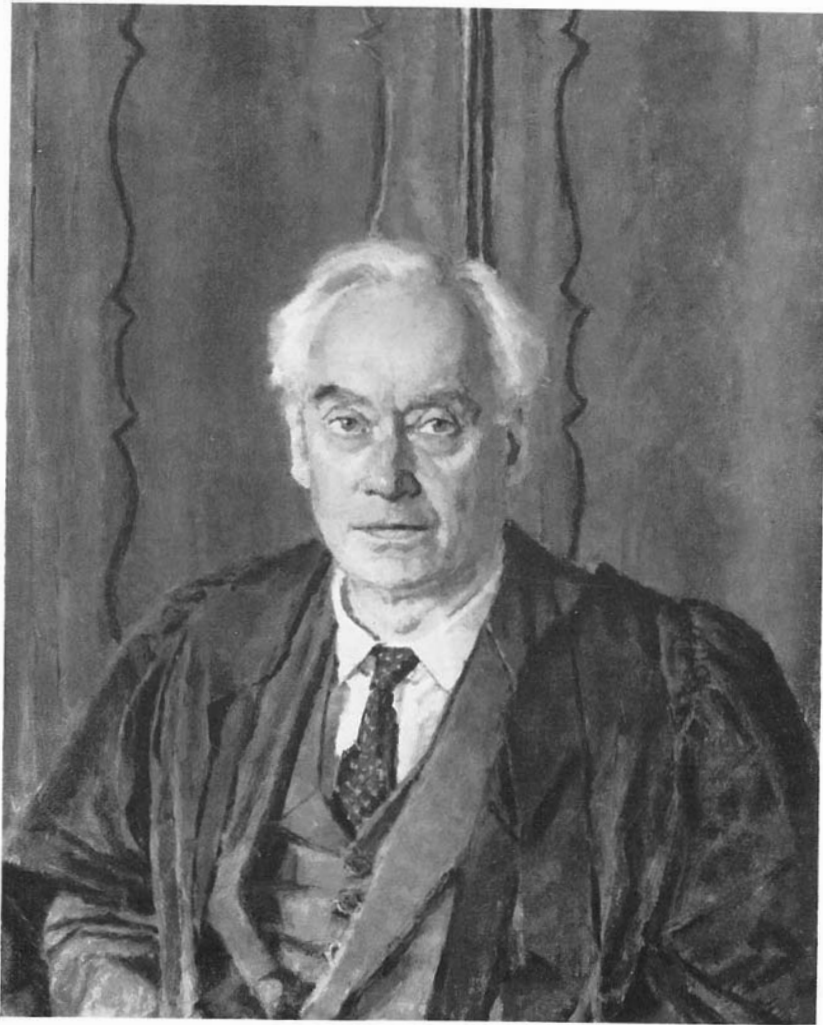
Or so we believe. We may be wrong (let us hope we are). Nor do we repine over being of use and interest to Old Johnians (it would be shocking if we were not). But even if *The Eagle* has more undergraduate readers than seems likely, there can be no doubt about the shortage of contributors. Every issue manages to contain the work of a couple of poets and two or three writers in prose. Yet there are quite certainly many more undergraduates in the College who write, who might benefit from seeing themselves in print, and who might appreciate the advantages of a guaranteed circulation of 2,000. There may even be, within the College, a group, or groups, who try their writing out on each other, and might appreciate the intellectual challenge of a periodical to serve as a focus for their efforts and a forum for their views. If so, the *Eagle* is very much at their service.

Unfortunately, a vicious circle sets in at this point. Young writers like to be read, and they are well aware of the probable fate of most undergraduate copies of the *Eagle*. So they do not write for it because nobody reads it, and nobody reads it because nobody writes for it. But the circle can be broken, if the young writers care to try. Let them take over the *Eagle*, publish in it, and then make their friends read it. Let them puff it and push

it. They need not be novelists, playwrights or poets. There must be budding journalists in the College too, or critics, or travel writers, even (rarest class) men with ideas they wish to convey. If they publish regularly in the *Eagle* they will build up its readership, and also their own. We might then appear three times a year, and have a genuine correspondence column.* At the very least, the claims for intellectual achievement on the part of the oldest surviving college paper in Cambridge would not be based so exclusively on the work of a tiny number of undergraduates and a rather larger number of Fellows who are prepared to labour in this way for what they take to be the good of the College (with all that that implies).

One last point must be made, though nothing is drearier than sermons in the name of some equivalent to the mythical "school spirit". It is made therefore with diffidence. The Cambridge man has long tended to turn his back on all organised activities except those tiresome examinations. The Union is a bore, *Varsity* is vulgar, the ADC a waste of time, rowing ridiculous. No doubt, no doubt. But what about *you*, my boy—you who toil so dutifully for that inevitable 2/1, that seemly marriage and that appropriate employment as something or other? This college has afforded what is probably your last chance of belonging to a community of intellect and feeling, rather than to one based merely on convenience or pleasure. It is not like the golf-club or professional association of your latter years. Have you exploited it enough? Do you do more than play squash in winter and tennis in summer? No? Then the *Eagle* may be of service to you yet. What have you given to the College, or it to you? The pages of the *Eagle*, void of your presence, suggest the answer *Nothing*. The old bird must be lying. But mayn't it be worth while to write in and tell her so? Don't you ever get tired of writing nothing but essays?

* In response to public demand, there will not be a spoof one again.



REV. J. S. BOYS SMITH, MASTER OF ST JOHN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

BY

ALLAN GWYNNE-JONES, R.A.

The Next Master

HAPPILY, the reign of the present Master still has five years to run; but, as all readers of C. P. Snow will understand, this will not seem too long to the far-sighted movers and shakers among the dons. If we wait much longer, stealthy intrigues will be started. It is to avert this peril that the Editors of *The Eagle* now come forward to make a proposal that they would have liked to keep under wraps a little longer. But their sense of public duty is too stern to be brooked. They therefore beg leave to reveal the best, the unique, the inevitable answer to the question that, otherwise, must one day vex the College.

Gentlemen, we give you the next Master of John's: Lyndon B. Johnson.

We would be the first to admit that Mr Johnson's name was not the first to occur to us; or rather, that we did not ourselves find out how to secure his services. But some simple islanders in the South Sea have shown us the way. They, with the intuitive genius of primitive man, have hit on the excellent idea of buying Mr Johnson, and are saving up their cowrie shells in order to do so. It is with a heavy heart that we propose to purloin their idea and defeat their purpose. For Mr Johnson can scarcely be owned both by a South Sea island and by the College; and our suggestion is that we overbid the savages.

It can scarcely be doubted that we shall be able to do so. It is true that the number of cowrie shells in the Cam (at least in that part of it which flows by Third Court) is probably not so great as that on the beaches of Papua. But we are plentifully supplied with currency of a different kind. If cowrie shells are few, professors are many (22 are Fellows) and, in terms of weight, would dip the scales against anything but an enormous quantity of cowrie shells. But they need not be judged in terms of weight only. We presume that the vendor of Mr Johnson will be his wife, Lady Bird. Mrs Johnson is known to be a capable woman of business; and it is impossible that she will not see how much money (in terms of the old-fashioned American dollar currency) she can make out of owning a team of professors. Properly looked after, in terms of bedding, fodder and medicaments, these valuable creatures can, if hired out—for example, as legal, industrial, scientific, linguistic or theological consultants—prove a veritable treasure trove: we imagine that Mrs Johnson will jump at the chance of acquiring them when eventually she feels free to part with her husband.

That will not be, we understand, until January, 1973 when he will cease to hold his present job; but of course she might sell him in advance. John's could then count on having as its Head a politician so astute, so famous, so unlikely, as to put Trinity's puny nose out of joint forever (no-one could call LBJ a failed Prime Minister), and we can think of no better reason for elevating a man to the Mastership. Accordingly, we look forward to some early approach to Mrs Johnson, with a view to clinching the deal.

It will be hard on the South Sea savages; but their need for government of the most sophisticated can hardly be so great as that of a complex society like our own. We would advise them to put in a bid for Edward Heath. We have reason to believe that *his* owners are willing to part with him at an early date, for a bargain price.

The Strangers in our Gates

ONE of the problems of living with an ancient monument is that of receiving its visitors. All the Cambridge colleges, or rather all those which are sufficiently beautiful and sufficiently central (Selwyn is probably left pretty much to itself) know what it is to be popular. One of the minor amusements of life is the comparison of the various painted boards that the principal attractions display, bearing words of welcome, warning and restriction. They reveal slightly different attitudes in different colleges, and have changed somewhat over the years. King's is now verbose and a little shrill, particularly in its circumlocutory version of KEEP OFF THE GRASS; Clare is brief but clumsy; Trinity infected perhaps by the ghost of Macaulay, has the most rotund and mannered announcement. John's has decided to be businesslike: the capitalised NOT that recurs in its trenchant sentences reminds one, somehow, of the Ten Commandments. But on the whole John's, like the other colleges, officially extends a warm welcome to tourists. Let us hope it is sincere; but doubts will rise in the kindest mind.

For it cannot be blinked: the rising tide of tourism is beginning to induce a siege-mentality in many of the collegians. There is a growing resentment of the dislocations that our visitors produce in the machinery of our smoothly-running lives; and an increasing desire that something should be done—though what is as yet debatable. The most dramatic demonstration of this came at the beginning of the Easter Term when the news got round that

150 undergraduates at King's had signed a petition demanding that restrictions be placed on tourists; Lord Annan* was said to be sympathetic, not least because he had once had to eject some tourists from his bedroom. This sort of experience is almost common form: several dons in John's have had, on occasion, to turn out unwanted guests who felt themselves at liberty to walk in and make themselves at home. And the rate of petty pilfering from North Court was sufficiently high, not long ago, to induce the college to lock the gates, permanently and inconveniently—inconveniently for inhabitants as well as for thieves.

But the real problem is not the occasional inquisitive, foolish, or dishonest visitor. Most tourists are very well behaved (except that nothing, apparently, will stop them walking on the edges of the grass: it seems to be a human passion to have turf underfoot, even when a gravel path is clear). They come to Cambridge, with luck on a fine spring or summer day, whether singly or in battalions, and move steadily round the Backs, savouring the green, and the flowers, and the river, the charms of ancient brick and stone, and of young people in punts. As summer wears on, they venture more and more into punts themselves. At King's and Trinity, but not, this year, at John's, since the area has yet to be re-turfed, they sit on the river bank and sun themselves; the more energetic ones, with their cameras permanently unslung, are forever active with optical gadgetry, carefully selecting the most picturesque angles, and patiently waiting for the moment when they can get a clear picture, uninterrupted by passers-by. The little children, of course, have to be restrained from running onto the inviting lawns: but they usually are. And the sight of twenty or thirty more or less earnest faces grouped round a guide as he recounts the history of the college and its building inspires a respect for their love of information and a hope that the information is correct.

But those earnest faces have bodies attached to them; and the bodies get in the way. This needs no underlining; on a fine summer day the inhabitants of the College regularly find the Bridge of Sighs blocked against them. (Perhaps we should change its name to something less romantic: say, Indigestion Bridge.) Nor does the matter stop there, for noise, even of well-behaved people is, if they come in their thousands, enormous. So, work and privacy suffer—sometimes unbearably. Several Fellows still speak with anguish and rage of the activities of a party of French schoolboys two summers ago. Their instinct for hullabaloo seems to have been natural, unforced, and overwhelming.

* The Provost.

Perhaps they were exceptional. Perhaps Johnians are not persecuted like the young Kingsmen, who complain that foreigners keep trying to take photographs of them. But if noise and crowding continue to increase, the pressure to Do Something will soon be irresistible.

What should that something be? The obvious remedy is to take a leaf from Oxford's book, and admit tourists only in the afternoon. Probably that is what will eventually have to be done. But it is no good blinking the difficulties this will create. Oxford colleges are scattered over the town; none of them is a short cut from anywhere to anywhere else. But if King's, Clare, Trinity and John's are closed, for most of the day, to all but their members and persons with *bona fide* errands in their grounds, the traffic over Garrett Hostel Bridge and down Trinity Lane is going to increase enormously. Also, the din, the crowding, the inconvenience, during the tourist hours, will go up: the peace of the mornings will be dearly bought if the afternoons become intolerable. (One way of avoiding that is the suggestion that tourists should be allowed in between 8 and 11 a.m. only: the half-asleep residents would scarcely notice them so early in the day.) And it is possible that yet other nuisances would appear. In a college like John's, for one thing, vigilant patrolling would be necessary to protect the gates onto Queens' Road; unless those gates were kept locked—which would be exceedingly inconvenient for undergraduates. These, however, might be issued with keys: it is hard to see how access to the Cripps Building can be made difficult, and an edifice more open to surreptitious entrance after hours will be hard to find. Climbing in is probably about to become a more popular sport than ever—but that is another story.

One school of thought holds that the College would be within its rights to exclude tourists almost entirely; another, that it has no right to exclude them at all. It is hard to see how either attitude can be sustained in view of the facts. The colleges of Cambridge are, indirectly, heavily subsidised by the public purse; they were not built by their present occupants, who are lucky to live in them; we all enjoy visiting beautiful buildings when we travel. For these reasons (and perhaps a fourth: Britain makes a lot of money out of foreign tourists, and hopes to make more) we can scarcely frustrate the natural wish to come and admire these splendid works of the past. On the other hand, the colleges were not built merely for rubbernecking: they are places of education, religion, learning and research, and it would be a pointless piece of masochism to allow these pursuits seriously to be interfered with by holiday-makers: unless we are to agree that our fathers made a mistake in building beautiful buildings for us

(since such monuments are necessary only to the tourist) and that therefore we should decamp to a collection of nissen huts in a damp field near a goods yard.

But who likes reducing the sum of human happiness? The tourists, in moderation, improve the scenery, so real, innocent, and visible is their pleasure in being in Cambridge. Might it not be possible rather to circumvent the tourist agencies that make so much money out of Cambridge University and give so little in return? Some years ago Peterhouse discovered that the big coaches rolling in from London were stopping at this, the first college they came to, and letting their women passengers out to use the ladies' lavatory which Peterhouse provides, like John's for its female visitors. A queue became a permanent feature of the college courts, until the lavatory door was finally locked against the interlopers.

It is the tourist agencies that are unscrupulous enough to play this sort of trick, and that stimulate the unmanageable increase in the number of our visitors. Perhaps if Cambridge took a hint from certain roadhouses, and added to its notice-boards the simple message, NO COACHES, the problem would solve itself.

CORRECTION

In our last issue the names of the Editorial Committee were given incorrectly. Those responsible for *Eagle* 265 were: Mr BROGAN (*Senior Editor*), Mr HINSLEY (*Treasurer*), L. M. R. PAINE (*Junior Editor*), D. BROAD and W. K. KUMAR.

An EAGLE Crusade!!

WE take our editorial duties seriously.

Among them is that of being the Big Johnian Booster.

It is our duty to boost John's because we are the Johnian periodical.

We believe this, and we act upon it. If we do not boost John's, who will? Answer: a paid firm of public relations.

We do it for free, being part of the free British Press.

Let others point the finger of scorn. They languish under totalitarian yokes. They know not freedom. We do.

We also know which side our bread is buttered.

How unlike totalitarian régimes, where all they know is fear, hunger, and the knock in the night.

We therefore feel free to congratulate John's on the biggest building of its kind, the finest, the newest. Honour to the men whose courage, vision, and money made it possible.

Can Russia show us a better advertisement for its way of life? Do its power stations and underground railways rival the Johnian achievement?

Of course not.

But a free press must feel free to criticise. And we at *The Eagle* are entirely free, like our readers (except in respect of their compulsory subscription to the magazine).

We therefore Denounce. Who? The purblind bureaucrats who have not seen what we see.

From the roof of Cripps Building we see it in our minds' eye. What?

*An open-air swimming pool in the garden of Merton House.
Let Johnians bathe!*

THE EAGLE

Such is the cry of the latest *Eagle* crusade!

Already we anticipate the exhilarating trample of numerous feet running to our support.

Democracy has never failed yet, nor will it fail now.

Up, fainthearts!

PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

“The Eagle” will award a prize of a May Ball ticket, supper included, and one bottle of champagne, to the competitor who, in the opinion of the judges, submits the best photograph of a pretty girl suitable for publication in the May Week issue of “The Eagle”. The photograph, of course, to be the competitor’s own work; and all entries to be submitted to the Junior Editor by March 13th. The Editorial Committee will be sole judges of the entries. Unsuccessful entries will be returned (with a regretful sigh) if requested.

Kindly Chew These Straws

AN editorial is a useful thing with which to open a magazine, if only to make sure that those who always skip the first article won't skip anything important. Some people, of course (perhaps most people) always read it; and this again has its advantages for an editor. He can address his readers directly in the editorial, as nowhere else: there is an automatic sense of the vocative. Too often the subsequent articles (even in periodicals with more pretensions than *The Eagle*) read as if they were meant to be overheard. Editorials should, and almost invariably do, read as if they were meant to be listened to. It is a distinction not without importance.

However, on this occasion we present, not an editorial, but editorial notes. No one topic presented itself as of such overriding interest or amusement as to warrant exposition in a two or three page article. On the other hand, several themes demanded treatment of some kind; themes that, for good or ill, were unsuitable for the dignified terseness of the College Notes. Life in John's is not quite so exciting as life in, say, 10 Downing Street; but of late it has not been wholly uneventful. Follow some comments on some of these events.

One of them, of course, demands to be noticed at length: the completion of the Cripps Building. Since that happy event members of the College have exhibited something of the joyousness of a man who has become a father for the first time. The greater glory, of course, belongs to the new mother (in our case, to the Cripps family and Messrs Powell and Moya); but there would have been no baby but for him, and it was his excellent sense, good luck, or palpable virtue that won him his wife in the first place. It is the same with the College, but for whose worth, needs and wants neither benefactor nor building would have

appeared. Well may John's rejoice, and *The Eagle* join the chorus. It is happy to mark the occasion by printing an article on the geology of the building, as it were: the stone of which it is made.

News Item: as our cover shows, the Photographic Competition was a success, not least with the Editorial Committee. One of its members was careful to turn up for the judging, but unaccountably forgot to arrive the following week to prepare the other contents of the magazine for the printer. The winner (for those who don't read lists of contents) was Mr Gavin Shaw.

Old Johnians will not be surprised to learn that the present generation doesn't like the food served in Hall, or its cost. Some traditions are too precious to be tampered with. But there are undergraduates who disagree. Early this term the cheerful tranquillity of High Table was disturbed by the sound of clapping as soon as the grace was finished. Glancing down the Hall one saw about twenty gowned forms disappearing through the doors, followed by the ironical applause of the hundred or so remaining young diners. As a demonstration it must be reckoned a failure; the more so as rumour says that most of the brave boycotters had prudently had dinner at Second Hall before walking out of Third. It put one down in mind of California, where it is now possible to hire demonstrators and picketers if you don't feel like going on the streets yourself. There really is nothing in life so nice as eating your cake and spurning it too.

A more valuable undergraduate criticism of the College may be expected to emerge from the answers to the questionnaire circulated by the JCR committee. Not all the questions seem well-judged ("Do you take a genuine pride in the College choir?"); but on the whole there can be little doubt that, since the response was quite heavy, we shall all learn something from the results when they have been processed. It had been hoped to include an article on these results in the current issue of *The Eagle*, but that has not, after all, proved possible. So we will carry it in the January, 1968 issue, along with such comment as seems appropriate. In the meantime the Dean of Chapel offers some reflections on related themes, and the Master enlarges on College government, for those who feel they don't understand it.

The Eagle is still keeping up the pressure for an open-air swimming-pool on the Backs. Write to your M.P. and win his support for this exciting project.

Readers of *Varsity* were amused to read last term that, opinion of that newspaper, there had been a collapse in the morale of Johnsmen. No serious evidence for this contention was ever put forward, and in fact no one in the College believed it. Well, *Varsity's* inventions have seldom done anyone any harm. But it was rather less than amusing to discover, after reading a few more stories of a similar nature, from internal evidence, that one of *Varsity's* informants was animated by a grudge against the Dean Discipline, Mr Bambrough. It is not too much to say that *Varsity* let itself be used as a weapon in a campaign of calumny and misrepresentation. Mr Bambrough can look after himself, of course. But I can think of no reason why I should not advertise my contempt for this untruthful and cowardly attack. If our base little friend had to put his name to his slanders, he would not dare make them. I hope that his fellow Johnians understand that his is not the way t

HUGH BROGAN.

Questions and Answers

STUDIOUS readers of *The Eagle* (there are no others) will note that the present issue contains an unusually large amount of material directly bearing on Johnian life, past, present, and to come. The editors can take none of the credit for this consistency: it must go to our contributors, and to the coincidence which made so many of them sail on the same tack. But it is a happy accident, for there is in the air a sense of change, of important decisions to be made about the life and work of the College, and it may be valuable that the present issue of *The Eagle* offers some illustration of how varied that life and work are. It is a time for thought about the nature and purpose of a collegiate community, and almost any information may prove useful to the thinkers, even if it is about what the eighteenth century would undoubtedly have called the spiny denizens of the College grounds.

Change being the very nature of things, all wise governments will seek to encourage it: not merely to channel it, but to originate it. The government of the College is at the moment confronted with various opportunities for fruitful change, some of them arising from the fact that the biggest change in the recent past, the coming of the Cripps Building, is now complete. The almost simultaneous completion of the restoration work on the older College buildings reinforces the likelihood that energies and funds will now become available for accomplishing change in other directions. It is worth reporting that the College Council has set up a committee to look into the possibilities.

Another reason for supposing that change is coming is the rage for questionnaires that swept through the College in the last academic year (1966-1967). *The Eagle* itself has succumbed to the vogue: we hope that as many of our resident subscribers as possible will fill in the form we are sending them. More important was the Co-Education Questionnaire, the results of

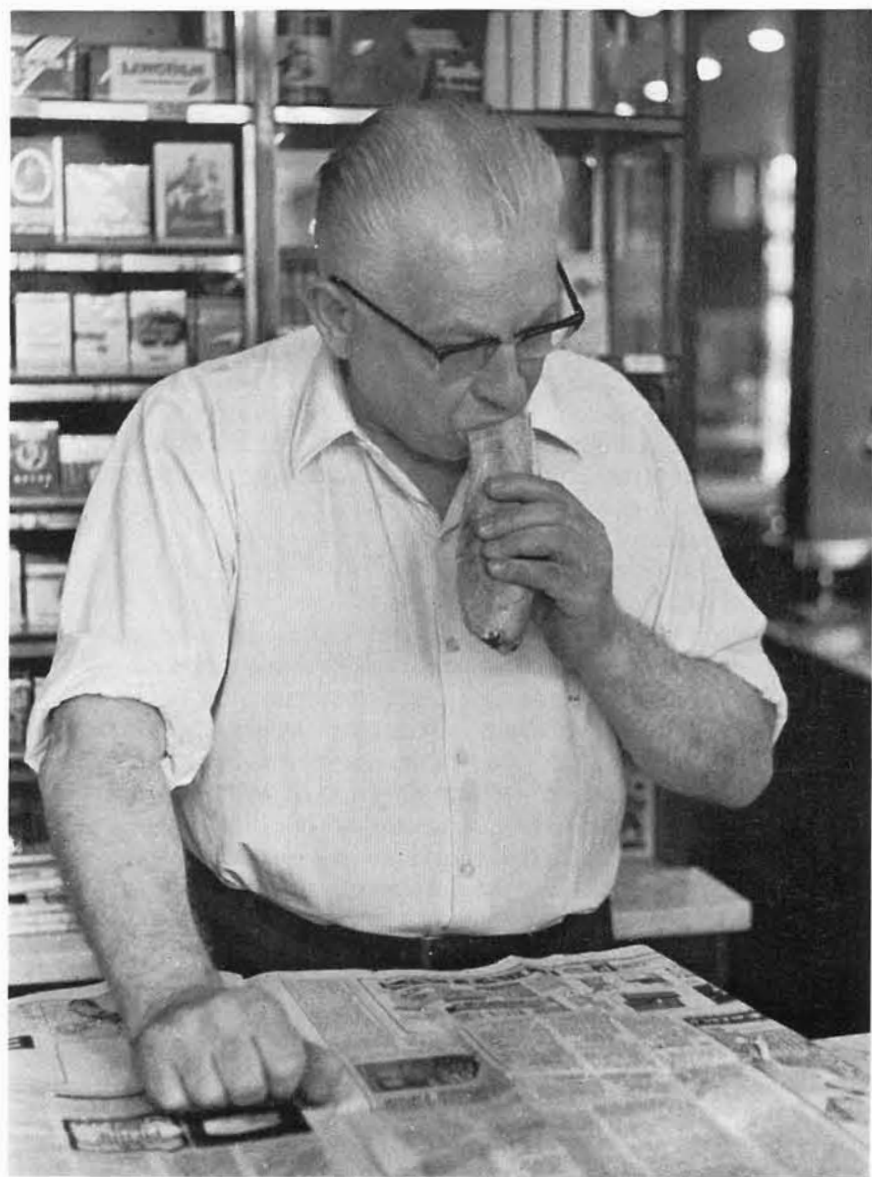
which were published in our last issue: it will be remembered that 63% of the 289 junior members who replied were in favour of the proposal that John's accept women undergraduates. More important still was the JCR questionnaire, distributed in February, which covered a very wide range of College topics, and had a very high response: more than 80% of the undergraduates replied. The results have since been closely analysed by Mr M. J. Field, a research student in mathematics, Secretary to the JCR Committee. His report makes fascinating reading, and certainly suggests the desirability of some measure of change—though it should at once be added that, on the whole, the picture of College opinion which emerges is a gratifying one.

It was at first hoped that *The Eagle* could print the full text, either of the questionnaire or of the final report; but, all other considerations apart, both courses were ruled out by the great length of the documents. Instead, we offer a digest of the questionnaire, for those who have not seen the original. We follow the digest with a discussion of what seem to be the survey's main lessons as revealed by Mr Field's analysis. Some editorial comment seemed desirable, if only to the editors; but in spite of the difficulty of sustaining a discussion from issue to issue of a magazine that appears only twice a year, it should be possible, and is patently much more desirable, to print comments on the report by readers—if only readers will write them. So will everyone with views on change in John's feel free, if he or she chooses (*The Eagle* is of the opinion that many Johnians are married) to set down and send in any thoughts that might be worth publishing? *The Eagle*, of course, is constantly trying to jog people into writing for it; but in the present case it feels even more strongly than usual that everyone might benefit if its efforts were to prove successful.

The Power of The Press

VETERAN readers of *The Eagle* will suspect a certain savage irony in the title of this editorial; nor will they be wrong. The copies of the last issue that were sent out to the hundreds of junior members of the College included a questionnaire about the magazine: 54 specimens were filled up and returned. The long and interesting article on the JCR questionnaire ended with an invitation for comments from readers: not one was received. And, mortification on mortification, when the completed questionnaires were examined, it emerged that 40 of the respondents believed that *The Eagle* played no significant part in College life. (We comforted ourselves with the reflection that, as one respondent pointed out, this was 'not a proper question'—it was far too ambiguous.) These results might be interpreted as a vote of no-confidence in the present editorial board, were they at all surprising. But in fact *The Eagle* has always had to struggle against the passivity, the indifference of its subscribers; and all College activities are those of minorities. What percentage of Johnians go to Chapel? How many row? It's all of a piece. The only problem is, what do the majority do with their time? The editors of *The Eagle* are not discouraged by the results of their questionnaire; not even much saddened. They do, however, feel even more weary and hopeless than usual as they make the old, old point: that a College magazine is only as good as the College cares to make it, and until more of the undoubted talent in the place chooses to make itself available, *The Eagle* cannot greatly improve.

The last remark should not, by the way, be taken as an admission of inadequacy. We are all geniuses on *The Eagle*, as the brilliant pages we produce convincingly demonstrate. But we cannot do more than our best, in the time available to us. Those who want more must find us new recruits. They would be welcome. And any who, reading these lines, are moved to offer their services, will be welcomed with three times three and the fatted calf.



Situation Vacated

IN what concerns the College, by far the most important occurrence since our last issue has been the announcement of the Master's intention to retire on 1st October 1969. All Johnians will deeply regret to learn that Mr Boys Smith feels that he can no longer carry the full load of his demanding post, and honour his refusal to continue, as it were, on a part-time basis. This is not the moment in which to attempt an appraisal of this eventful reign, but it is never too soon (or too late) to wish a friend well, and *The Eagle* knows that it speaks for all members of the College in hoping that the Master and Mrs Boys Smith will have a long and happy retirement.

New Year Greetings

So there we were about to slip into bed and our girl friend like any other well balanced mature progressive editorialist with Che Guevera tattooed on his left buttock and an "I love Rosa Luxembourg" sash swathed across his ample chest, when we realised we didn't have a thing to write about we pondered . . . "To let the universities disintegrate would no doubt seem rather a shame to some, a relief to most, and a sickening confirmation to anyone who thinks that we might as well give up and drop a nuclear bomb, or concentrate all our energies on getting the other man's wife and job or listen to the still small voice of calm or all jump into bed with one another and hope that things will turn out better when evolution has had a second chance . . ." these ponderings were leading nowhere when there was Mr Ronald Bell, Q.C., M.P., (God bless him) staring at us from the floor, snuggled into a couple of columns of *The Times*, cheerfully spreading good will to all men even before Advent had arrived.

"If we ever thought we needed 42 universities, do we still think so, when it has become painfully clear that a sufficient number of worthy university teachers does not exist, that some of these universities are disastrously overloaded in social studies and starved of students of harder disciplines and that an exaggerated dislocation is caused by the presence of a minority scarcely worthy of university education?" (Ronald Bell, Q.C., M.P.)

Well nearly all men; Mr Bell doesn't seem to care for students too much. And his views chime with those of a large section of the community who are disenchanted with a generation which allegedly abuses the educational opportunities provided at public and private expense, and apparently risks careers for slogans. If we may believe our newspapers—and we must add that our confidence in the integrity of the gentleman of the press remains unshaken by innumerable articles so wittily entitled "Revolting Students"—we must assume certain characteristics and failings to be common among our fellow students.

(Our readers are invited to check the following against their analyst's results, and spot both the ball and the deliberate mistake.)

"I wear kinky clothes, drop paving stones on policemen at point duty, expound a suspect morality, have long hair, am totally unfit to accept the responsibilities of MANHOOD, frequently burn churches and upturn double-decker buses, read Brecht in the bath, am permanently High, cannot recite anything by John Betjeman, am 90% perverted (the other 10% remains to be analysed) and cannot for the life of me remember when Jessie Matthews made her last film."

No; it won't do. Easy generalizations may sustain the press in its time of need, but they can have little relevance to a reasonable consideration of our predicament. We are not fools; abusive attacks on juvenile aberrations can only reflect on the mentality of the attackers. So while we're at it, we might as well eliminate a couple more sticks of lumber which merely distort the problem;

1. The violent revolutionary Left, whose incoherence and incompetence are happily, but none too easily, disregarded.
2. The jovial Right, whose intellectualized banalities are either a) unintelligible b) false c) both. (Our thanks to Bentham.)

The Student doth protest, and to many, he doth protest too much. We must thank Mr Bell for mentioning the comforting fact to which we all scurry at the first scent of passionate criticism—the disruptive element in university life is a minority. Simultaneously, and probably unwittingly, he suggests two questions—we add the answers.

The Questions

- 1) Who are the minority? What do they stand for?
- 2) What are the other students doing with their time, and what do they stand for?

The Answers

- 1) The activist group are noisy and disruptive. They flourish in an atmosphere of sparkling press coverage, and at the same time bear the brunt of public criticism. They concern themselves with matters obviously outside their control, they notice the minor ills of society from Vietnam to Biafra to Czechoslovakia, from poverty to disease to social injustice. Absurdly they do not recognise that their elders and betters have both the experience and the ability to solve contemporary problems, as the consistency of results in the post-war period proves. Current evidence suggests they are actually prepared to take to the streets when necessary.
- 2) Some of us don't like this—the continual emphasis on minority activities, damaging our reputation. But though attention has been drawn to the activities of this minority, nobody has very seriously enquired as to what the rest are up to. We cannot pretend that they're all scrambling round the U.L., slaving at social work, or helping old age pensioners to chop wood and get across the road. To Mr Bell and the British taxpayer, who think that too many students waste their own valuable time and the taxpayer's even more valuable money exposing their consciences to public inspection and contempt, I can offer a reassurance. The traditional Cambridge still flourishes—the Cambridge where manhood is measured by boats and goal posts alone, where social acceptability is the ability to get drunk, start a fight and be sick, and where the sole end of university education is held to be an appointment to a job in insurance.

Conclusion: Things haven't changed much.

Why do the minority win the slanders of public abuse? The reason is fast becoming obvious—it is jealousy. The minority are condemned not because of the deplorable and saddening surface of violence, but because of their ability to think, to develop ideas which can solve problems and not merely create new ones. The style is one of despair, but the message is one of hope. Surely our elders should only worry when we fail to see the bestiality and evil about us, the by-products of our inheritance—when we can only resort to decrying those who have a commitment.

“The core of rebellion . . .” wrote Burke, in considerable rage, “are the universities.”—to breed sedition is merely undergraduate high spirits, to rechannel that vitality to produce a new philosophy, a new attitude and a new policy is what we’re here for. There must always be angry, or at any rate, passionate young men.

So here’s to you Mr Bell, and a Happy New Year to yourself and Sir Leslie O’Brien as you scamper off to “grapple with realities instead of ideals” (O’Brien in St Paul’s). It’s a good swap—ideals for the rigid and commonplace convictions of a prosperous middle age.

S. P. Q. R.

Trying not to Fall

LISTENING across a taut wire
You say nothing, but prod
At my words with your eyes
To dislodge a meaning
As I wobble towards you,

While down there, air away,
There is another world
I think I might like more
Than this one where I hover
And rock in mid-sentence

From crucifix arms and
Stare blind as a spotlight
Till my unicycle words
Have passed the touching-test
Of your hair to reach your ears,

Then, balanced before your voice,
I stall, and topple back-
Wards headlong to listen
To you, wanting to fall
Because there is no net.

PETE ATKIN

A Good And Desirable Thing?

THE latter part of John Crook's thought-provoking sermon for the Commemoration of Benefactors concerned itself with the survival of the College as a corporate entity.

"There is a perfectly real chance that these institutions may be quite soon, if not suppressed, at any rate changed beyond our capacity to recognise them. And unless they can justify themselves in the eyes of society and be clearly seen to be by and large a good and desirable thing, then disappear they will into the pages of history along with the Greek city-state and the steam locomotive. And the onus, the grave onus, is on us."

The College, in short, must justify its existence, must be prepared to meet criticism—criticism of two kinds. The first is that which is brought to bear from outside the university and which is derived from direct comparisons with other academic systems. The co-educational ants at present in our pants are one example of inevitable change to which the university must quickly adapt itself. The second kind of criticism is that which comes from within. It has a more subtle nature and acts more gradually. Yet this seemingly less substantial agent of change is often just as potent as the rude blasts from the outside world.

Take evening Hall in College for instance. This is one of the most fundamental activities in the life of a corporate society. The validity of the College depends on the success of such activities. Unhappily it is likely that if undergraduates were able to sign out and reclaim the nine shillings or so which is spent on them each evening then formal Hall would cease to exist. So, while appreciating the many complex problems which face the Steward in the practical execution of his duties, the College owes it to itself to improve the system to the satisfaction of the majority of undergraduates. The fact that generations of Johnians have already spent their time in Cambridge eating primitive meals in primitive conditions does not justify the system. Dining in Hall has a far greater significance than merely providing the opportunity for gastronomic indulgence, but one hopes for that as well, and if it is completely absent then formality as well as the food takes on the attributes of a proverbial dead horse.

Community spirit is a delicate plant and Hall is not the only place where it has been wilting. At a more prosaic and particular level the College Music Society has either become amazingly secretive or has ceased functioning altogether. Gone are the days of the Smoking Concert and the unforgettable "Music to Forget" evenings, which required so little in the way of organisation and yet provided so much satisfaction for audiences and musicians alike. And how many members of the College know that the choir exists let alone have heard it perform? It is remarkable and sad that, though the choir is frequently aired in Wales or North of the Trent, it is so rarely heard giving concert performances in Cambridge.

Another matter which deserves mention concerns the School of Pythagoras and its use by College societies, in particular the Lady Margaret Players. The College has spent a great deal of money renovating this building and naturally it is proud of the addition to its facilities. The assembly room in the undercroft and more significantly the new theatre in the main hall are potentially of great importance for developing and expanding the corporate life of the College. But though the

rebuilding has created almost as many theatrical problems as it has solved these pale before the attitude of the College authorities who have both refused any financial aid to the Players and have proved obstructive in the administration of the building. Inevitably a dramatic society is a shop window for College achievement. And unless more than one of the senior members are wholehearted in encouragement of such a venture the antagonism could increase fragmentation of our community.

These are not random allegations. They have been carefully assembled to suggest one respect in which (so at least its junior members think) the College is wanting: one area for an improvement which, by enhancing the viability of our society in our own eyes, would better enable us to justify it before the eyes of others. They that have ears to hear, etc.

GRAFFITI

Communication

The Editors, *The Eagle*

29th January, 1969

Gentlemen,

In these days when students the world over are clamouring for a substantial share in the control of University administration and teaching, it may be of interest to note that there have been occasions in the past when the boot was on the other foot.

The Oxford historian, H. A. L. Fisher, in his "History of Europe" (1936) stated that the University of Bologna, which in the 12th century became pre-eminent as a law school, was managed at first by a guild of students who hired the teachers, though they by no means always remembered to pay them their wages. He then quoted Hastings Rashdall, the great authority on European Universities, as follows:—

"The professor was fined if he was a minute late for lectures; if he went beyond the time for closing; if he skipped a difficult passage or failed to get through in a given time the portion of the law texts provided by the university. A committee of students—the *denunciatores doctorum*—watched over his conduct and kept the rectors informed of his irregularities. If the doctor wanted to be married, a single day of absence was graciously allowed him, but no honeymoon."

Fisher went on to say:—"From this iron and niggardly discipline the University was eventually rescued by the intervention of the City. Salaried chairs were established for professors chosen by the City, who being regularly and sufficiently paid came in time to monopolise the teaching."

Yours faithfully,

C. W. GUILLEBAUD
St John's College, Cambridge