

FELIX

3

D. EVERY
FORTNIGHT.



— No. 8. IMPERIAL COLLEGE, 19 MAY 1950. —

EDITORIAL.

Pomp and Circumstance.

At a recent meeting of the C. & G. Union, a motion was passed deploring the President's common mode of attire, and decreeing that on official and semi-official occasions he wear a frock coat of the old Guilds blazer material. Similarly the R.C.S. Union have decided that the august person of their President should be clothed in a top hat on these occasions. A similar motion was very properly defeated in the R.S.M. Union last term - we say properly, because the motion smacked of frivolity, and the ceremonial dignity of our Presidents is not a matter that should be treated lightly.

This reawakening of a proper sense of the true splendour of these exalted positions is to be welcomed by all of right mind. The world to-day is drab, and the colour of official pomp does much to alleviate its monotony. Let us therefore have more of this sartorial brilliance; let the Guilds complete the costume with a grey top hat; let the R.C.S. clothe the body of their President in a garb becoming his headgear; and let the R.S.M. clothe their President in such splendid plumage as to put to shame all those of humble habit.

What, then, of the President of Imperial College? If his mere flunkies are to be thus gorgeously attired, what possible apparel could match the true majesty of his exalted office? We regard as frivolous the suggestion that, after the Union had unanimously deplored his ignorance of the meaning of the College motto, that a dunce's cap would be most apt.

This matter evidently merits the most serious consideration by the Union's ablest brains. It seems likely that nothing less will suffice than a full suit of armour, with lance and plumed helmet, a white charger and a shield inscribed with the College crest - with the motto translated.

A FEW KIND WORDS.

In our last Editorial we were so busy saying unkind things about the Refectory Committee that we forgot to give them the pat on the back that they deserve. The beer in the bar may now be drunk with real pleasure, for it is an excellent fine ale. Congratulations to the Beer Improvement Sub-Committee, Chairman Derek Howe, for their fine achievement.

A word of praise, too, to the Entertainments Committee for adopting our suggestion of a second bar for Saturday night hops.

THE REFECTORY.

By a Felix Reporter.

In the last issue of Felix, the Editorial expressed the discontent of the students with the latest increase in Refectory prices, and it is evident that a fuller explanation of the increases is required than that given in the pamphlet issued by the Refectory Committee. It is hoped that this article will enable students to make a better appraisal of the situation by giving them the important facts.

It is already well known that the Refectory was running at a considerable loss - £3,451 last year, and at a similar rate this year, and that the Governors could not continue to meet this loss.

The basic reason for the loss is the fluctuations in demand which occur in a partially residential college; fluctuations of numbers, with a small number of breakfasts and suppers, and a large number of lunches; fluctuations in quality, in that a higher standard of meals and service is required for college functions, like club dinners and Dinner in Hall; and heavy fluctuations in that the place is busy for 30 weeks in the year, fairly slack for 14 weeks and very slack for 8 weeks. An organization that can meet these requirements must inevitably be less efficient than a normal catering establishment, although this loss of efficiency is partly offset by the lower overheads.

In their consideration of how to balance their budget, the Committee has assumed that there can be no lowering of requirements or standards, and since the staff is considered to be the minimum necessary to meet the requirements, there could therefore be no economy by cutting the number of staff or cost of food. Actually, two minor economies have been made here: it was found that one of the cleaners on the Refectory payroll worked elsewhere in the College most of the time, and her wages have been transferred to College Administration; also the usual trading discounts had not been obtained on some items of food, and these have now been negotiated.

A very substantial saving has been achieved by introducing a system of "laying off" staff during vacations. Retainers will be paid as a lump sum at the end of the "lay off" periods, these being considered a necessary incentive to the staff returning. The year has been divided into periods at which it is estimated to be economic to employ certain numbers of staff and adequate warning will be given to those to be "laid off."

This quite drastic reorganization will effect a saving of about £2,000 a year, but there will still be a deficit estimated at £1,600. There appeared to be no way of reducing this by further reorganization, and the Committee therefore reluctantly decided that prices would have to be increased.

The distribution of price increases is well known, also that consideration was made of the fact that vacation meals contribute largely to the loss. It may, however, be of interest to give the estimated yield from the increases:- surcharge on functions £200, vacation meals £600, breakfasts and suppers £300 and lunches £500.

These, then, are the salient facts. If anyone has any suggestions to make the Committee would be glad to receive them. They (the suggestions) should be dropped in the suggestions box in the Union, preferably this week-end, as the Committee are meeting on Monday.

The Dilemma.

There used to be a saying that an apple a day keeps the doctor away. An apple now costs five pence and the doctor nothing.

EASTER ON THE CORNISH SHIVIERA.

Just before April Fools' Day every year the tiny Cornish north coast village of Porthtowan is invaded by a score or so of miners and mining geologists. The local inhabitants are usually warned in advance and prepare themselves for the eight weeks to follow. On the whole a hearty welcome is given to the visitors from England and the neighbouring inns and public houses check over their stocks of liquid refreshment.

Perhaps to call the arrival there this year an invasion would be a slight overstatement, for the Mines Carnival was barely over when the coach and twenty, followed by an odd assortment of vehicles, set off from South Kensington with loads of sufferers bound for the West. Recovery was swift in the sea breeze, but it was a full month before anyone dared to admit that things seen through a theodolite telescope appeared upside down.

Tywarnhale Mine was an important copper producer until fifty years ago when it closed down and was taken over by the Royal School of Mines. Since then scores of R.S.M. men have been trained there in surface and underground surveying and the present course is organised to give a thorough understanding of practical mine surveying obtained in a hard working but almost holiday like atmosphere. Work on the surface and underground is sensibly arranged as far as possible to suit the elements but this year's weather - "th'worst for thirteen years" - was a different proposition and many got wet.

The old stone power house and long wooden hut which serves as a "dry" are pointed to with pride by the Porthtowan villagers who refer to them as "The" Royal School of Mines. Rumour has it that someone once wrote requesting to be shown over so that he might compare it with the Camborne School of Mines' buildings. It is considered that Camborne would have lost the verdict by a short head.

Sporting activities may be summed up as three rugger, two soccer and a billiards match lost; one darts and one squash match won. Most of the pubs between Plymouth and Land's End were looked into and among other places of interest visited were Helston (on Flora Day), The Victory (on any day), the Camborne drill hall, the Redruth ambulance hall, St. Ives and the Camborne drill hall and the Redruth ambulance hall ----- and the Camborne drill hall.

A pleasant little interlude occurred one evening in April when the third year miners, down in Camborne on a two week rock drilling course, threw a party. Surveyors and rock drillers combined to make the occasion a happy one and the main results were one policeman convinced that he was not up to "B" Division standard and many early morning arrivals at the Camborne School of Mines shocked to see their flag pole capped by a china utensil.

A few such incidents lingered in the memory as we eventually worked our way back to civilization. Others lingered too but you'll hear about them all sooner or later. And if you're very interested go down to Porthtowan and climb down Railway Shaft and sit quietly in the dark and listen.

"Tacrod."

"Practical work in Mine Surveying is done at the Tywanhale Mine, Porthtowan, Cornwall ----- Unusual opportunities are available there for gaining experience -----"

Extract from the Imperial College of
Science and Technology Calendar.

FIRST YEAR BALLADS.

II - Electrical Lab.

We poor flies inside Priggy's Parlour
Are caught in the web that he spins,
Where the use of thick wire to test voltage
Is the basest of all carnal sins!

Hear him rant, hear him rave, hear him rattle!
Hear him blow us all up with his amps!
Watch electrons encircling his whiskers
As over false wiring he champs!

With thousands of meters in circuit
To see just how AC's rectified.
(This does not scan but then it was a jolly awkward
experiment).

"It seems quite a feasible circuit."
But the little man checking it fried.

With plus wires connected to minus,
And AC where DC should be,
The whole at the highest potential,
A present to Priggy - from me.

While loud sings the synchronous motor,
The switches emitting green sparks,
Intrigued by tachometer readings,
Ex R.A.F. types are up to their larks.

And then, after weeks of hard labour,
Of toilings both early and late,
You are greeted by "Idle young loafer,
Your lab. report's five minutes late!"

"Why write such vast oodles of waffle?
A little involved, is it not?
Keep out of the margin! Use tables!
Great ampere! Its all tommy rot!"

Remove not your wig Mr. Prigmore,
Fond patience will lead you to fame.
We think you're a very nice person,
But wish you at home just the same.

There are fuses in the wiring of our circuit
And rheostats are smoking merrily,
So just pass along another heavy current,
And lets go down the road to Jane's for tea.
Umfaan.

NEBULAE AND CRICKET BALLS.

Fred Hoyle rings the changes at R.C.S.

After a fascinating lecture outlining some features of
the new theories of the expanding universe, Mr. Fred Hoyle
entertained the Maths. and Phys. Soc. at their Annual Dinner
with an (impromptu) discourse on the velocity of cricket balls.
With what dread must the batsmen of yore have faced the bowler;
for the published figures would imply that, with a supersonic
roar, the ball would cleave the bat in twain and have energy
enough to fly from Lords to South Kensington! Compared with
this we certainly do lack fast bowlers these days!

Profile: DEREK HOWE.

Few men at Imperial College can be so well known as D.C. Howe. Why then this profile? He is a prominent member of the I.C. Union Council, he is known to Guildsmen as their Union President, to the Hockey Club as a centre half, to supporters of the bar as a reliable (though always sober) supporter, and to Hostel residents as a late breakfaster. But it is not the purpose of this profile merely to catalogue his activities: rather to attempt a more unofficial portrait of one who has given much time and effort to the well being and smooth running of I.C.

After leaving school Derek casually studied some engineering to keep a friend company. Living at Portsmouth it was natural that he should join the Navy when the time came and the Navy were pleased to send him severally to Cambridge, Loughborough College and the R.N. Engineering College to train him. After these preliminaries he joined a Fleet Air Arm Sqdn. on the Implacable at Belfast; a trip round the British Isles and before long he was landed at Pompey and demobbed. To continue with engineering was the obvious thing to do though he confesses that he had always wanted to be an actor or a writer. His successes as the former with the I.C. Dram. Soc. leave no doubt as to his capability in that direction. 'During the winter,' he said, 'I decide to be an actor every other week.' Of past I.C. productions the role he most enjoyed was that of 'Dr. Knock' (Christmas, 1948); he has the ambition to play Henry V. 'Just before a production,' said Derek, 'its sheer agony. I quake and quaver and forget my lines. But once the play has opened on its first night I enjoy every minute of it.' All his activities are, as it were, communal ones; he abjures such anti-social and vicious hobbies as stamp collecting or patience. He finds more pleasure in people than in things, a sentiment which is reflected in his ability to meet and mix with any and everyone.

I asked Derek how he felt about the frock-coat (see Editorial, p.1.). He was quite lyrical! In fact he approves of brighter clothes for men - only wishes he dared to dare a red waistcoat and a yellow cap - so is glad to have some 'official' excuse for sartorial extravagance. On I.C. matters, Derek expressed the wish that more speakers at Union meetings would take their courage and humour in both hands and speak their mind - be it grave or gay - for the edification or entertainment of the meeting. More colour and more dash were needed. 'I'm all for pomp and circumstance and spectacle - though not to the exclusion of humour or spontaneity.' In respect of rags, Derek thinks that the best were often spontaneous - but we ought not to neglect the idea of a great procession and an organised rag for charity - this last providing both the excuse and the means of obtaining more license from the police.

An epicure, Derek assured me that with diligence it was possible to find really good food in London without spending a fortune. 'I regard good eating as one of the chief physical joys of life,' he said. Derek Howe is indeed a man of many parts. Guilds President, sportsman, committee man, orator, oarsman, actor and engineer. And but for Derek neither this nor any other profile would have been written - FELIX itself owes its conception and infant nurture to him.

C.M.H.

Attention, Future Presidents.

At the risk of displaying our ignorance as deplorably as the President, we offer the following as a free translation of the College motto:- "Science is the Glory and Shield of the Empire."

LAST WEEK'S COMPETITION - The Winning Entry.

ODE ON INTIMATIONS OF IMMORALITY.

There was a maiden so demure,
So staid and nice, so chaste and pure.
Her mind was free from base desire;
Her thoughts were on the plane that's higher;
With skirt pulled primly o'er her knees,
When on this plane she feared no breeze.
No wolf could brave this Gorgon's glance;
(She stayed inside when at a dance).
There was a maiden so demure;
But I'm afraid I never knew 'er.

There is a maiden so assured;
Her way of life's to be deplored,
(I can't say why - it's not allowed).
She's apt to giggle out quite loud
When sitting on a Hyde Park seat.
Her skirt and neckline almost meet
A girl who's loose, and often tight
(Particularly late at night).
There is a maiden so assured;
And do I know 'er? Oh, my Gawd!

D.G.Randall.

Matters of Moment.

The lists are now up in the I.C.Union lounge for the nominations of I.C.Council representatives, two from each college, and for the Entertainments Committee. The lists will close on 29th May, and the elections will take place at the Annual Union General Meeting on 1st June.

The lists will also soon be up for the nomination of next year's President, who will be elected by Council on June 8th.

We urge everyone to give these elections their serious attention, for on them the future well-being of the Union will largely depend.

Matters of Little Moment.

We understand that an unprecedented interest has been taken in the Photographic Society since a very interesting notice appeared on their notice board outside the bar. (The Editor will be pleased to consider any photographs that may be submitted to him, but cannot undertake to print them).

The Discovery II (see our last issue) is reported to have been held up by, amongst other things, a pair of trousers in the funnel. The I.C. men on board evidently find that old habits die hard.

We were pleased to see that in a recent article on University slang, The Observer very properly credited I.C. with the invention of the term "brown-bagger" - on account of his inseparable devotion to his brief case.

Matters of Big Moments.

Off the record: Reg. Gill has kept his secret well. Felix now lets the cat out of the bag - he has been engaged since February.

We offer our congratulations to Mary Mayer and Bob Reavell who were married during the Easter vac. Likewise to Paul Digby, Frank Shephord and David Shore, who have also taken the plunge.

There have so far been no hangings or deportations this term.

B.Sc. - A Warning.

There was a man of C. & G.,
(Soft-headed as you'll all agree)
Who wooed a maid of "high degree"
In energetic fashion.

The maid - as maidens go - was chaste;
Not easily to be embraced;
Could tell the diamond from the paste
And knew the Price of Passion.

Romance is not to be preferred
To Safety - as is oft averred
(And oft the Stork is undeterred
By Impious Inventions.)

And so she set this fiery gent
(She hoped perhaps to thusⁿ prevent
Too premature a ravishment)
A test of his intentions.

She made him work both hard and late
At complex numbers and the state
Of Spindles Whirling at a rate
Beyond all Computation.

He worked till Understanding reeled.
The fiery turbines round him wheeled
As lambs that gambol in a field
In vernal jubilation.

He slept - and Indicators drew
Huge diagrams that grew and grew
And barked - as Indicators do
When Superheaters bite 'em!

He won her and you ask if he
Lived ever after happily
Alas! He's chasing Ph.D.
And so ad infinitum!

B.

■ If Gilbert can split an infinitive so can I.



And just to think Darling, all this time the entropy of the universe is
tending towards a maximum

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

1, Templeton Place, S.W.5.

Dear Sir,

I am afraid that I cannot let your remarks about the play "Mandragola" in your last issue pass without comment.

Your critic is quite entitled to his opinion and I must agree with him that the play was not an ideal choice.

I would however like to bring to the notice of both your critic and your readers the fact that it is very difficult to find suitable plays for the Easter production. It must have only one set and a small cast to suit available actors. My own suggestion to put on Moliere's "Tartuffe" in a new translation in verse was rejected as it was felt that the college audience would never stand for it.

I must now take up the remark that we are "frightened of comment from the audience ruining a straight production." Judging by the behaviour of a small section of the audience on the third night of "Mandragola" this is not an altogether unjustified fear. On the night in question some six irresponsible youths succeeded in making the rest of the audience restless and uncomfortable for the entire first act. The effect on the actors was to make their job 50% more difficult. Just as long as the audience maintains this standard of behaviour the Dram. Soc. must choose its plays accordingly. I would however like to add that no one is more interested in putting on new, serious and interesting productions than the Dram. Soc.

I don't think that it is fully realised that a production means hard work for five nights a week for some seven or eight weeks for both cast and stage staff. It is not a little discouraging to have the culmination of such work ruined by six irresponsible adolescents.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

Henry M. Briscoe.

I.C.Union.

Dear Sir,

Realizing that Life is a Game, I have not requested the return of my 3d. for this fortnight's issue of "Felix." However, I think you should be aware, Sir, that a proportion of your public is disappointed at the disappearance of that refreshing feature, "The Drinking Man's Guide to London." I may not have learned anything from it, but it was pleasant to read about the old haunts and feel that others, perhaps, were receiving a true education. Surely there are many more houses worthy of inclusion: the "Cross Keys", "Surprise", and "Queen's" in our own vicinity, not to mention the many rewarding places further East, such as the "Lamb & Flag" and "Surrey" off the Strand. With so much wealth to draw on, it seems hardly less than criminal that your space should be taken up by reports of the verbal clumsiness of unfortunate women.

Yours faithfully,

Drinking Man.

This is one of several letters received on this subject. In our next issue we hope to print a special article on London's oldest waterside pub, the Prospect of Whitby. Ed.

UNION DIARY.

May 19th	Links Club Dinner 7.30
22nd	Golfing Club A.G.M. 1.20 "A"
24th	I.C. Boat Club A.G.M. 1.00 Gym.
	"69" Club Dinner 7.30

DIARY (contd.).

May 25th

Boxing Club A.G.M. 1.15 "A"
Bridge Club A.G.M. 1.15 "B"
I.C. Musical Society Recital 1.10

26th

Derby Draw 1.20 Gym.
Chaps Club Dinner 7.30

30th

Mountaineering Club A.G.M. 1.20 "B"
Musical Society A.G.M. 1.20 "A"

June 1st

I.C. UNION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1.20 Gym.
I.C. Musical Society Recital 1.10

2nd

"22" Club Dinner 7.30

Fencing Trip Easter 1950.

The Thursday after Easter saw the arrival in Paris of an I.C. fencing team, determined to enjoy to the full the joys of spring and to do some fencing as well. In the course of a week, three matches and a competition still left adequate opportunity for other things, and thanks to our hosts, l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes Commerciales, and to the members of the Clubs we visited, a good time was had by all.

The high light of the visit was the 'Challenge Mabilean', an international foil competition which provided some of the best fencing to be seen to-day, and which, incidentally, was rounded off rather pleasantly by the presentation to l'Equipe d'Imperial College de Londres, amongst others, of a case of 4 bottles of champagne for taking part - a liar dice session until the early hours adequately disposed of these!

Our match against the H.E.C. was very close, resulting in a win for our opponents by one fight. Wholesale hissing by the spectators from time to time was rather disconcerting until we realised it was meant as a compliment, but champagne after the match more than made up for this initial misunderstanding. Matches against the Cercle d'Escrime de Paris and the Racing Club de France also provided good practice, although both were lost to more experienced teams.

However, by the end of our stay, we too had gained experience and it was generally agreed that there's something very pleasant about Paris in the spring - you'd never guess what.

Putney Amateur Regatta.

On Saturday, 13th May, in brilliant sunshine and with a stiff cross-following wind off the Middlesex shore, the I.C. First Junior Eight laid the foundations of a revival for I.C. rowing.

The First & Second Junior Eights had been entered, the former for Junior Eights and the latter for Junior Clinker Eights.

The Second Juniors were perhaps somewhat unlucky in being beaten by the eventual winners of the event in their heat. All the same, their rowing typified the errors into which I.C. rowing as a whole has fallen. An almost complete lack of beginning - a hoick through at the finish and a consequent forcing away of the hands, which leaves the crew with little or no time to prepare for a true beginning. Every crew which bases its rowing on the teachings of the immortal Steve must realise that a quick, hard beginning, the blade locked up in the water at the moment of entry by a quick flex of the arms and carried through by a drive off the stretcher with both legs is the first essential - from which the rest will follow naturally without need of being forced.

The First Juniors had the right idea and made no mistake in winning their heat. In the final, though perhaps a little rougher, they were looser and more lively and commanded a higher rating. After a good fight they lost to a good London R.C. eight, who showed clearly that the finish of the stroke is really only the end of the beginning. "Through in one piece" in fact.

LONDON UNIVERSITY ATHLETIC CHAMPIONSHIPS.

At the end of the Union lounge you'll find another gap - this time the Roseberry Cup for athletics is the defaulter. It has passed to Kings, so we shall probably never hear the last of it!

Things never looked too bright from the Wednesday evening when, although Jarvis gave us a 2nd in the mile walk and Whitlock came 3rd in the 3 miles (in good time), Kings produced the winner of each. Brookman and Goldhawk got 3rd and 5th respectively in the discus and Bean managed a 5th in the hammer, but how we missed Fred Martin in these events.

On Saturday hopes of remaining champions were slim but not extinct and a fine effort by Smithies to finish 2nd in the 440 yds hurdles on his second run over that distance set the standard - but the points only came slowly. George and Townend filled the last two places in the 100 and Watts beat the latter into 4th place in the 220; Windle seemed off form in the 880, finishing 5th, but Gillett's 4th in the 120 yds hurdles equalled the I.C. record. A few inches cost Brookman the javelin first place and Whitlock ran easily into 3rd in the steeplechase. Need we add that Tony Watts occupied his traditional place behind Wint in the quarter - he probably dreams of that view!

IMPERIAL COLLEGE ATHLETIC SPORTS 1950.

On this grey day the I.C. stars of track and field shone brightly as they competed for the Imperial College Governors' Challenge Shield for their constituent colleges. The trophy, dim and dusty, had earlier been transported from its niche in the Union, by courtesy of London Transport, and via a circular tour of Walham Green, to Motspur Park. Boanerges, that mascot of mascots, having spurned the R.C.S. drum outside the Union, but complete with Spanner, had already completed its course to the track.

At this annual event, tactics in deployment of strength count for more than a few spectacular victories, hence the long standing of some of the records. One, however, that fell again after only two years was that for the half-mile, won by C.J.Windle, ex-Public Schoolboys Half-Mile Champion, in 2mins. 0.6secs. Windle later laid the foundation for the record breaking Mile Relay time of 3mins. 43.4secs. by returning 2mins. 3.6secs for the half-mile. A.B.Watts clinched the matter with a 52.4secs. quarter at the end. The Guilds team thus had a grandstand view of the battle for second place between R.C.S. and Mines.

The meeting was visited early on by an intrepid airman who might have been better employed cheering his side from the rails. The Judo Club exhibition, commentated on in the Carroll Gibbons style ("Hullo Everbuddy") at least provided the long-sought answer to the question as to which bone was connected to the shoulder bone. The events in general were coaxed along most ably and wittily by the commentators.

Since about 500 people attended the meeting, individual results will be quite well known, and we shall give only the final scores:- C. & G. 113 points, R.S.M. 96, R.C.S. 62.

ERRATA.

We apologise for a mistake in our Editorial on page 1. The Beer Improvement Sub-Committee in fact consisted of two people, Col. Sheppard and D.C.Howe, and it was quite incorrect to refer to Derek as its chairman.

We have also been guilty of ambiguity on page 6. It is Reg. Gill who is engaged, not Felix.