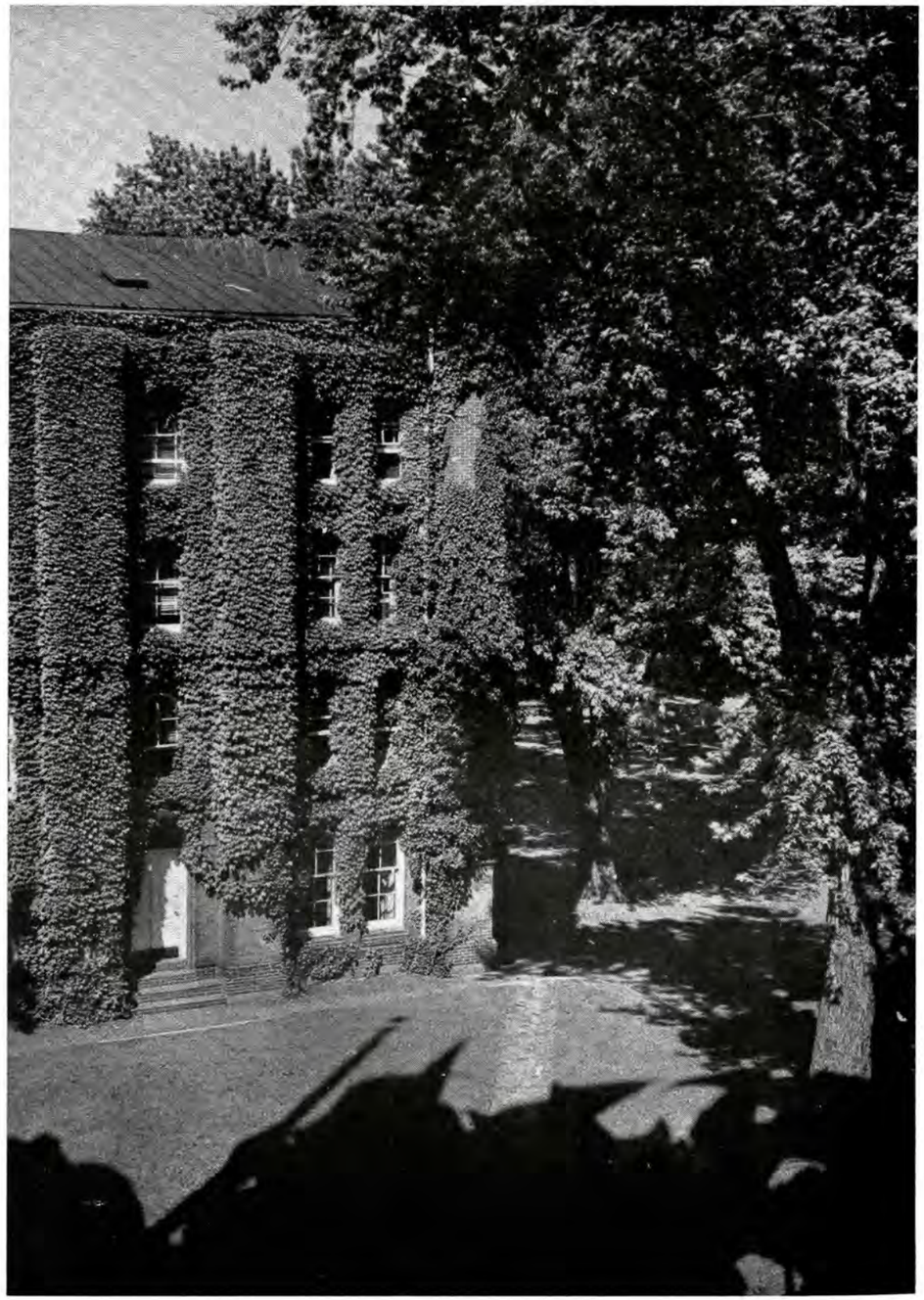
ST. JOHN'S *1951-53*

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE

ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND



ST. JOHN'S *1951-53*

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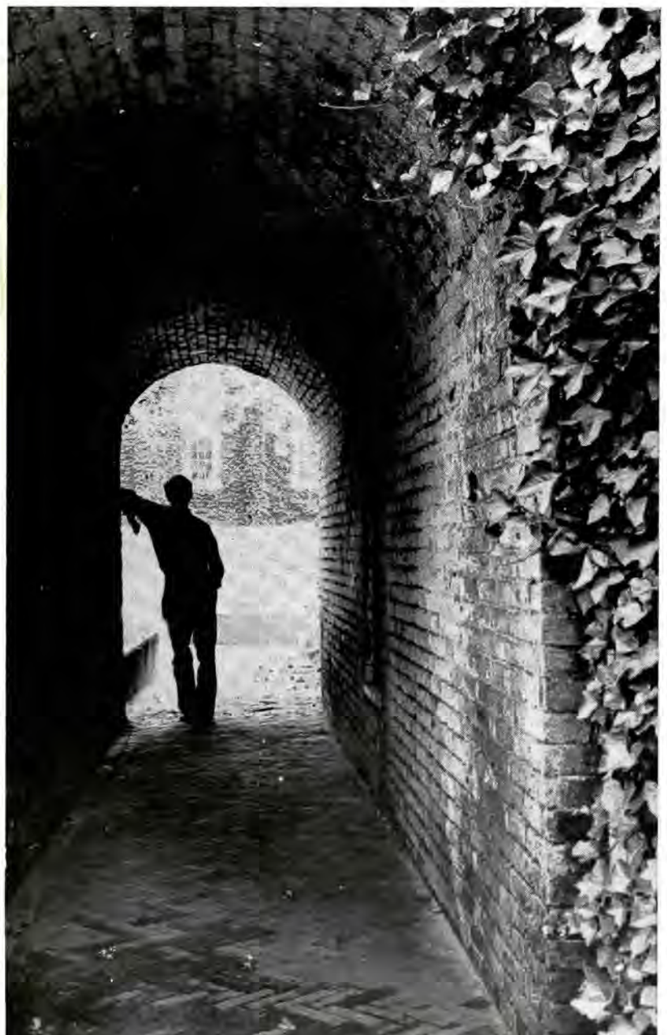
BY WAY OF INTRODUCTION

THIS publication is not a St. John's Yearbook in the usual sense, as defined by the annuals bearing that title. A St. John's Yearbook is something that is planned ahead of time and matures slowly during a whole academic year or more, and leisurely appears in its completed form generally a year later than the one to which it belongs. But "St. John's 1951-1953" is diffierent; it is an afterthought, a last minute Bright Idea.



It all started when the official demise of the 1952 Yearbook was proclaimed late last May. While others simply mourned the passing-away of a highly useful endeavor, it occurred to one of us that there really should have been a Yearbook, and that it was not too late to print something, a modest pamphlet perhaps, but in any case some publication that would represent the two years past. And suddenly that excitement and eagerness that had so long been missing from the College took hold of a number of us, and the modest pamphlet became in conception an ambitious document that would capture the essence of St. John's as it had been for these years. But at this point it might be well to describe in general terms the conditions that make this book and the era it covers so unique.

The last two years were singularly critical ones for St. John's. Most notably they were years of change. Of course the College has always been changing, as it must to stay alive, but never since the introduction of the New Program has it seemed to change so drastically. Co-education and its consequences, accreditation, financial crises and their resolution —all these are signposts along a road that those who govern and administer the college had clearly elected to take.

Students reacted to the change to the extent it affected them. Some of us, who had been here a little longer than others, were at first apprehensive, fearing that the college they cherished and loved was being menaced by something foreign and inimical. The anxiety grew in many cases into a firm conviction that the change was a wholly disastrous one, that the true St. John's as they conceived it was being betrayed and would soon disappear. Others spoke in terms of historical cycles, of inevitable old age and dissolution. Relative newcomers could be less dogmatic; while realizing that they were a part of the change, whatever it was, many caught the prevailing contagion and began to speak also of subversion, decline and fall.

The apprehension was accompanied by a coincident process of communal introversion, with its result a heightened self-consciousness. Disturbed by the change and by the decisions that were required of us, we began to examine and challenge the basic premises upon which education and the idea of the community of learning are built. This should have, and no doubt did, clear up some of the reasons behind conflcting motives and pronouncements. But the talk continued, and as it did became shriller and less considered. The same ground was covered over and over at panel discussions, forums, polity meetings, in the coffee-shop; everywhere you found people talking, they were probably talking about what St. John's was coming to. The issues became painfully clear, and the groups of opinion fairly well distinguished. But strangely enough the more that was said, the less insight there seemed to be. The most typical attitude was either of theoretical rebellion, or disgusted resignation. All of which served to indicate that the introversion had gone on too long, that it was sapping our strength and diverting our attention and energy from more immediately relevant and important matters.

An example of the confused thinking that prevailed is reflected in the growth of the familiar Golden-Age-at-St. John's story into an obsession that affected us all to some extent. The idea of a period of past perfection apparently gave a credibility and frame of reference to our feelings of dismay and anger at what was happening. What was forgotten was that our Golden Age, like all others, whether it was mythical reality or historical actuality, and the evidence is entirely against the latter possibility, is irrevocably part of the remote past. And the past is definitely where it belongs. To identify the ideal expressed in the Golden Age story with any specific time can be shown to be fallacious. But further to assume that degeneration can be halted and the ideal realized by attempting to reconstruct and reduplicate the external conditions of a particular period is monstrous and greatly in error. Perhaps none of us was so naive as to believe in this obvious and oversimplified delusion, but a similar assumption was apparently lying beneath a good deal of what was said and thought during these years.

Such was the atmosphere in which this book came into being. All of us who worked on it had on our minds a question that we tried to answer with some degree of finality: "If there has been a change at St. John's exactly what has changed and how, and more significantly, what remains unchanged?" To answer a question like this required long and careful research, which took the form of conversations with the faculty, alumni, and others who know the College well, reading yearbooks of the past, and recalling to memory the half-forgotten but important events and statements

of the two years. Finally, it took painful and honest self-searching, and the testing and revision of our own private convictions. One hopes that somehow the barrier of too intense personal involvement was crossed, and a genuine balance and perspective was arrived at.

Unfortunately, our original enthusiasm necessarily had to be compromised and reduced somewhat; a long hot summer took care of that. Although it gave us time for contemplation and critical detachment, some of the issues involved began to seem pretty remote. And because of the hurried conception of the book, its unity and excellence have undoubtedly suffered. The photographic files we inherited were both imperfect and uncomprehensive. The difficulties of editing by mail account for some of the unintended duplication, redundancy and contradiction among the articles. Perhaps most regrettable is the absence of a discussion of the role of athletics during this period, or an account of the change that occurs within the individual student during his four years here. But despite its various shortcoming, we regard the publication of "St. John's 1951-1953" as an extraordinary worthwhile undertaking and hope that it is read seriously and thoroughly. In our attempts to state what was important at St. John's during these two years and to separate the temporal from the relatively timeless, we must present private opinions that are at least not capricious, but are founded upon research and contemplation. The least we can hope for is that these opinions will seem provocative and worth considering and arguing about; if this is the case, then our efforts will have been rewarded and the publication of this book justified.

REASON AND GOOD WILL

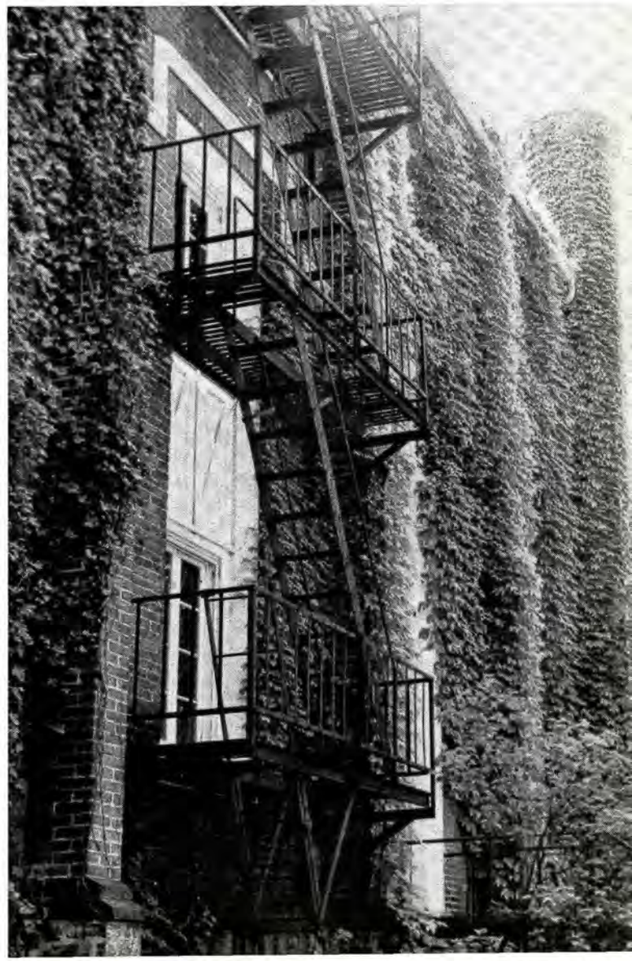
THIS article will distinguish between true respectability, which concerns itself with respect and "respectability", which seeks indiscriminate approval. It will also attempt to show how these concepts apply to St. John's and to the Administration's actions in presenting the College to the outer world.

St. John's will be truly respectable when the outside world understands and appreciates its real importance and integrity. St. John's is "respectable" when the world can force it to conform to mundane preconceived notions of what a college should be. In seeking respectability, the Administration is faced with the problem of presenting the College in a way that is not false and yet persuades. It must discover a valid rhetoric for St. John's, one that will not misrepresent.

For often stated though less often understood reasons, the Administration wishes to continue the existence of the College. A difficulty lies in establishing what it is they wish to preserve. Extant definitions (community of learning . . . making free men out of children with books and balances . . . etc.) are variously understood even by St. Johnnies. This presents the obvious difficulty of conveying the nature of St. John's to strangers to the program.

In order to exist as a functioning plant, St. John's must have both money and students. No one, though, can be expected to contribute his money or four years of his life to this "revolutionary" return to non-specialized education unless his understanding of the College evokes his respect. On the other hand, many students feel that the College must not get its daily bread from people who have no idea of the REAL nature of St. John's.

The Administration must, of course, constantly revise and improve the Program in its attempt to make it more unified. It must be careful not to jeopardize the original aims of the College. But it must also supply tutors, food, buildings, and all sorts of equipment so that it need not be hampered by mechanical obstructions. A freshman class of appropriate size is also a sine qua non to the futherance of this kind of learning.



This spring, at long last, St. John's was accredited by the Eastern Seaboard College Accreditation Committee. The Committee on its latest visit, spent a week on campus and its sub-committees put tentacles out everywhere. The report contained some valid criticism, but it also contained some basic misunderstandings of the place of the books on the program. It attempted to classify the truth found in books as "old" as the Platonic dialogues as primarily historical. The situation is grim when it can be said that the evaluators, who are ostensibly reliable critics of colleges, simply cannot understand that an idea must be judged by its value in our search for truth and not by its age or historical position. St. John's is almost unique in America. But if it were to become the last stronghold of the liberal arts, it should still be determined to defy anyone who could not explain himself reasonably and thoughtfully.

However, the College has not altered the Program simply because of a recommendation by the Accreditation Committee; and one hopes and believes that it would prefer to go unaccredited than to sacrifice any part of the program, if such a sacrifice could not be entirely justified in terms of the integrity of the whole. This would evidence an interest in true respectability. But, there is a tangible apprehensiveness around St. John's that the desire for "respectability" might actually blind the Administration to the true place of such an ornament as accreditation.

The justifiable magnitude of this apprehensiveness, which has been produced by the Administration and some tutors, is difficult to determine. Let us first consider what the Administration has done in the last two years. Specifically, it has attempted to raise money and to increase enrollment; and generally, it has attempted to plant seeds which will ripen into a benevolent public attitude about the liberal arts and St. John's.

Mr. Weigle, as everyone knows, has spent a great deal of time "on the road" in the last two years. He has made several extended trips and many short ones, speaking to business men, educators, foundations, and prospective students. He has tried not only to raise money, but to arouse immediate and long range interest in many quarters. He has concentrated on making Annapolis into a friend and benefactor, and is becoming well known around town as a "good mixer" and a "live wire".

The results have not been insignificant. Annapolis, which in past years contributed practically nothing, has responded generously to Mr. Weigle's recent appeals. Mr. Mellon's Old Dominion Foundation has taken the college out of debt for the first time and has provided a 5-year plan for the gradual emancipation of St. John's from any single source of income. Increased support from other quarters (other foundations, business men, friends, etc.,) is anticipated and is, in some cases, already realized. The Administration hopes to dwarf its present gains with large scale achievements in the future.

However, the financial aspect of administrative plans is more encouraging than the admissions. The entering freshmen class of 1953 is as small as any since the war. Mr. Hollywood, sometimes in conjunction with Mr. Klein and Mr. Weigle, has also traveled extensively. He has talked to high schools, visited prospective students, and helped to conduct a few seminars comprised of interested alumni and high school students in various cities. It looks as though the Admissions Office has organized itself along new and different channels. It is only now attempting a form of the "high pressure" procurement methods long used by most American colleges. The increasing scarcity of veterans under the G.I. Bill could partly explain the smaller freshman classes since the war, but the "humanities courses" at other colleges which are similar to but necessarily unlike our Program in some crucial respects, may also be taking a sizeable toll of our freshmen. It has also been suggested that apathetic and unsuccessful students have failed to interest friends and chance acquaintances to the point of applying. None of these theories is readily provable, so it is difficult at present to evaluate the admissions program.

If the Administration refuses to compromise either the non-Program aspects of a community of learning or the Program itself for the sake of fund raising and yet is able to keep the College on its feet, then part of the search for a good rhetoric is over. But the real test lies with the Admissions Office. Only when the Admissions succeeds in procuring (1) more students, and (2) students who find that the College was not misrepresented to them, will it have arrived at a solution to the problem of presenting the College respectably, in the strict sense.

The serious charge has been made against the Administration that it is now seeking "respectability". Since the only glimpse we get of its approach to the public is administrative action on the campus, we are forced into generalizing from a rather small number of particulars.

Rules of residence, which the Administration insisted on when women entered, were admittedly for appearances' sake. Everyone remembers discussing whether or not he would send his daughter here. The wisdom of fulfilling certain minimal requirements for the sake of parents is manifest. The appearance of order is essential and this presupposes an existing order. How much of this is a concession, and how much the real need of the community was, of course, the problem in many Rules-of-Residence Polity meetings. Many thought of rules simply as necessity imposed by the Administration, and in this way avoided facing the two-part problem of rules.

The Administration's reasons for rules were at first much more in terms of students' parents. But when the Administration finally took over and handed down the law, it gave as the final cause of the rules the internal welfare of the community. It spoke of minimal requirements for study and it implied a deprecation of the hypocrisy justified by students' distinctions between the "letter" and the "spirit" of the law.

But also among the local phenomena from which we must generalize are the sun-bathing-on-front-campus edict, the dining hall-dress laws, the short pants legislation, and an incipient law governing the dress of student aid job holders. These last measures do not seem to arise from any genuine Program need, though they may, perhaps, be justified by a need for formality in the community. However, many people wonder why short pants or any other pants are improper as long as the liberal arts are being pursued as fully as possible. St. John's is not a finishing school. If a visitor is shocked by local apparel, one of two things has happened. He has either found the student body devoid of any substance whatsoever and feels that, accomplishing nothing else, they might as well dress carefully and "show a little respect for visitors"; or he has failed to understand that respect is a frame of mind and not a well ironed shirt.

Most would agree that the community has not suffered overmuch from the various pressures about things sartorial and hygienic, but if these pressures continue to grow, they will cease to be irritating and will become stifling. There must be a true way to show ourselves to the world and still remain ourselves.

Because no one has a readily communicable understanding of the Program, our appeal must be rhetorical. Perhaps it is our love of learning and our competence in learning which can most impress outsiders and inspire them with confidence in us. Enthusiasm in itself does not communicate a particular idea, but in itself it is persuasive. It can make clear that there is some substance present, whatever it might be, and it can be impressive when it is accompanied by organization and rigorous procedure. Graduates of St. John's, who have, to various extents, discovered good lives, can proselytize by setting a good example.

The effects of the last two years' Administration have been both good and bad. There has been a healthy, realistic attempt to get the College on its own feet—a most desirable state. Concomitant with this effort has been an increase in the College's contacts and a more methodical spreading of the St. John's idea of education. The admissions program now under way will attempt to bring the College up to a more efficient size for the realization of its aims. The Administration is guilty, however, of tactless pressure on the community's everyday life, and this is not only distracting from the real aims of the College, but is of questionable value to either fund raising or procurement.

NECESSITY OR ANOMALY

I PROPOSE to consider what the Polity is and, in the light of this question, its action within the past two years and whether its continued existence is desirable.

The nature of the Polity is the prior question. The Polity Constitution will not be reprinted in its entirety within this article; at the same time, in view of history, the assumption that the student body is familiar with that document is admittedly not only dangerous but probably disastrous to the intent of this article. The Constitution itself, however, is not a simple answer. The Preamble states:

> St. John's College is a community united by common aims and common problems. Such problems presuppose no absolute division of responsibility. Therefore, Administration, Faculty and students can work together only so long as each deals with the other in a spirit of reason and good will. . . .

The college community resembles a city, the primary aim of which is learning, but which must concern itself, as all cities must, with the welfare and happiness (or unhappiness, as some would have it) of its citizens.

Wherever men are united by common aims, common problems exist also. Existing responsibilities which are not fully cognized and fulfilled, and the process of learning itself which consists of an "intimate interplay between theory and fact", constant revision of both ends and means, engender "common problems which presuppose no absolute division of responsibility". Most responsibilities can never fully nor even in large part be assumed by the Administration since, on one level or another, they must involve the student's abilities, activities or ethical agreement, which may fluctuate according to the individual and which, so long as they remain within certain immutable boundaries which determine the existence of the college, must be recognized as valid.

The existence of the Polity presupposes that the student must recognize, in

addition to academic responsibilities, political ones. The existence of the Polity presupposes further that a formal organ, composed of the student body, which independently considers common problems and submits opinion or legislation to the Administration and Faculty according to the dictates of certain prescribed limits in a manner consistent with the formulation of that body, is preferable to disorganized student participation and influence in such matters.

College meetings, in which students and Administration informally exchange views, are not enough. The Preamble continues:

> . . . The Polity is the instrument whereby the student body assumes its proper share of responsibility for the welfare of the community.

This implies responsibilities which are most properly to be fulfilled by the student body directly, which they are most capable of handling directly, and the nature of which demands formal action within a defined and regulated jurisdiction in order that most effective execution be achieved.

Exactly what defines the powers of the Polity, and therefore determines what these powers are, is not clear. Prevailing notions within the past two years of what the Polity is have been, for the most part, notoriously rash and ill-conceived, for just this reason. The action of the Administration in removing the Rules of Residence from the jurisdiction of the Polity was followed by much talk of invaded 'rights' and the question of whether the Polity, as such, still exists.

Article II of the Constitution states that the purposes of the Polity are:

> 1. to promote a consciousness in the student body of political and communal responsibilities to both the College and civic communities;
> 2. to discover and submit to the Administration student opinion on formal academic matters;
> 3. to exercise, jointly with the Administration, jurisdiction in matters concerning College property;
> 4. to maintain the reputation of the College, which is a joint concern of the entire community, but the responsibility for whose maintenance rests independently on each of its parts;
> 5. to act as the organ of self-government of the student body in all other matters, except in those areas over which the Administration reserves jurisdiction;
> 6. to sponsor and be responsible for student organizations which exist continuously, or collect and spend money.

Section 1 implies that in some appreciable measure the student body is not aware of its responsibilities. The rest of the stated purposes, together with the Preamble, place within the jurisdiction of the Polity a great deal of responsibility which they presuppose is within the ability of that body to fulfill.

Responsibilities, as such, are not persuaded by "rights"; necessity, by definition, is antithetical to personal desires. Section 5 is no less motivated by necessity, and therefore stern responsibility, than Sections 1 and 4. It is not the gift of manna, sudden license in the midst of dry matters.

The Administration contended that the Polity did not properly fulfill Section 5, that it lacked a requisite awareness of communal responsibility. In certain fundamental respects, it must be granted that the Administration, in view of its duties, has to do with the civic community in a way which fosters a perspective not easily available to students. This is right and proper. What have students to do with gossips on Maryland Avenue or potential fund-raisers in Kentucky? Nothing, obviously. But what the Polity has to do with such people seems to be a different matter. We have only the Administration's word for the fact that the time is critical, that in matters concerning reputation in light of conceptions of popular morality we must give way as we may not academically. We must accept that word.

But this is a rehashing of what has been said. This article, perhaps unfortunately, is in part a review. What is probably the most important remaining issue is how the Administration's action has affected the position of the Polity.

When the Administration felt that the Polity was ignoring its responsibility under Section 5, it intervened, removed the power, and legislated. That a spirit of 'reason and good will' was notably absent from the community at the time can be ascribed to all parties concerned and to the "critical" nature of the occasion. Again, some of the forms in which necessity presents itself are at times trials to one professing a reasonable life; it is ridiculous to treat these as affronts. That the Administration's action was a violation of the Constitution may be true, although there may be room for doubt in light of Section 1. This doubt, however, is not feasible if developed on grounds that the Polity is primarily a pedagogical device. A "violation" of the Constitution, in any case, is, when perpetrated by the Administration, nothing more illegal than a restriction of authority which was in the first place delegated by the Administration. The question

then becomes whether such delegation or restriction of delegation is just. In any case the action does not automatically render the Polity extinct.

The subsequent action of the student body was a greater violation of the Constitution than the action of the Administration under any interpretation. Attendance at Polity meetings reached a new low. When the meeting was called to consider disbanding the Polity, there were not enough people present to vote. If the main cause for absence was a general disbelief in the need for the Polity, it surpasses reason that the students would not meet to disband the Polity formally, which it, as a formal organ, deserved.

It is unclear that there is justification for such an attitude. The common problems still exist; a number of these are still under Polity jurisdiction. No matter how relatively "unimportant" they seem, they are responsibilities and not to be dismissed at whim. They are of such a nature as to render most capable fulfillment possible in the hands of an organized body. If the extent of that body seems out of proportion to its remaining duties, then it is the duty of the student body to make the necessary changes. It seems stupid to point out what are, after all, obvious and almost mechanical courses of action in the light of the year's happenings; however, such an account is justified.

All this discussion presupposes interest in the Polity in some form. The question remains—regardless of its power or importance within the community, should there be a Polity?

One approach to this question assumes that the student is not a man, a political man. A student is one who is engaged in the process of learning. Assuming that he has chosen this 'restricted' and qualified existence voluntarily, we may suppose that he knows something about what he is doing; the particular nature of this endeavor implies that he does not know. The kindest thing that one may say about a student is that he knows his ignorance and has embarked upon a course which he thinks will be justified in view of his lack.

What is a student of the liberal arts? It is a comparatively little thing for a man to admit ignorance of, and take up the study of, shoe-making or medicine or the history of Roman warfare. The bricklayer and the doctor are, essentially, men adorned with specialization. The concept of the liberal artist presupposes that a man should familiarize himself with the liberal, or broad and fundamental, faculties which make such specialization possible. In examining these faculties, which are taken for granted by more "advanced" individuals, he admits that he does not understand his actions, and therefore what he is.

At St. John's the student applies himself to this study by reading books which deal with themes universal to man's experience and speculation. Politics is one such theme. It is a fundamental characteristic of political life that those engaged in it must act AS IF they know.

Aristotle, Book 1.—Chapter 3 of the Ethics, speaks of the study of political science:

> Our discussion will be adequate if it has as much clearness as the subject matter admits of, for precision is not be sought for alike in all discussion, any more than in all the products of the crafts. Now, fine and just actions, which political science investigates, admit of much variety and fluctuation of opinion. . . .

Those questions which are concerned with the political, the ethical, and the just are closest to the passions and actions of men. These are not questions which can be entertained throughout with a mathematical clarity. These are most difficult and the difficulty increases if action is pending.

The philosopher, one who is concerned with knowing above all else, is ill-suited for legislation, for legislation is a matter of necessity and as such demands opinion rather than knowledge, which requires not only decision but decision within a certain time. Ultimate clarification must be sacrificed, and this the philosopher is not willing and perhaps not able to do. The student, as such, is comparable to the philosopher.

But the students at St. John's are merely being prepared for the examined way of life. They are not yet wise men who have decided that the study of politics is preferable to acting politically. Such an organization as the Polity, from a pedagogical point of view, might be called a practical lab in ethics.

It has been said that such political experience, in spite of, or more probably because of, what is gained, should be put aside until the academic curriculum has been completed. A most important part of that initial operation which St. John's performs is shock treatment, the role of the gadfly. In view of the assumption that a student can take only so much shock with profitable results, some things must be put aside for the present. On the other hand, the curriculum does not coddle. The result of overwhelming students with more material than they could possibly handle is that they apparently accomplish more than they would have under gentler circumstances. This entire approach (i.e. for and against political activity) is, however, most difficult to clarify and evaluate.

The question remains unanswered. In the light of the previously mentioned responsibilities, political action may not be a matter of choice. The necessity to act politically may be met with fully or evaded as much as possible. As the only real alternative, "evasion" would consist in committing ourselves to what has been up to the present a partial and benevolent tyranny. It would mean that political responsibilities are not to be formally cognized and require less conscious endeavor than that which has prevailed over the past two years. Thus political activity must be dependent on the decision of the individual student, who, being necessarily aware of such responsibilities, has to settle for himself how he is to meet them.

A FAMILIAR PROBLEM

UNDOUBTEDLY, the introduction of coeducation is the most important single event that has occurred at St. John's in recent years, as far as the College in its relationship to the critical world outside is concerned. The admission of women attracted that spotlight of journalistic and public scrutiny that has been directed at St. John's since the advent of the New Program. The not entirely flattering attention we received because of

coeducation and succeeding developments was a reminder that the College is measured and criticized by many whose familiarity with the College's real intent is as limited as their belief in commonly held convictions is firm. In taking cognizance of this audience, those who administer and govern the College have made a number of decisions that have impressed students as shocking and unwarranted. After the immediate shock had passed away, some of us saw or thought we saw an ultimate wisdom and justification behind each successive measure, while others insisted that the policy being followed was a mistaken and disastrous one.

With these insurgents there remains an irreducible body of agreement that stands at variance with the expressed position of the Administration. Both of the arguments have a number of implications worth pondering, and the most effective presentation of the quarrel would be to let each side speak for itself,

after the familiar manner of Thucydides.

THE ADMINISTRATION: Through the charter granted to us by the State of Maryland, we are responsible for the proper maintenance and government of the College. It is our task to establish the conditions of enrollment and study, and this applies not only to academic matters but also to the general atmosphere under which studies are to be carried on. St. John's has made a radical departure from the traditional methods of higher education in a program of liberal arts, whose rightness we are convinced of. It is our hope that St. John's will not only become the pattern for future educational revolutions, but will be accepted throughout the country as a serious, well-founded institution that will attract scholars who are impressed by the intellectual challenge the program as stated presents to them. The existence of the College, then, is our concern, an existence fully commensurate with the dignity and purpose of our academic program.

In order to insure this existence, we must conform to certain unavoidable pressures from outside. In the realm of morality, we cannot be revolutionaries. Our program is a challenge to each student to discover for himself a moral law that has meaning, but we do not propose to legislate or suggest a set of moral values for the rest of the world. Society will reject us if we fail to meet those familiar minimum standards of decent behaviour, particularly with regard to sexual conduct. If we flout these, we are endangering our survival and our chances of persuading the others of the rightness of our beliefs about liberal education.

But speaking more immediately for the College itself, we must make sure that the conditions of study are such that will provide the maximum opportunity of concentration and subsequent benefit from the intellectual disciplines of the program. To do this, we must exercise our prerogative and impose certain REGULATIONS, that will formally set these conditions and insure their enforcement. Regulations concerning the dormitory, the dining hall, and absence from the campus may seem arbitrary, and no

doubt are to a certain extent. In these matters, arbitrariness is unavoidable. We must simply say that we are wiser and more experienced than youthful students, who, lacking our experience, must be content to yield to our judgment and abide by the regulations.

The Dissenting Students: We must recognize and agree with much of what you have said. Our quarrel is not as much with your intention as it is with certain errors of judgment we feel you have made. For one thing, we find your actions are based on a philosophy of appearances and expediency, which is abhorrent. You say "You must not violate certain universally accepted standards of behaviour", but your actions appear to say "You must not give the appearance of violating these standards. We will provide a set of dormitory regulations that will be a statement to the world that we are trying to avoid promiscuity, but if you can get around these, you are a clever fellow, and there's nothing we can do about it."

We, on the other hand, would insist on complete integrity of action and belief which you would in effect make impossible. St. John's, as you rightly point out, is a unique college. To us much of its uniqueness and worth lie in the challenge presented us in the books we read and the ideas we discuss; this is a challenge that attacks the convictions that underlie our actions and behaviour and which we must face in our own lives. We consider that learning does not consist in the acquisition of a set of skills and disciplines but in the application of these to our own immediate decisions and judgments, the area of which you so drastically restrict by what you admit are arbitrary regulations. It may be that the morality which you give such an equivocal sanction may be ultimately founded upon a real moral law, but we must find that out through experience while you hand it to us as a convention to be tactily accepted.

So in effect, we consider that you are destroying St. John's as we understand St. John's to be. The college whose existence you are claiming to insure is a fictitious college based on property and location; the real college, the community of learning, that was started in 1937, is already severely damaged and you seem determined to finish the job. Both your arguments in favor of regulations we reject. If we must gain the support of the outside world by sacrificing our integrity it would be better to remain poor a while longer. And your minimum conditions for study have the effect of divorcing our studies from the rest of our lives and making them a set of lessons to be learned by rote. For these reasons we find your regulations disastrous and your position untenable, and we urge you to reconsider and revise them."

Although necessarily these statements are interpretations—this publication can hardly claim to be a spokesman for any particular group—we think that the essentials of the quarrel have been presented. One thing that stands out right away is the archetypal nature of much of what has been said. The two sides could almost have been labeled Youth and Age; invariably the generations are jealous of their prerogatives in matters of behaviour—the older is conservative and restrained, the younger exuberant and experimental. But apart from easy generalities, there are definite merits and

fallacies in both arguments that should be examined. Speaking frankly editorially, we would address both sides and offer suggestions. To the dissenting students, who are, after all, an energetic and vociferous minority among the student body as a whole, we say: "Much of what you say seems motivated by passions that you feel and do not yet understand and might even be regarded as a clever defense of license and promiscuity. Your insistence upon integrity of action and belief is a compelling one, but needs a better thought out examination. To experiment as unrestrictedly in the realm of action as that of thought may be demanded by a literal application of your principle, but may destroy the larger integrity, which is that of the individual in a social context. The wisdom of experience has shown the necessity of an ordered society, and a deliberate flaunting of this order to satisfy a personal compulsion is dangerous and reflects incomplete and confused thinking. Further, no matter how unique the program of instruction, St. John's is still a school, and an undergraduate school is still an extension of parental authority that has not yet been completely overthrown. Most students at a college are still not completely mature, and must be protected from dangerous and destructive experimentation in morality."

Granted then, that the Administration is essentially in the right, there is a certain consistently disturbing method in their approach to the problem of sanctions and regulations that could well provoke the alarm of sincerely apprehensive students. To them we would say: "Your arguments for minimal regulations are apparently sound. We have really no other choice than to rely upon what you claim to be the wisdom of experience. But your application shows rather exaggerated concern with 'the reputation of the College'. Granted that uncontrolled license and promiscuity could ruin the College in the eyes of parents and other educators, so could the kind of deadening uniformity and decorum you seem to be striving for. It is fallacious to identify the wisdom of the ages with conventional bourgeois 'respectability' and stuffiness. Beware that in your anxiety to make a good impression on others, you do not snuff out that degree of high-spiritedness or even anarchy that is a symptom of real vitality and learning. Your job is to protect the minimal conditions of study and residence, but if you transgress that border that separates the minimal from the intrusively oppressive, the students will protest and rebel, and the health of the community of learning will have been severely damaged.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

In order to obviate tedious reiteration of qualifications and gratuitous hedging, it should be understood at the outset that for better or worse I have, with the indulgence of the Dean & Co., elected not to repeat any year of the St. John's program, and consequently lack the more advantageous position of the tutor in evaluating changes taking place in classes. On the other hand, to whatever extent tutors initiate changes through gradually acquiring a style of teaching, solving problems of explanation and communication—that is, in evolving into whatever variety of tutor they are—changes cannot be manifest to them in the same way they are to a student. Whoever makes the change cannot regard it as a change but only as a realization of the goal being sought.

Further by way of preface, one would add that the liberal arts, being parts of the equipment of the adult mind—necessarily connected, mutually endeictic, independently significant—are things in themselves, capable of being taught, and as things in themselves, adequately grasped. This is not my opinion alone, for such a point of view is required to subscribe to the possibility of useful tutorials. Some assumptions must be made that as they develop independently, the arts' relatedness will become accessible, and that as relations appear, the application of the complex to experience will begin.

Mathematics

I fail to understand the rearrangement of the material of the first two years as put into effect the year before last, which was placing Ptolemy immediately after Euclid in the freshman year, and postponing Appolonius until Ptolemy had been completed in the sophomore year. The only apparent advantage of this shuffling would be putting Ptolemy in the freshman year when the freshman laboratory was occupied with stereographic projections and star charts, so that the mathematics tutorial might not only have provided the customary Euclidean justification, but might also have broached the problems in a mathematical text that the laboratory and its techniques propose to solve. But that particular physics exercise, as far as I can discover, has passed into desuetude. Not having at hand a schedule, I can only wonder at my impression, substantiated by a vaguely remembered conversation with the Dean, that in addition to making Ptolemy and Appolonius both more accessible to the student, the rearrangement cuts out some material from both.

Since I inevitably greet any take-aways with displeasure, I will offer, at this point, an opinion about mastery and familiarity with the subject matter. While on the one hand it is not altogether gratifying to contemplate the picture of a St. Johnnie reeling drunkenly from class to class under the weight of a mass of material and system which he cannot hope to grasp during his stay at the college, still less pleasure is obtained in regarding one who, though warned against overconfidence, may well become guilty of that academic sin through not having lost enough fights with his subject. Indeed, the facile student is discouraged from more than cursory application through suspecting that no matter how assiduously he toils, he will never have done more than cursorily touched the available material.

Even a discouraging awareness of processes not yet touched enables the student to ask more interesting questions, whose qualifications are more readily apparent, and, accordingly, whose solutions are close at hand. By thus recommending a confused panorama to the more precisely limited understanding, I think that I encourage the student to feel confident of his ultimate ability

to undertake significantly the solution of problems by enabling him to pose them in more terms and even though no single one be wholly understood, providing more avenues of attack. Since this certainly activates the lust for independent work, and, in the situation envisaged, where time enough to do the assigned work is not available, there arises the problem of determining whether a student can afford to forego the curricular material for the sake of indulging either his taste or judgement of what particular kind of mathematics he ought to be studying. However, modesty on the part of those who draw up the curriculum should persuade them of their fallibility in this connection, and should enable them to allow a certain latitude (there it is again) in these matters, so long as there is evidence of continued good faith on both sides. It is said by some seniors that most of the students of that class have talked each other out. This ought not to be the result of a community experience, but it would seem to be the result of a complete identity of experience. Clearly, it would not occur where, everyone studying the same things in substance, there was the possibility of important differences, not exactly of emphasis, but of best informedness.

Returning more particularly to mathematics, I feel it is a true observation of the math tutorials in general, although it is difficult to say whether this is more prevalent during the past two years, that they appear to be teaching more and more a vocabulary of proofs, at the expense of method and more general competence. While it is probably true that one does not understand what he cannot prove, I am not sure that every proof need be in one's mouth all the time, ready to be quoted. For, despite the pleasure of demonstrating incommensurability to your incredulous seatmate on the bus, I should imagine it satisfactory to the student if he were justifiably confident that there is commensurability and incommensurability, and that, marooned on a desert isle without a set of Euclid, he might, should the occasion arise, produce a proof at leisure.

In the evolution of tutorial techniques, it seems to me that the "artistic" approach is gradually crowding out the object of the tutorial, or at least obscuring it. By this I intend derogation of the emphatic ONE FORTY-SEVEN IS IT! approach to Euclid, the PRESTO—THEY ARE THE SAME! approach to Appolonius, and similarly misleading devices, whereby the work seems to be held together. This is false. Granted that as highlights, beacons, reference points, they are of value, the tutorial should still not be built around them. Mathematics is more than well told stories in the language of number and figure. It is also an integral part of one's daily experience; while it may be made perhaps too ordinary with

carpenter's square and excursions to the boat shop, it ought not to be a collection of pleasing curios.

Language

In the language tutorial, we study one of the forms of communication humans commonly employ in exchanging ideas. Therefore we study grammar, rhetoric, and logic. Since some ideas seem to be substantially the same in any tongue, we translate from one to another, presumably so that we may compare the methods of different languages in realizing the expression of these ideas, hoping to derive from the study some sense of the effect of language on concept. Disregarding the problem of the idea should you speak the wrong tongue, this would seem to be a reasonable procedure. It is a common experience that most of us at some time or another, and a few of us all the time are aware of a glaring discrepancy between the thing in mind and the thing we say. It is not clear that the thing we say is univocally, or even possibly, the whole of what may be in someone else's mind. However, by watching the difference between what we say and what we mean, along with what others say and what it turns out we think they mean, it is possible that we may derive some rules, either explicit or not, whereby cognizing the kind and nature of the shortcoming inevitably present and uniquely associated with different languages, we shall be able to expand consistently what people say to approximately what they mean, and at the same time, to require less assistance ourselves. Now then, so praiseworthy a speaker as Mr. Churchill has observed that at the

time his colleagues were preparing versified renderings of selections from the *Greek Anthology*, he was talking—a choice for which he lays claim to be still grateful. There does not appear above, as far as I can see, except in something omitted perhaps, grounds for the growing propensity in the language tutorial to measure the accomplishment of the student by the knowledge of that particular language that names his tutorial.

An adequate concept of grammar is attainable without the ability to articulate one at request. The summit of aspirations in this line was to have commited to memory one of those midget grammars contained on both sides of a medium-sized piece of paper. I never bothered to memorize, since I always had the paper. Nor, moreover, do I feel that to have done so would have altered my concept of language; for the purposes of discussions about languages in tutorials, it was always sufficient to remember previous discussions and elicited principles rather than the particular examples from which they came. As for the translation aspect of the tutorial, it scarcely seems tenable that one should mean by "the ability to translate into English" a high degree of proficiency in the languages taught at St. John's. There are too many other languages in which,

though there may not be such interesting examples of linguistic principles, there is at least as much stuff that would be profitable for the St. John's student to be able to get from the original. Accordingly, I have always supposed that what was meant by the phrase quoted was the ability to take a grammar textbook and a dictionary of any human language and be able to pick out right meanings from wrong ones.

There has been a definite increase in the pressure applied to students actually to acquire the language of their year. If they had more time this would not be a bad idea, but the time just isn't there, and because familiarity with the language itself is the easiest mode of participation to assess, that does not validate it as paramount.

In restrospect, I am sorry that Latin has gone; in prospect I am sorry to see that second year Greek will go, or at least has been seriously compromised. In so far as the rumor is reliable that two years of Greek were reckoned insufficient to exhaust even partially the light its consideration threw on language, as opposed to a somewhat lesser contribution from Latin, it seems still probable that if another language had to go, it ought to have been either German or French. In so far as the change is motivated by a desire to remedy defective public school preparation for reading and writing properly, I conceive it misguided; a continuation of a general to be all things to all people may be a praiseworthy attempt, but ultimately will only vitiate a curriculum whose virtue does *not* consist of coddling those unfortunate ill-prepared students.

Music

If the freshman music tutorial, as it is presently developing, is an attempt to equip the student with information and a method that will assist him in the analysis and finally, in the criticism of music, it is certainly necessary that more tutorial work be done. The tutorial I

took, the first required one, devoted itself almost entirely to the development of the properties of tones and systems of sounds. It may possibly have suffered from distracting students' attention away from music and into psychology and physiology; however, a required second year has not been dealt with as an actuality, and I suppose the original idea was to supply in one year the broadest possible foundation for understanding. There was little or no attempt for advanced analysis, although the tutorials of 1952 made a few tentative steps in that direction. At first, only slight encouragement was given to acquiring the ability to read music at sight. Since then, two academic years have elapsed, during which there has developed more emphasis on knowing the signs of music, as if there were to be an opportunity to examine music with them and to discover directly what was taken either on faith or by ear without too much detailed investigating. The virtue of this approach was that it at least exposed the student to the possibilities of musical communication in a general way, and offered greater opportunity to kindle his enthusiasm and interest in continued study, either alone, or in more advanced tutorials. One must say that such a method is fraudulent in that it cannot hope to get at the real stuff of music, but merely magics the student into premature excitement. Nevertheless, it does promote some interest, while an unbalanced emphasis on matters like notation accomplishes but little, unless secured by use. At the risk of seeming to carp, one would observe that rote work is that work wherein the tutor is most dispensable, and its performance most dependant upon the successful communication of its value, either as a Sesame, or a gem in itself.

Laboratory

Transitions in the laboratory program are most easily observed in the manuals, copies of which for the various years are more or less available. In general they seem to be becoming what their authors apparently considered coherent; that is, the tutors who write the manuals have selected for them particular "themes", to which the individual exercises are subordinated.

In this respect, they have become excellent essays on the development of scientific theories, and perhaps very good examples of the interplay between hypothesis and experiment. However, I suspect that they are no longer really laboratory manuals of their subject matter. Much of the material in the chemistry manual more properly belongs to

physics, introduced simply to unfold the evidence for the atomic hypothesis. Similarly not all of the optics is optics, some of it being electronics in order to get out the compression of the wave and particle theories. Again, the junior biology lab is striking for the attention it pays to the cell theory, the genetics lab to the "gene theory" of inheritance, the embryology lab to the theory of the organizer. These are in sharp contrast to my freshman lab, which seemed to ramble happily through form and function, the possibility of measurement, facts, and the somometer.

I am not, on the whole, grateful for the change. If it is possible at the end of the chemistry lab to write a paper of five hundred words or less describing more or less accurately the development of the atomic theory, or in about the same length, to make observations about the interplay of experiment and hypothesis as shown by those experiments that were performed, then it is presumably possible to read an excellent article on both of these, somewhat shorter and probably

more accurate, to discuss it for two or three hours in a lab tutorial and learn some chemistry in addition. With appropriate emphasis, the same principle applies to the other things cited.

Theory, theorem, hypothesis, experiment, verification: all these words see frequent service in seminar discussions and elsewhere. That the laboratories should increasingly devote themselves to investigating them as such is in some measure to deprive the student of a genuine familiarity with the methods unique to each of the sciences, and of a sufficient acquaintance with their accomplishments to be able to evaluate the success of the methods presently employed. There are a multitude of other theories, whose mere existence is worth knowing. Having taken one or two of these in order to discover if possible some paradeigmatic skeleton, which we may presume reproduced to some extent in the development of them all, there seems to be no reason why we should not, albeit apparently chaotically, investigate these, too, as wholly relevent and fruitful material for possible insight.

Lectures

It is preposterous that the only lecturers in the world should be St. John's tutors and their intimates; they, indeed, are the only people who have given us any worthwhile lectures. To dwell specifically upon the various shortcomings of the diverse one-night standers who have worked here Friday nights would serve no purpose, save to record indignation at the unfortunate individuals whose principal fault lies in having been invited to lecture. It may be that they are never properly apprised of what we expect from a lecturer, or it may be that they are simply ill-chosen, or it may be that they represent all that is available. One can too easily accept the first possibility, because in most cases they do not seem to know that they are expected to walk to the nearest exit under their own steam. A maximum of ten words would surely inform even the densest that when they are through, they have only to walk out. Again, the amount of clock-watching they do would seem to indicate that they have not been told of the notable patience of St. John's students, and their willingness to listen to anything that bids fair to be informing. Further, the inability of many question periods to get underway seems to be the result of a mutual misunderstanding of what a question period ought to be. This is not always the case. Sometimes I feel that those who attend are unable to decide whether to begin with a leading question, under the guise of asking for a restatement of a point, or to abandon the lecture as altogether hopeless, and to treat the man like a smart stranger with whom one would like to strike up a conversation. In any case, the question periods, once underway, indicate often, but not often enough that the lecturer might very well have pleased us had he only known we were really trying to listen.

Since I am not familiar with the protocol of seeking talent for our podium, I don't know whether it would constitute a breach to ask the lecturer to consider us as assembled great minds that will not be satisfied with anything less than the

best. I can well understand a certain reluctance to brag, but I find it more rewarding to risk the Dean's feelings than the student's time. If we are really getting the best there is from outside, let's stop. There are a number of tutors who have never lectured, as well as those who have been unheard for a long time.

In considering the question periods, I find that participation, especially student participation, seems to be on the decline, both qualitatively and quantitatively; however, in the time against which I compare the present, lecturers were superior. At one time there was a genuine complaint that could be made against the constant repetition of the Platonic line. Now, however, there seems to be a certain timidity about voicing the same old things; it is as if some doubt were actually felt about the propriety of forcing them on anyone not of our company. As it seemed, the only people from school who are willing to argue with any conviction are tutors. One can only observe that the sort of intellectual timidity that shrinks from stating or asking the obvious, and yet restrains active inquiry into relatively unfamiliar areas of thought is wholly incongruous to the whole idea of a question period, and is an attitude that anyone at St. John's must learn to overcome.

The Faculty

The faculty presents the same problem of change and changelessness as the curriculum. As far as overall competence is concerned, the faculty of the last few years was probably about the best since the war. Because of a number of dismissals that were no doubt occasioned by economic necessity, there were whispered charges of a purge of those insurgents who did not subscribe to the prevalent neo-Platonic orthodoxy. This is at best a mere shadow of the truth. The idea that a St. John's faculty should be made up of Platonists, Cartesians, Logical Positivists and Townsendites in proper proportion is not a sound one. Rather the principle seems to be that each tutor should be familiar with the various schools of thought represented by the books on the Program, should know their agreements and disagreements, and instead of identifying himself with one particular group as spokesman, should clearly locate his own convictions in the realm of "private opinion".

But rarely did tutors attempt to impose "private opinions" on students. The most grievous accusation that could be leveled against the faculty as a whole, and it is a serious one, is that they did not live up to their responsibilities, but took the much easier path of specializing in a single subject, or passively tolerating specialization on the part of others. If the statement of the purpose and function of the faculty in the catalog is correct, its members have a responsibility to master as far as possible the whole range of the program. This would mean accepting tutorials and seminars in all subjects and classes, and would require a decent minimal familiarity with the mechanics of the subjects. By implication this responsibility could be extended to the giving of lectures, and the maintenance of conversational approachability with the students outside the classroom.

When we come to measure individual tutors, one by one, it is evident that some actively faced their responsibilities and attempted to live up to them, while others sinned only in one of the possible departments we have attempted to set up; the really notorious offenders were only a bare minority. But the faculty as a whole is something more than the sum of the individual tutors on it; to whatever extent any tutor is irresponsible, the general level of the faculty is thereby pulled down. So we must conclude rather regretfully that the faculty of the past two years, while not the worst that has been at St. John's, was clearly not as good as it could and should have been.

In Fine

There seems to have been made a considerable and worthy effort to make those portions of the Program historically unpalatable and opaque less so. Reasons for everything were apparently sought, and where there was not a fairly simple one available, some changes have been made. Most of these changes have had the effect of ordering the material reducing and eliminating what seemed like wasted effort, and most of all supplying continuity and relatedness to all parts of the Program. The dangers inherent in such a well-minded revision are numerous. It introduces a hazardous area for the expression of private and fallible opinion about what are significant enterprises. It offers an opportunity for half-truths and withheld facts through clever organization and emphasis which is, I take it, far less desirable than honest student error brought about by confusion.

The total effect is to give an untrue image of the world. Under complete intellectual honesty, much has to be accepted simply as probable, and there are not glib answers for everything always on the tongue. By attempting to supply them, with gimmicks and short-cuts, educators deprive the student of the opportunity to arrive at his own insight and synthesis and present him with artificial ones. And this, as I understand it, is not what St. John's ought to try to do.

It might be observed that this article has been entirely negative in approach, aimed solely at stating what was wrong with the curriculum and not what was right. This need not necessarily place me with those prophets of doom, whose croakings one hears so frequently. It is just that the St. John's program has an integrity of its own that is pretty much a constant thing; it would require violent and stupid tampering to destroy its effectiveness in promoting confusion and then showing the possibility of insight. Undoubtedly, it has continued to do this during the last two years. But assuming this integrity, I am, I think rightfully, concerned with detecting a very particular and noticeable trend in the revision and carrying out of the Program, which as it is being followed, may well seriously impair its integrity, hence its effectiveness.

CREATION AND RECREATION

No long-range review and evaluation of a particular period at St. John's would be complete without a fairly involved consideration simply of What Happened in the extra-curricular activities and the fine arts. This essay can hardly give more than one observer's highly personal opinions about the various accomplishments in these fields, but one hopes that what is said will not seem completely

King William Players

Over a number of years, the King William Players have produced a greater number of successes than failures. (For some reason, the dramatic arts have managed to acquire more acceptance and respectability than the other fine arts, and the KWP by now have enough of a tradition behind them to enjoy the

arbitrary, or will at least arouse the reader's own reconsideration and prompt worthwhile argument. Although the evaluation and emphasis may be personal, the impact and significance of these activities to the college remains an objective fact that must be tracked down and examined by whatever process is available.

status of a college institution. The plays of the last two years might be called qualified successes. Coming right after the fabulously sumptuous and intensely realized "Cranmer" of the year before, and undoubtedly hindered by having a smaller, less experienced cast to work with, Al Sugg's *King John* was a provocative and exceptionally praiseworthy

exposition of Shakespeare's eloquent commentary on the nature of the King and the Kingship. The most significant virtue of the production was undoubtedly that of integrity. The play itself was a fortunate choice, peculiarly appropriate in a number of ways as a St. John's undertaking; and the casting was sensible as well as sensitive. One remembers Priscilla Shore's beautifully conceived set, in which elegance and economy of design enhanced notably the unity of the production; one forgave momentary lapses and occasional tense overacting because of the wholly convincing sense of direction that was so surely generated.

On the other hand, Bernie Jacob's *Winter's Tale* suffered from a noticeable lack of this same integrity, which was only in part due to the structural looseness of the play itself. Because the production was apparently conceived as Spectacle, it was inevitably episodic and seemed to emphasize the play's length and dramatic weakness. (Either *A Winter's Tale* is an extraordinarily difficult masterpiece, or else it is one of the sloppiest, most outrageous, if charming, pieces of hackwork ever perpetrated.) The performance shed not much light on the

play's difficulties of meaning, and seemed to make a fairly convincing case for the latter conclusion. Further one felt an undue and distracting emphasis on The Revolving Stage, The Musick-and-Dancing, and The Bear, remarkable as these were. However, in all fairness one should add that the Spectacle was skillfully and resourcefully contrived, there were moments of real beauty and excellence, and the production was, on its own level, entertaining.

One feels further compelled to mention certain distressing symptoms of dry rot within the KWP, of which the near-failure of *A Winter's Tale* was only one. That refined social inbreeding that inevitably occurs in any special com-

munity, here produced a KWP "clique" that was an occasion so collectively formidable and unapproachable as to discourage competent people from taking as active part in the plays as they otherwise might have. (The point in question here is not the simple existence of a closed group, but the fact that they should so completely "take over" and control the KWP to the exclusion of other voices.) Although the members of this group were undoubtedly responsible in large measure for getting the plays on the stage, there was always present a wholly distasteful current of intrigue and tension, something FELT rather than clearly perceived. This has increased rather than diminished, and may finally prove destructive. The last meeting of the KWP was not encouraging in this respect.

Two other activities should be mentioned here as a footnote to the plays. In 1953 the Variety Show, silent for a year, sprang to life and easily saved what was otherwise a pretty flat June Week. It was all Berny Udel's baby this time; an accomplished and experienced "specialist in libel and slander", he abandoned the usual unrehearsed crude slapstick and takeoffs for a more polished writing and staging, using to best advantage the not unlimited "talent" that was available. Not so obvious as its predecessors, this Variety Show had enough gall and wormwood to be relevant (". . . if she says that her field's not for sowing, tell her eros is one form of knowing . . ."), and from the practically unanimous accounts was as pleasing an hour's entertainment as one could ask.

For two more years, the play-reading group, one of the more enduring of its kind, continued to be one of the most worthwhile ways of spending Tuesday night. Mr. Bart's obvious enthusiasm communicated itself readily and the choice of plays and casting were on the whole rather fortunate. With a few exceptions, most of the readings were uniformly good, but the night devoted to Pirandello's *Six Characters* stands out to many as exceptionally memorable.

The Collegian

MOST colleges have a college newspaper; St. John's has the *Collegian*. At one time the *Collegian* was a college newspaper; what it is now pretty well defies definition. Historically it might be called a ruptured phoenix, a creature that has undergone a number of deaths, but has never actually been reborn into real vitality. History shows that the *Collegian* problem is essentially a matter of adjustment. With the advent of the New Program and the disappearance of fraternities and intercollegiate athletics, came the change to a more intercommunicative college, whose subgroups were no longer those of departmental or dormitory loyalties. The need for a conventional newsy-gossipy sheet vanished as the grapevine proved more than adequate to handle both news and gossip. The *Collegian* remained as a holdover from the pre-Revolutionary age; faced with the problem of adjusting to the new setup, successive editors searched without notable success for a format and style that would express what was important at St. John's. It is this problem that still remains unsolved.

Although everybody seems to want to have a *Collegian* of some sort, no one seems to want very much to write one. In 1951, Larry Sandek made a broad attack on this unproductive situation, doing away with the editorial board and formally constituted staff of contributors, who, in the past would see to it that SOMETHING was ready for publication every so often. In the following year, Barbara Dvorak and Sinclair Gearing followed the same policy, this time relying more on faculty and outside contributions. The accomplishment is hard to evaluate; this writer's attitude must be one of indignation—tempered with charity. There can be no doubt that Larry, Barbara, and Sinclair worked pretty damn hard at it, pleading, bullying and shaming people into writing articles as well as contending with unreliable printing facilities, and the reluctance of the Polity to appropriate enough money to work with.

But just what did the effort gain them? There were five issues over a period of two years, which, for sheer bulk, certainly outclassed anything that preceded them. Unfortunately, the preponderance of dull, bad articles seemed to obscure the quality of the undoubtedly good ones, and the value of a LOT of dull bad articles is problematical. Also regrettable was the virtual disappearance of short stories and fiction, written by students. Perhaps a wholly understandable reticence has kept the few who did experiment occasionally in those forms from submitting their efforts for more or less public criticism, but there was no evidence that the editors ever really encouraged contributions of that sort. A relatively unpolished or tentative poem or story has a certain redeeming grace, as

long as it is a genuine attempt to express something of importance to the author, and not mere pretence, which makes it more interesting than the pedantically competent lecture or film review. The encouragement and publication of such efforts would not only have enlivened the *Collegian*, but might also have confirmed and strengthened existing poetic ability. So quantity alone at the expense of quality will not make the *Collegian* interesting.

It could be interesting, though. At one time, the *Collegian* was a living and important college institution, and though it dealt with relative trivalities, it handled them more competently and more spiritedly than the latter-day enlightened trivial artists, who with their cultivated pomposity and much laborious periphrasis made what was important seem dull, or even ridiculous. "Writing comes hard at St. John's . . .": this is the now classical apology for the state of the *Collegian* (as well as the annual essays). Writing comes hard anywhere as long as it is simply an exercise or a task with the restraint of a self-conscious high seriousness, and the writer is jealous of the time he is so reluctantly devoting to it. What is missing is the quality of enthusiasm, a dearly felt need to write and to maintain certain standards of excellence and intelligibility, whether the subject is a lecture, a film, or a metaphysical problem. Until this enthusiasm returns and replaces the prevalent attitude toward writing, until enough people decide that the *Collegian* is really important enough to work hard at it, it will probably continue to limp indefinitely along its present unsteady course.

The Film Club

THE Rogers Albritton Memorial Film Club continued to show moving pictures for another two years. There isn't much to say, really, about the films themselves; most of them were good (this writer is convinced that the film is an art form, and that it is therefore meaningful to speak of a "good" or "bad" film. This opinion will be assumed without argument or apology through this article.) One could, out of the two years, recall the particularly memorable showings: *"Caligari"*, *"The Golem"*, *"Farrebique"*, *"The General"*, *"The Navigator"*, *"Day of Wrath"*. Another commentator could offer a different list, though he would probably name a few of these. On the whole the programs were pretty well above criticism. A Film Club President has to stick to the "age or excellence or both" clause of his charter, balance "heavies" with comedies,

and somehow manage to keep from losing an awful lot of money.

Further than this, both presidents, Phillip Lyman, and to a great extent, Ed Bauer, felt an obligation to EDUCATE their audiences, and frequently risked films which neither of them had seen and had only the glowing recommendations in the catalog, or impressive accounts of "significance" in scholarly histories to go by. By being enterprising you are sure to get a few duds and sleepers among the classics. Thus the Russians who came through so magnificently in *"Potemkin"* and *"Alexander Nevsky"* were guilty of the bathos and banality of *"Chapayev"* and *"Mother"*. All four came to us well recommended.

But the attendance fell off, badly—Ed Bauer estimated that by '53 hardly half of the St. John's community regularly went to RAM films, and the midshipmen and townspeople were not enough to make up the difference. Why did this happen? We repeat, the films were for the most part eminently worth seeing. Rarely were there complete clinkers; there were some films whose academic competence was evident but were otherwise unimpressive. To the co-ed who is reputed to have said with a shrug, "I NEVER go to foreign movies", there is only one answer: an exasperated "REALLY!" But her case was exceptional and, one hopes, apocryphal. Could it be that a kind of backwoods calvinism is rampant that regards the film as a device of Old Scratch to lure the unsuspecting into

temptation and downfall? This would seem to be the sort of unconscious but implicit assumption that keeps people in their rooms on Saturday night. "I thought about going to the movie, but I already went last week and I want to get the lab reports out of the way. Besides it's some Russian thing I never heard of, and I probably wouldn't like it anyway." One can piece together this sort of composite portrait of the non-filmgoer. How could such a stuffy type exist at St. John's?

The answer is one for which the Film Club is partly responsible: they have failed to advertise. Of course Saturday's film is mentioned in the weekly calendar, usually with some specious and unconvincing note about "historical significance", and occasionally there is a poster. But it appears that the Presidents made the mistake of assuming that they had a fully initiated audience to deal with, one that was cinematically as literate as all the people who used to go to the RAM

movie every Saturday when THEY were freshmen. But apparently the idea that the film is an art form is a completely new one to many of us, one that hasn't been thought through. In a prevailing tradition, the movie is something you go to when you want to be diverted or thrilled or titillated or can't think of anything else to do, but certainly not something from which you expect to learn.

At St. John's one is engaged in a learning process to which the movies in this conception of them are a foreign and intrusive element; what is further bewildering is to have thrown at one a whole bunch of obscure things in foreign languages or even SILENT for heaven's sake. (A little thought would show that this is precisely what happens with books in the seminar.) Add to this distrust what might seem the pretentious snobbism as reflected, say, in the substitution of "film" for "movie". This hypothetical type may occasionally go to a "movie" at the Circle when he feels time permits, but rarely to an RAM "film". If the Film Club Presidents are convinced that the film is an art form and want to encourage attendance, their job is obviously to promote an active film consciousness and to establish the RAM as an unofficial part of the Program. The latest President is speaking in terms of film seminars, special programs, and a careful selection of films in which excellence is stressed above age as the primary criterion. This may help build up the habit of attendance—whether one comes consciously to learn or not at first is of no matter. Those who come regularly to the films will soon realize that there is more than merely diversion involved.

In 1953, the Maryland state censorship board announced that all RAM exhibitions would be subject to their approval before public showing. This would mean that all films not previously shown in Maryland would have to be taken to Baltimore for viewing by the Board, who would delete all sequences they considered objectionable. All other films would be shown only in the form that the Board had previously approved, which would mean in some cases, with deletions. Ed Bauer tried to avoid this interference through the legal fiction of the "Film Club", that consists of as many people as had paid their "membership dues" in order to see the film. The matter is currently being contested with the censorship board. Until it is settled, the expense of time and money involved is an obvious harrassment to the Film Club president. The constitutionality of the censorship law, the insensitivity of the censors, and the effect of such censorship on the integrity of the art of the film are matters for "fuller" discussion.

Music

THE formal concerts for this period were all good. Ralph Kirkpatrick's annual appearance is becoming a regular event, like Mr. Van Doren's, and Mr. Klein's Lecture on the Liberal Arts. This is a good thing. His performances are so evenly predictable as to defy meaningful criticism; whether or not one agrees with his rather rigid tempi, and the muscular insistence on the TOCCATA aspect of everything he plays, it is always done with an infallible taste and authority. The Juilliard Quartet, too, remains predictable. The twentieth century repertoire they perform with surpassing dedication and excellence; earlier music in their hands is at best variable. Although their Beethoven is beginning to a show a little more maturity than formerly, it was their performance of Bartok that remains in this listener's memory as one of the most intense musical experiences he can recall.

Francis James sang with her customary musicianship which received far less of an audience than it deserved. The Societa Corelli played Italian Baroque string music with commendable enthusiasm, although the extraordinary sound this group produced at first distracted from the music itself. The Schneider-Katims-Miller trio played with the insight and absence of display one would expect from such a group. Mr. Schneider's performance of the solo Bach D Minor Partita was an extraordinarily engrossing experience, although the Mozart E flat Divertimento that preceded it was probably even more completely realized on a wholly musical level. Doda Conrad and Hugues Cuenod gave us an unusually variegated program that was all the more engrossing because of the chamber orchestra that had to be hastily assembled shortly before the concert. In spite of an understandable lack of polish, they played together with a degree of ensemble and devotion that was a credit to each member as well as to Messrs. Cuenod, Conrad, Zuckerkandl and Allanbrook. During their stay at the college, the visitors captivated us completely; we were speaking of them as "Doda" and "Hugues" and were sorry to see them leave.

In 1953, a Baltimore band led by Tylden Streett gave a New Orleans Jazz concert. Playing numbers from the traditional repertoire, they were slow warming up, but, after getting more accustomed to the acoustics of the Great Hall, improved notably in ensemble and swing. Notable also were the embarrassingly cute notices in the press, the enthusiasm of those who attended, and the raised-eyebrow attitude of those who chose to be absent.

As a part of the program of instruction in the liberal arts, there can be no doubt that music is finally outgrowing its role as "family bastard". The music tutorials are being constantly revised, and the revision is rewarded by better attendance and more serious work. The musically illiterate, and the subliterate who considered themselves at first above such an elementary approach because they could play Padarewski's Minuet in G, rapidly learned to shed their familiar prejudices and began to study music as a liberal art, instead of a vaguely emotional stimulus. The most disturbing thing is that while the music tutorial is absorbing the rest of the Program, the rest of the Program is not absorbing the music tutorial. The other tutors were notable for their nonpresence in these classes, as well as their apparent air of bored condescension in the music seminars. These were also hindered by rather lackadaisical preparation, and the inherent difficulty in talking about music, that was exaggerated out of proportion by the vociferous few who monopolized the seminar insisting that it couldn't be done. They did improve to some extent when it was arranged for Mr. Zuckerkandl and Mr. Allanbrook to lead them. The chorus, at this writing, is still a problem; if it's compulsory, nobody comes, if it's not compulsory, nobody comes. One is tempted to say the hell with it, noble experiment that didn't come off, if it were not that it has been proved to be successful and well worth the time allotted it in the past. If there were a larger student enrollment, the chorus would undoubtedly gain a numerical advantage, but the fact that people do not attend voluntarily indicates it needs considerable reworking to be successful.

Since the advent of the Zuckerkandl era, regardless of the shortcomings of the music program academically, there has been a gradual lifting of the general level of musical literacy and curiosity. The phonograph is now included in that list of essential possessions that includes a Greek lexicon, a Chase and Phillips, and a set of Euclid. The traffic to and from the Reverdy-Johnson House is invariably heavy. At all hours the dormitory walls reverberated with Beethoven, Mozart, Guillaume da Machaut, and

Roger Sessions; there was a good likelihood that they were actually being listened to, perhaps with the score, and not simply used as a background for reading, carousing or emoting. The very worst this could lead to is a sort of superficial eclecticism, that craved distractedly a little bit of everything. But it was also evidence that people were beginning to think actually, and not merely theoretically about music as a symbolic discipline, and were listening to uncover a real meaning.

The amount of actual musical activity on the campus varies directly with the number of musicians among the student body at a given period. In 1952, there were enough to support a string quartet and a madrigal group, who, aided somewhat by outside musicians, gave a formal concert. In spite of the horribly embarrassing moments, the Bach cantata in the hands of the madrigal group was a moving and immediate musical experience, as well as a reminder that the phonograph is not a substitute for an actual performance. The string quartet we shall pass over without comment. To close the program, Jim Chrestensen gave a fluent and thoughtful reading of a Bach English Suite, marred somewhat by rhythmic insecurity. Accidentally there were a number of jazz musicians on the campus during this period. Their occasional sessions among themselves and with visiting musicians were probably exciting to the few who dug, but were otherwise no more or less significant to the community than the guitar pickers and folksong singers outside of Pinkney, or the inevitable sound at night of the McDowell pianos, rippling or plodding through Bach and Bartok.

Arts and Crafts

THESE years' achievements in the graphic and plastic arts were hidden rather than obvious, if we look at the usual channels. In successive years, Mr. Morgan and Mrs. Thoms were available to assist anyone who should evince any interest in painting. Classes were announced and facilities of some sort were always made available. The classes were abortive—a few wandered down to the studio (when it was a studio and not a store room, or a workshop, or an airplane hangar) but never worked at it consistently. The only regulars were Mrs. Thoms and the few students who had acquired skills outside of college and were merely exercising them here. Similarly a woodworking shop was in some sense maintained, but from all evidence it was a farce. The shops were equipped with excellent equipment that had been allowed to become unusuable through neglect and apparent indifference on the part of both the Administration and the student assistants. There seems to be little point for

an outraged denunciation of bungling and incompetence of the parties concerned. One can only point out the incongruousness of the situation and conclude that since the Administration did not act to preserve their investment and the students did not indignantly protest, there was little demand for a competently operated and stocked shop.

The Graphic Arts Committee arranged a number of exhibitions in the Junior Common Room. A display of "student art" in 1952 was, if memory serves, a genuinely interesting assortment of curios that at least showed us how some of our more enterprising friends spent their "spare" time. Much less intriguing was a contribution from the Maryland Institute of Art; the academic slickness and uniformity of each painting was rather deadening. Townsend Morgan loaned us some sketches for a mural, depicting the progress of man; they would probably have looked to better advantage in the post-office at Callahan, Florida. An exhibition from Life Magazine, dealing with medieval architecture and life was instructive and in generally good taste. After the departure

of Bert Morgan the Committee apparently folded; nothing has been heard from it since.

Although from such an account this might seem to be a rather barren period in these arts, a closer examination reveals much more significant activity. The most esthetically satisfying achievements here are usually spurred by a very practical need. Each year that sprawling monster, the KWP, has to be fed with sets and costumes which are invariably executed with competence and sometimes with real distinction. The redecoration of the basement of McDowell was entirely in the hands of a student committee consisting of Priscilla Shore, Phillip Lyman, and Al Sugg; the unobtrusive success of their designs and especially the elegant lattice testify to their productive imagination and good taste. The introduction of plastic library cement lead to the rapid development of the art of bookbinding as a close to universal activity. Some bindings resulted that were outstanding for their unusual excellence, while others were remarkable simply for their unusualness.

A Suggestion

THE preceding paragraphs have contained one fairly close observer's evaluation of the accomplishments in the "extra-curricular" activities at St. John's for the past two years. If these activities are of any consequence they ought to be taken seriously, and examined for the merit of what they produced. But there is also something of the ludicrous in applying pronouncements very much in the high-serious Brooks Atkinson manner to the unpretentious efforts of a small college, particularly St. John's, where the fine arts are likely to be regarded at best as not wholly reputable. In view of this rather special context, what has been said may seem like a string of adjectives of only the most superficial relevance, unless we bear in mind the fundamental question: what significance were these activities to the community-of-learning?

Given the facts on hand there are a few problems of interpretation. Are we to be discouraged by the decline and disuse of the workshop, or encouraged because more people are binding more books? How important is the relatively small enrollment of this period to any meaningful conclusion? In attempting to cut through issues like these to the essential one, it would be wise to examine certain prevailing assumptions about the arts and activities.

"Community of learning" has become one of our most abused cliches, but it expresses effectively the nature and intent of the college as a whole. This notion presupposes that the motive that brings people to St. John's and keeps them there is to learn, and anything not concerned with the learning process must be relegated to the relatively inconsequential. How do "extra-curricular" activities and "recreation" fit into such a community? "Extra-curricular", of course, means literally "outside of the formal academic program", and the latter is the medium of education. "Recreation", in the usual understanding, is playing as opposed to working, a temporary diversion or "escape" from one's major occupation, a kind of relaxation through distraction. If "extra-curricular activities" are the forms of "recreation",

then in the conventional understanding, they are simply devices to allow you to take your mind off your academic work for a while. The more intent a student is upon learning, the argument might go, the less time will he devote to mere diversion, although a certain minimum is necessary to preserve balance and sanity. (It is not suggested that anyone at St. John's actually holds this extreme view, but that in modified form it is a

habit of thought, or prejudice that restricts participation in these activities.)

Looked at from another position, that of the artist, these activities might seem to have little validity. The fine arts are demonstrably rigorous disciplines that demand lifelong dedication to master their symbols and techniques. Anyone who approaches the arts with any less complete devotion and humility is contemptuously called a "dilettante". As applied, say, to the superficial poetaster who considers himself a poet because he once knocked off a sonnet in a moment of temporary excess of feeling, this term justly evokes our scorn. But it may be that the position of the dilettante offers a possible resolution for someone at St. John's.

Stripped of the opprobrium associated with it, dilettante simply means "One who takes delight in something". That first attitude we have mentioned values the arts and activities because they are delightful—and make relatively little demand on the intellect. But there is a familiar tradition that associates learning with delighting. "All men delight in things of the senses . . .": thus Aristotle opens his *Metaphysics,* and proceeds to show how this primitive delight is the origin of philosophic inquiry and eventual wisdom. The true spirit of learning is necessarily accompanied by a roving curiosity that delights in examining and investigating different systems and disciplines to find out what distinguishes them and where the area of sameness is, to learn as much from them as is possible without complete dedication to one in particular. At St. John's we could be said to be dilettantes even in regard to the academic program, so why not to the activities that lie outside the program?

This concept is illuminating as applied to the forms of expression we have discussed. A KWP production may be an escape from the more superficially exasperating aspects of the program, like memorizing paradigms or counting fruit-flies, but it is hardly analagous to the office bowling league as a relief from a dull, ordinary grind. The King William Players wouldn't or shouldn't be doing it if they did not take delight in putting on plays, but they are also aware that the play itself and the problems of staging it point to the same elementary problems faced in the seminar and tutorial. King William Players while they are at St. John's cannot be professional actors; professional actors cannot make the necessary sacrifices to their art to attend classes. (When, on occasion, King William Players do miss an inordinate number of classes, it is evidence of a misplaced emphasis.) The professional jazz musicians who have come to St. John's all soon realized that they would have to relegate their art temporarily to a secondary place in their lives, and in some cases found this sacrifice impossible to maintain for four years.

Of course there are practical limits to what we are suggesting. (And ludicrous extremes as well—one shudders to think of a dogged would-be dilettante, striding grimly toward the gym, determined to LEARN from a casual game of ping-pong or die in the attempt.) The time problem really makes itself felt. So much time is consumed by the demands of the Program, and by such presumably neutral activities as sleeping, eating, and going to the dry cleaners, that there is not much left for dilettantish activity. It is specially infuriating to have a small period, like that between dinner and lecture, and helplessly to see it go by because it is impossible to decide how to use it. But this is an adjustment that has to be made by the individual, who must decide for himself what is most important at any given time.

During these years, the spirit of the dilettante was remarkably active in music, and to this writer lamentably inactive in writing and in the film. There was evidence of an increasing intellectual retreat to the comfortable and familiar in the face of something new and disturbing, whether it was a lecturer, a film, or a science. This may be merely a passing phase, but one hopes it passes quickly. One ventures to suggest that the health of the college community as a whole may be measured by the number of actively enterprising dilettantes.

HEMIDEMISEMIQUAVERS

"But Mr. Carter, the very essence of a *reductio* proof is that it confuses you!" . . . Siemens' bathroom mural . . . our immovable, but still virile cannon . . . our abortive delegation at the Nixon rally . . . those midshipmen we were never allowed to see . . . Lowdenslager's attempts at levitation through *Folkways* . . . The Great Slater "Ja" vote—free ice cream on election day . . . taps for Koogle's ivory tower; the life of our tallest landmark ends with a bang—St. John's blows stack observes the Baltimore Sun . . . The Scrabble madness . . .

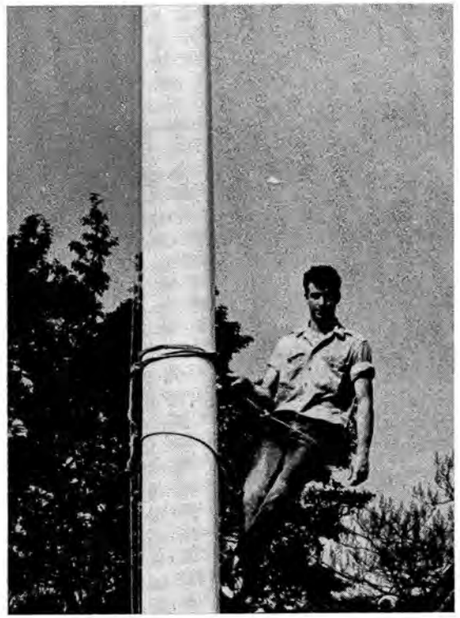
Sperdakos' Shakespeare seminars . . . Our Heroes of the Fire: Toto's midnight Ptolemy Club—"Asbestos" Keithley and his fire brigade—the residents of Pinkney who got their eight hours—Mr. Kieffer's intuition — Miss Chiera's spirited anti-book burning crusade—*St. Basil's Ascetical Works* removed from the shelves for the first time in sixteen years—his big moment arrives, but where is Sinclair? . . . Black Mass in the coffee-shop . . . "Life is as tedious as a twice-told tale" . . . Ripley's nineteenth going away party, the one where someone else bought the scotch . . . "Burn down the Louvre!" . . . The party in Koogle, "by invitation only". . . . the therapeutic effect of music is recognized in the infirmary . . . "Yes, but what is revelation?" . . . Hazo's party for a "select and representative" group of freshmen . . . the ghost of Oliver Wendell Holmes in the bookstore . . . Lyman lights all seven lamps of architecture in Koogle . . . volunteers for Stevenson . . . Markowitz's correspondence with Buckingham Palace . . . "So I belted her" . . . lifemanship . . . Cafe Sans Jean le Ier: the marathon improvising of Henry Jawish—Dvorak's statuesque adornment of the piano . . . Cafe Sans Jean le IIeme: Dame Edith Sitwell, sans neckwear, makes a whirlwind appearance—the harrowing ragging of Mr. Hiatus . . . the G&J movement . . . Mrs. Kluth discourses on the circumcision . . . "Unmöglich!" . . . the mozartina . . . swimming under Kleig lights . . . Learning through Living in Randall: Miss McWilliams'

sorority—Smoky's name in the sign-in book—evening cocktails with Jack and Dottie—Evil Jane's cats—Dvorak's encounter with fire-escapes . . . an art theatre for Annapolis . . . apiarist Levering . . . the new girls' dormitory and hopes for a real ivied quadrangle, by God . . . swinging the curfew, a la New Orleans . . . our most distinguished night-watchman: ex-paratrooper, -mountain-climber, -uraniaum prospector, and -knife-sharpener . . . "Mr. Ombler" . . .

The Rebirth of the Short Essay at St. John's: via the Lost and Found Section of the Bulletin Board . . . the oft-repeated "Death of King John" . . . the Polk Putsch . . . West Pinkney's woodpecker cheerfully survives rocks and imprecations . . . the Europe Seminar—rumors of a quick dash to Athens . . . McKay's room . . . the *1952 Yearbook* . . . "But on the other hand, Mr. Belair, I might be burning" . . . East Pinkney's third floor commons room . . . Mrs. Zuckerkandl's Stevenson rally . . . *The Appolonius Cantata* . . . Ford K. Brown's Highland Fling: Archie McCourt on a blue crystal sphere, Sandy McTavish in a suburban garden . . . Schatzberg's "mysticalbooks" . . . Udel's bulletin board coup: "Seminar 2ab (Mr. Wilkinson and Miss Alexander) will simply meet in the Georgian boiler room . . . " . . . at home with the Shores . . . "Steve who?" . . . pierced ears . . . Wildman's contribution to our library memorabilia . . . the girl, the beau, and the arrow . . . "Mister Van Doren, you know that poem you wrote on the wall . ?" . . . Uebermensch Tarcher's unappreciated attacks on the Food Situation . . . guitars—ukeleles—clarinets—washboards—recorders . . . Joe Belair, foreign correspondent . . . lacrosse for ladies . . . "Mr. Klein, if McDowell Hall were to catch fire I venture to say no one would bother to turn in an alarm."—Bernard Udel, 10 P.M., November 24 . . . kneesocks . . . Mr. Worthington's music coterie enjoys Bach on the oscilliscope . . . bathtubs in Randall . . . Columbia lecturers . . . eclipses after seminar . . . Mr. Wolff carried away by a herd of red streetcars . . . glot charts . . .

Kilborn sandals and the blossoming of toes in tutorials . . . Udel's nine o'clock retreat from seminar . . . a succession of croquet sets . . . the McGhee-Heywood rodent-extermination in Paca-Carroll . . . the *Kentucky Irish-American* . . . Jascha

and Dodo's Market Street Supper Club —scrabble and stroganoff for lecturers, musicians, and VIPs . . . waffles in the coffee-shop . . . Pinckard's trumpet serenade of the Wilkinson math tutorial . . .



"Because I got a scholarship . . ." . . . the return of June Blaisdell . . . the discovery of subterranean connections . . . Hysterical Annapolis, Incorporated . . . the Koogle telephone bill . . . *Uncle Bertie's Christmas Carol* . . . Pierre Grimes, our torpedo-fish in residence— "Did you ever look closely at a map of Athens?" . . . the piano tuner visits seminar 3ab . . . Ladies' Night at the question period: Mesdames Darkey, Klein, Zuckerkandl, and Kaplan pin down an evasive dean . . . the return of Jack Neustadt and "The Sea Inside Us" . . . John Alexander, coffee-shop lay-analyst . . . overheard: (one freshman in the bookstore to another) "Of course it's an important paper—I'm giving it to Harry Neumann" . . . John Wilkinson falls from the Coffee-shop's metalinguistic heights and drowns in his own mother-liquor . . . 500,000 dollars and accreditation, but what about the shelves in the library that were too high?

CONTINUING CONVERSATION

THE most distinct fact one can recollect from the past two year's social activity is that a lot of time has passed. It is particularly the social activities that bring this out, for they are primarily concerned with the passing of time—shortening it, stretching it out, livening it, obliterating it. A factual list of all the parties, bookstore talks and drunkennesses of the period will not recreate the thinning and thickening of time, but such a catalog will at least prepare one to perceive certain connections and trends in the doings that have already come and gone. Then let us have a brief look at the types and the values and the directions of these social activities all taken together.

The still pervasive and inescapable air of freedom about St. John's—unaccustomed freedom for most of us—generates, as it always has, a multitude of excuses for talk and song and drink and even private conversation — in general what may simply be called social activity. Some of the forms, although they are not customary elsewhere, show a remarkable persistence and unchangeableness in our peculiarly tolerant yet peculiarly demanding community. The Little Campus and the G. & J. have not changed an iota in three decades or more, the town movie is still a bane to the week's classroom work as well as a subject for universal and never varying mock derision. Has there ever been an informal dance put on by the cotillion board where there were enough lights to see one's partner, enough liquor to satisfy the perennial tablehoppers, enough bandsmen to make the music danceable or even audible? There is no change in the number of travellers to Washington and New York on weekends. Back Campus there has crystallized a way of life that will be same until the day walls are made thicker or the veteran's checks are doubled. Even the RAM movie serves to fill the same old Saturday night gap: perhaps the intelligent criticism in recent years has dwindled to mere disconnected superlatives, but the fact that talk continues and the RAM survives attests to the lotus-like, time defying quality of the movie habit. Even our most aged and excellent films exercise this unreasonable flaunting of Change, Motion, and Becoming. So—Little Campus, dark dances, Saturday movies—these are the constants in this school's life. Add one or two more: the bulletin board, tea in the library, tutors and students on cigarette trading terms. We need not worry that the rosy

days of "My Freshman Year" are passing away altogether.

Constants of our community life are no measure of time's vicissitudes. It is left to the changes in the beer bust, the Coffee Shop, the various formal dress occasions, and the seminar party, to more accurately picture certain passings away and springings to life. Two years have seen the thrills of chit-chat with that other sex keeping groups of a dozen or more clustered around the Cannon until the small hours—none being quite kinetic enough to substitute four walls and a book for guitar and giggle. Another new sight: the Lonesome Girl —the girl who came to read the Books, but who, after the current Book has been read, wonders why it isn't time for that soda tete-a-tete just like it was in high school, or even for listening to the *Nutcracker Suite*. Last year there were long, lonesome walks back campus; this year limelighting in the Coffee Shop seemed the thing until the Administration's curfew provided a more final answer to those evenings off. These are completely new appearances, like the newly furnished Junior Common Room — appearing from nowhere in particular, but striking deeply into what was the college of five years ago. Have there ever been coke parties after Thursday seminar before? These have not taken hold, but at the beginning of the past academic year they seemed to be the most natural medium of relaxed communication for those of us who were still recovering from high school. Later these dropped out in favor of the more traditional and perhaps less deadening card party, coffee klatsch and private gin sampling.

But the change is not shown only by new campus fads. Upperclassmen spout off on occasion about other changes in old customs. The Bookstore, they say, is only a place for light chatter and books no one is interested in now. The Bookstore helpers don't SELL you books like they used to — in fact the people are pretty dull anywhere you go in that place. The Upperclassmen go on to say that beer busts used to be occasions for good talk and just the right amount of undignified dancing, but that with the coming of the barbarians that balance has been lost. And the only people who enjoy seminar parties any more, say the Old Timers, are the people who do all the talking Mondays and Thursdays anyway.

Enough of the unchangeable, the new, and the changing. If any cause is to assigned to these appearances we do not have to look far. A partial answer, at least is provided by what people have been saying grimly, smilingly, innocent and authoritatively all year long. The people here are changing.

Of course, everyone at St. John's is changing. That is what we are here for. For the school to promise parents that John and Mary will come home just as innocent and perhaps mistaken as they left would be to deny the existence of any education here. And just as the Program in the narrowest sense of the word wreaks a painful change in each of those trapped in it, so the social life, which follows to some degree from the Program proper, causes a pain and then change in its members. But this is the education through change we are prepared to accept and which has always existed at the College. The social forms which cause this change and this education are not themselves constant and rigid—they become different forms when different functions and different purposes are given them. What the All Knowing Upperclassmen were talking about was this greater change—the change in parties and talks and escapes, all of which reflect one important thing: the change in the "type" of student at St. John's.

"Type" of student! Impossible word. The typical St. Johnny does not exist. If he did St. John's would not. Yet there is something worthwhile in our trying to determine a difference in, say, the freshman of 1939, the freshman of 1946, and the freshman of 1953. There may be certain distinguishing marks in a majority of the members of each of these three classes that would betray some significant things about the social life they lived.

The 1946 freshman is easy. He was either a veteran or a younger boy thrown

among veterans. And although the veteran of three years military service lost a good deal of his dignity and his experience and his hard shell as he was humbled before the more dignified and more experienced authors, many of the teachings of those years between eighteen and twenty two served to bring about the polished rough-and-tumbleness that characterized that particular "golden age". In 1939 the freshman was younger, but more extreme in his attachment to the Program, fired perhaps by the then current climate of political liberalism and social experimenting. He was trying ever so hard to break away from all that was stuffy and false in the Ivy League and yet steer clear of the "progressive" college fad, the Bard — Sarah Lawrence—Black Mountain gimmick. To avoid the unpleasant aspects of the everyday life of the other colleges took considerable self-conscious experimenting and disciplining of even the leisure activity of the student.

Now, what of the 1953 freshman? Veteran? More than likely not. Revolutionary? Again, more than likely not. What else might he be? Transfer from another college? Prep school graduate? Playboy? Husband seeking girl? More than likely none of these, but, instead, a graduate of a public high school, eighteen years of age, thinking in terms of the current newspaper editorials, who has read the Catalog well and who has chosen St. John's over some other school.

What will be the 1953 freshman's attitude toward the present campus social outline? Will he keep going to the Little Campus? Will the beer bust become a coke dance with all the boys on one side of the room and all the girls on the other? In way of answer to this it seems certain that several of the old forms most often attributed to the "golden age" will not survive or be revived. The wine, Stic-a-na-rick and Molly Hall party seems gone, along with beer-and-tutors in Pinkney. Add to the list touch football, the all night dance, and swimming in the buff. These are least likely to succeed in future years, while the existing dances will become shorter and more wholesome, the coke party will develop, more Pogo and best sellers will pass through the Bookstore, and that grand old American institution, the Friday night date, will flourish as it never has before on campus.

So, the life we know will change. And new ways of living through the Program will spring up—some of them springing up and going on right now.

It would be presumptuous to try to describe with any accuracy the social life at St. John's five years hence. We hope

the Coffee Shop will stay, but to predict the replacement of guitars with harmonicas or clavichords is too risky, as the whims of students go. Can it be that the new people, the new ways of living, will change what we know as St. John's? Or will the meat of the Program remain unchanged, the mere externals undergoing some sort of advance, to be expected in all institutions existing in time?

If there is worry about the health of the community at this moment, a quick look might be taken, for the disturbance caused by change is obviously taken by so many of us to some disease. People who are often called upon to stand back and look at the student body as a whole, or who have to organize the student body, or even parts of it to some task, report a clumsiness in our population as an inflexibility that approaches contrariness. The difference of opinion on a matter becomes an irreparable split when the time to act rolls around. The indecisiveness, diffidence and unwillingness to act in any responsible capacity becomes a

stone in the path of the simplest of endeavors involving more than one person. Some things are gotten done now only by sudden individual action — even simple bovine tasks like sewing for the play, providing decoration for a dance, keeping a college magazine alive, have to be shouldered by one individual impatient with the coquettish modesty or laziness of others. Even activities that do not require any great amount of time or action — like volunteering information on an informal questionnaire or observing a sane, simple rule originating from the Administration are too much for the pride or the sloth of a fearful number of us. The instances are numerous —they add up to a lack of any common direction to our activities with one another.

There should be some common ground that will permit our doing things side by side with fellow students. There is some process of selection in determining who shall come to St. John's—this selection might be expected to knit us rather than mark us off one from the other.

This centrifugal tendency has been explained or justified by arguments that must be recognized as secondary reasons. One party says Easter-egg hunts will never pay for themselves because the majority of students in residence are self-supporting and will not put their money into entertainment they do not genuinely enjoy. Another party explains that by and large we are the pampered sole offspring of doting mothers, or, at best, from small families—spoiled by the progressive schools and over-liberal parents —thus making for some sort of willfulness and perverseness. There are others: the Program requires each of us to live a book for a while. If Locke and Berkeley can quarrel, two Juniors can be expected to have different tastes. Or, since many of us have left other schools in disgust, each of us builds for himself a counter to that school's life, or, a counter to something else—the army, the home town.

To bring out the deeper reason for the fragmentized quality of the St. John's community, let more evidence be heaped to specify the exact nature of our tendencies to anarchy and cussedness. Allow

a visitor from far outside the community to speak of the trouble we all know so well—this speech being from one who, it may be assured, knows the school intimately.

"The first instruction that must be given one who plans to spend some time at St. John's College in Annapolis is this: Be careful what watertight group you get into. Conversation at the school is limited to small clusters of from two to ten persons. The crowd that gathers for guitar music at eleven in front of West Pinkney has very little to do with the handful who go to La Rosa for hamburgers, or the athletes who have study at night after an afternoon of ball. The Film Club people busily go about their little discussions of future programs, oblivious to the Quiet Girls Group who would like ever so much to see *Fantasia* but do not dare enlist the help of the Artsy-Craftsy set who are at the moment consolidating their ranks against desertions to the King Williams Players Crowd. This net of intrigue and mutual myopia is going unnoticed by the Fast Racing Car Enthusiasts and the Boat Club brass who are planning to make friends among the civilians of Annapolis to avoid being drawn into contact with the Bookshelf and Picture Frame Makers who have been congregating in the woodworking shops lately with a small coterie of Seniors who have just come to the private and unpublished conclusion, after reading the Fifth Act of *Faust*, that Virtue is none other than Civil Engineering. The visitor should be aware of the dangers of drinking tea too often at the library. He will see that to enjoy one's stay at polyglot St. John's the most universal yet most unapproachable segment must be sought out, courted, and joined. Once in the group of one's choice, the right tutors must be cultivated and the proper books from the Bookstore must be bought and memorized. The daily appearance must be made in the Coffee Shop, properly attired, with one's personal schedule arranged to make room for the group's next activity. The course of one such meeting (whether it be in the Coffee Shop, dormitory room, before class, or at a meal) runs something like this: Once the two or more members are gathered a private joke is told publicly—this serves the purpose of a trumpet cadence or moose call—gathering the ears of the faithful—warning outsiders that a session is presently underway. Questions are asked around to ascertain that no new trends, or kicks as they are sometimes called, are imminent, and, finally,

if there is no pressing program for furthering the group's activities in its chosen line a story is told deploring the icky action of one of the rival or more despised groups. You must understand that none of this ritual is obvious to the chance observer—all that the appearances betray is a small group of harmoniously attired and loosely clustered young people, not paying any particular attention to one another, yet communicating

vigorously by glance, by gestures, by password, by all sorts of indirect and inverse ways of speaking, so that none but the fully initiate could have any understanding of the proceedings. With this moment of communion soaked in, the members of the group may turn their attentions to current individual projects, or they may become lost in some activity together—a movie, a class, a song, or a bit of work.

"So much for the operation of the great clans, but the visitor must realize that even to see any thing of any of the students is a problem in itself. If the visitor is a prospective student or innocent newspaperman he will never penetrate the rather frighteningly heavy barrage of 'what we are really doing here', which usually prefaces the stock St. John's conversation with outsiders. There is very little chance of his getting to know any student as a person, or of telling the student anything interesting about the world of unreality across the street. The student's barrage of 'learning virtue by talking virtue', 'seeing what the Books REALLY have to say themselves', 'learning to live, not make a living', and 'Socrates crossing the Delaware' effectively becloud much of what might be gained by visiting the college, in spite of the aptness these slogans have in the catalog. My! how eloquent they are when strange faces visit their tutorials! Everyone talks, the regularly unprepared are skipped over in the day's recitation and there is even a conscious effort on the part of the tutorial as a whole to make the Catalog come alive. A dark statement like 'the mean is best' is given a half hour of earnest analysis, and a conclusion is reached that Aristotle himself would pride in. If the visitor asserts himself, the cloud of protective sales talk disappears. A lecturer, a visiting professor, an accreditor or measurer or examiner of any sort, no matter what he has to say, is met at first with hostile silence. As the visitor launches into his thesis or criticism the only recourse that seems to be left to the xenophobia-stricken studentry is the jargoned escape, sometimes called the mock-Platonic smokescreen, a common St. John's device which involves essence, the art of a shoemaker, non-being, ash trays, things-in-themselves, sophrosyne and a multitude of other Greek words. If the offending lecturer persists he is pounded into a puzzled silence by being accused of holding to one of the school's many recognized heresies: the historical argument, divine inspiration, democracy, bourgeois learnings, Midwest-ism, statistical approach, common sense, humor, plain English, or Christianity."

So we are split up—maybe not as hopelessly split into warring groups as the quote would have it, but certainly not pulling together. The dining hall still mixes the classes and the cliques tolerably well; at least this offsets the desertion of the incoming Freshmen by the Juniors and Seniors each year as the latter flee to Paca-Carroll. The enumeration of our private quirks might be read as the symptoms of some disease that is destroying us. But more likely, and more optimistically, let us read them as displacements caused by normal change. Pains and troubles are just as much the sign of a healthy, growing body as they are warnings of a sick one. It may even be true that the smaller splits mentioned by our visitor are not of great importance—the only separations of active harm being two: that of boy from girl, and that of upperclassman from underclassman.

The separation of the sexes is not severe. Perhaps the great myth at St. John's is the one that tells of boy and girl having serious talks together at two in the morning at any place they happen to be. Under the old system of complete freedom this marvellous conversation took place so infrequently it hardly seems possible that the new rules of strict separation have injured the communication, or the program. At present there is just about as much conversation between the sexes as purely personal tastes and distastes will allow.

As for upperclassmen, it is each October that they jam their hands deeper in their pockets and wonder how the school can possibly survive another Freshman class. By May the two are usually drinking out of the same bottle and together wondering what the following September will bring from farm, high school and apron string. There has been, however, in recent years, a widening gap between the Seniors and the Freshmen which has not helped the learning process one bit. The average age of the latter has dropped, or at least the upperclassmen say the maturity of the Freshmen is less and less apparent. The mistrust the two have shown toward one another has deeply hurt the community in every way. Seniors feel the Freshmen are passing up all opportunities to keep the reputed optimum learning conditions of the "golden age" alive, while Freshmen wonder how the rowdy Seniors ever get any work done after their bickering with the Administration, wasting time in cliquish intrigue, and their incessant private partying.

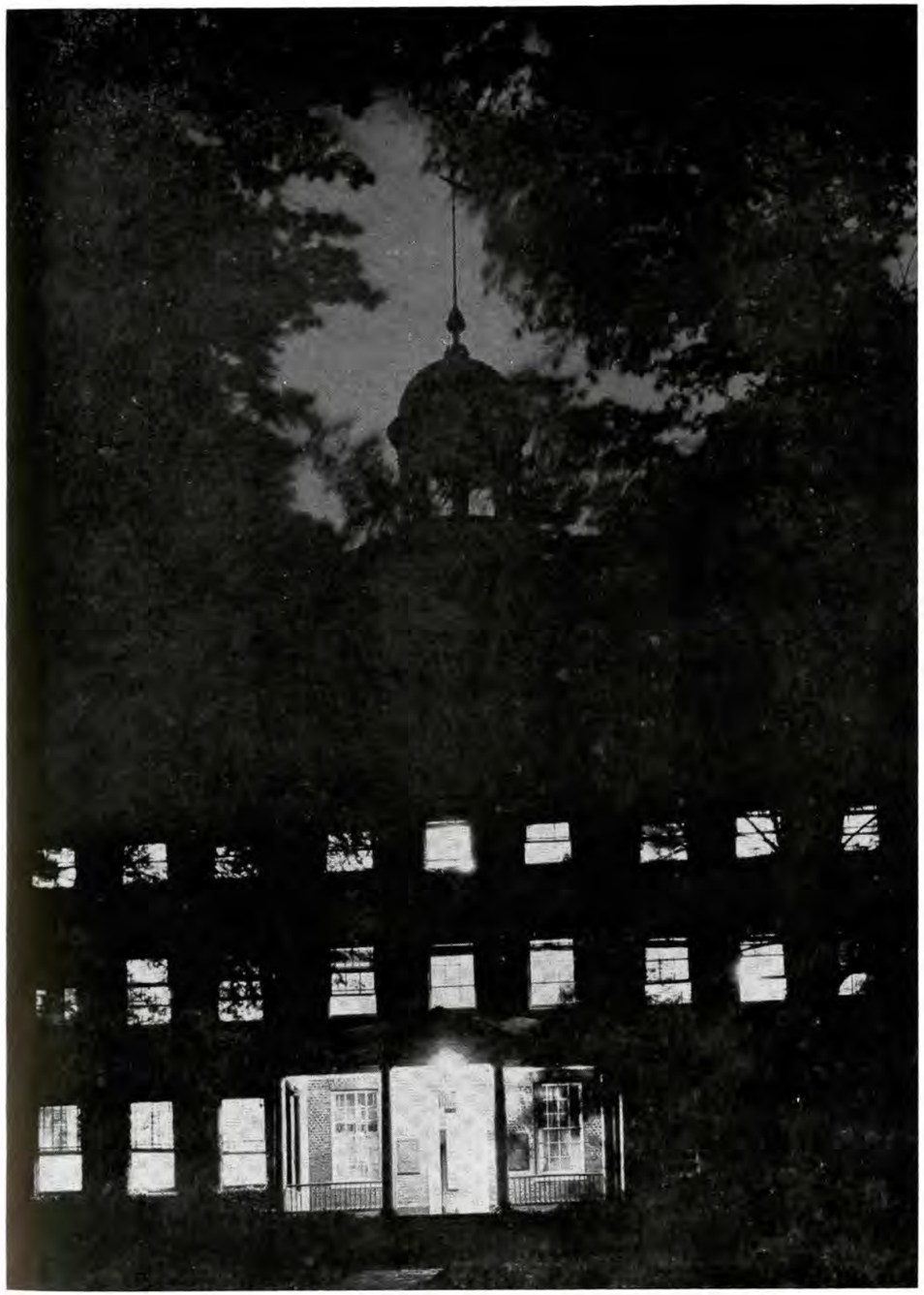
By way of resolving the accusations it should be offered that the Freshmen need not worry too much how the Seniors get their work done. Conversation is much more economically carried on after a few years of the discipline of constant talking under seminar pressure. All work done later in the four years of the Program is done more efficiently than during the early struggles. The Books are probably being conscientiously applied by even the most relaxed looking of the graduating class. On the other hand, the underclassmen may truly be missing something as they obediently illustrate their laboratory reports hour

after hour and try to perfect their memory of long Euclidean arguments. Their attempts to avoid Coffee Shop conversation and startling readings of the Books dullen the very purpose of their reading. Perfection in Greek paradigms is, in some cases, had at the expense of knowledge about language in general and the application of this language art to writing for the *Collegian* and speaking up in the question periods.

There is an intriguing explanation for this cultivated dullness that has been going around the community. It is worth retelling—even without space for close examination or possible rebuttal: It would seem that in late years there has been a great inpulling of all intellectual adventure in America. Perhaps two decades of wear and tear on the nation's patience has resulted in a desire to relax and retrograde into the tried and tested way of living that now seems as rosy after thirty or fifty years: the days of no international responsibility, no unruly labor, respect for church and professional man, low prices, low taxes—a past utopia.

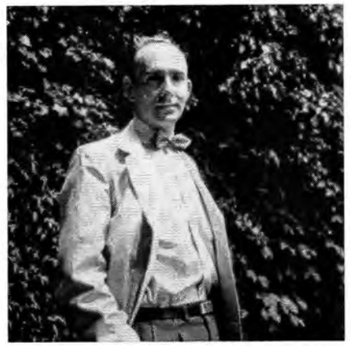
The recent Presidential election is evidence of such a retreat to the old, accompanied by an abandonment of some of the social and political pioneering that characterized the depression years and the decade of war effort. Even our present college Administration illustrates this leaving off of experiment in contrast to the never ceasing and often turbulent innovating of Barr and Buchanan. It is not unlikely that new students at St. John's reflect this trend toward solidity and old values.

If there is any truth in this apparent slackening of intellectual virility it is certainly the duty of those of us who can to inject life and the turmoil of experiment into those who are incapable of growing with the Program. It is assumed that the inaction of the upperclassmen has been due to merely accidental cliquishness and quarreling, not to any deep snobbishness or inability to act on behalf of the community's educational endeavour. It should still be possible for one at St. John's to immerse himself in living any phase of the Program without giving up the community responsibility that we call our social life. If some of these accidental splits cannot be resolved there must be deeper cracks in the body which we do not yet recognize. But if there is truly intellectual strength in the Program there is certainty that these splits and cracks will heal. The social problems we see are intellectual problems and they will be met, not by the passage of time, but talking and doing. Rational talk and virtuous action are the only tools we claim to manufacture ourselves. There is no reason why they should not overcome brute time and decay.



SENIORS
1952

THOMAS MASON CARNES



LARRY BROWNLOW CHILDRESS

RICHARD TOWER CONGDON

PAUL GEORGE CREE

MARTIN APPELL DYER

JOHN H. FRANKE, JR.

WALTER LEE GRAHAM

CARL CHRISTIAN GREGERSON

PIERRE GRIMES

WILLIAM DUNNINGTON GRIMES

HENRY D. JAWISH

CHARLES SHERMAN KLUTH

LANCASTER BENJAMIN KNOTT

DAVID WILLIAM LANE

EDWARD MICHAEL LEE

CHARLES DAY LEWIS, JR.

JOSEPH MANUSOV

GEORGE BERTRAM MILLER, JR.

DAVID EMRYS NAPPER

HARRY MORRIS NEUMANN

HISASHI H. OGUSHI

JOHN DIRK OOSTERHOUT

ADAM AUGUST PINSKER

PAUL NEVEL RICKOLT

JOHN MILTON TWIGG, JR.

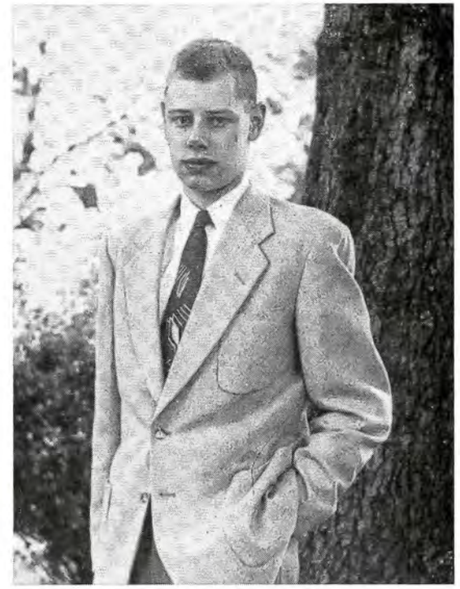
CHARLES FRANCIS WADE

WARREN PAUL WINIARSKI

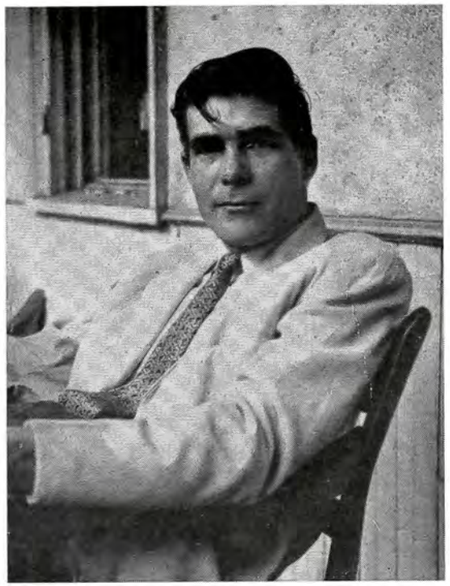
SENIORS
1953

EUGENE BRADY ADKINS

JOHN DAVIS ALEXANDER, JR.



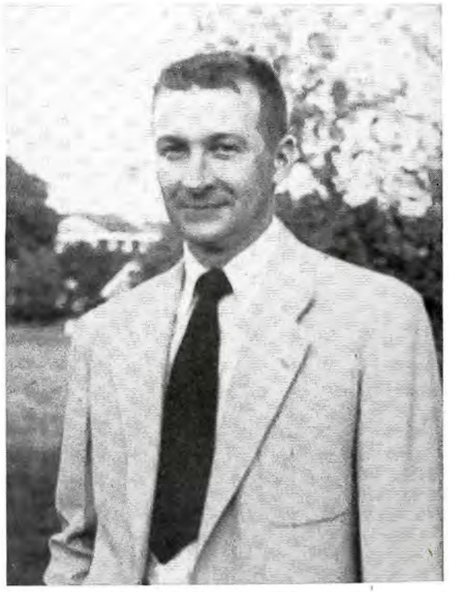
JOHN JAQUELIN AMBLER, III



WILLIAM MONEY ASTON

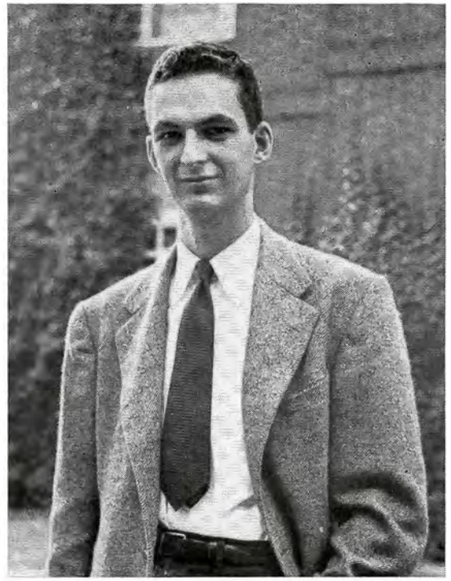
FRANKLIN ROBERT ATWELL

DUNCAN BROCKWAY



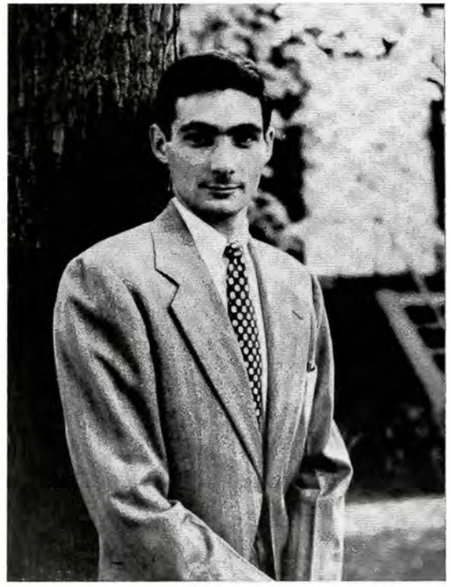
CECIL EUGENE DIETRICH

GEORGE KENNETH GERLACH

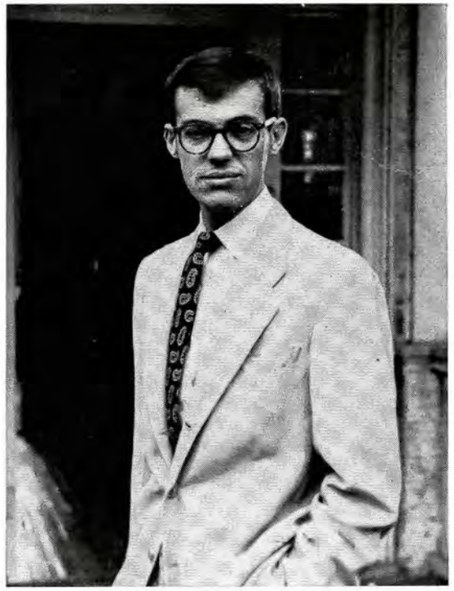


STEWART HAROLD GREENFIELD

ROBERT GEORGE HAZO



CHARLES SOLOMON LERNER



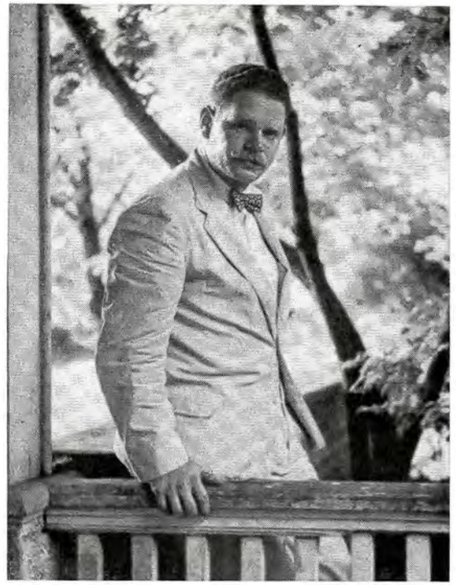
PHILIP H. LYMAN

THOMAS ALLEN MONTGOMERY

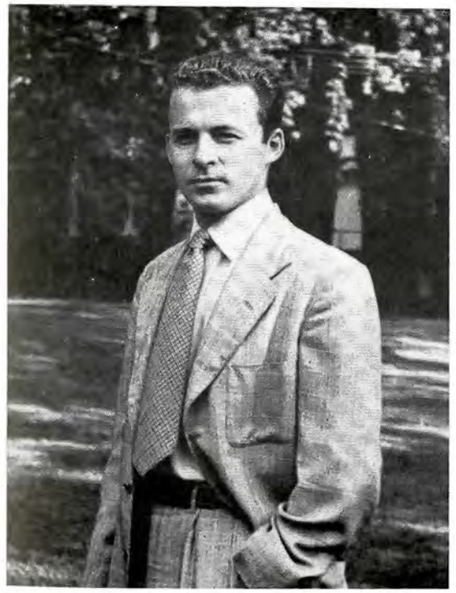
FRANK FELIX POLK

ROBERT SIGMUND SEELIG

JEREMY PHILIP TARCHER



BERNARD HARRY UDEL



FRANK WARHURST, JR.

ADDISON WORTHINGTON