

Guild News

The Guild of Undergraduates—University of Birmingham

Number 533

Thursday, October 2, 1958

Threepence

A MESSAGE FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

A MORE EXACTING FUTURE

The kindness of the Editor allows me to welcome all those coming to this university for the first time. There are, I suppose, about 1,300 of you this year. Some are already graduates of other universities. They, I know, will find Birmingham a friendly place, and I hope they will take every opportunity of contributing to the life of our academic society. However, most of you are making the acquaintance of a university and its ways for the first time. To begin with you are bound to find it strange, but that will not last long if you set yourselves to grasp the opportunities the university offers to all its members. For we want you to feel that this is your university on which you can look with pride, and to which you will have an enduring loyalty.

Those of you who are entering the Faculties at Edgbaston may well be surprised by your first sight of the place. It is true that the scaffolding, which this time last year covered the Tower from top to bottom has gone, but there are cranes, excavators, cement towers, lorries and legions of workmen on every side. The new University Library is well advanced, yet another Library at the Medical School will soon be finished, an elegant Physics Block is almost complete, the foundations of the new Arts Building and of the buildings for Mathematics and Mathematical Physics are laid, and a monstrous hole in the ground marks the place from which another Chemistry Block will soon arise. Nor is this all, for still more construction will start during the coming academic year. Those of you who go to Edmund Street will almost certainly spend your final year in the new buildings at Edgbaston. You will see all the Faculties brought together in a single place, and that is something for which we have striven for many years.

THE FUTURE

I hope you will see in all this something more than new and better buildings. This University, which has already achieved much, is working to fit itself for an even more exacting future, and we look to you, first as students, and then as graduates, to bear your part in our enterprise.

A vigorous life

In your life here the work of lectures, libraries, laboratories and tutorials must come first, but you will soon find that the University offers many other worthwhile things as well. There is the vigorous life of the Union, there is all the Barber Institute provides, and there is the wide range of opportunities for recreation offered by the Physical Education Department. These things are for your use, and we hope you will make the best of them. The Freshmen's Conference will introduce you to us all, and will help to make you feel full members of our community.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

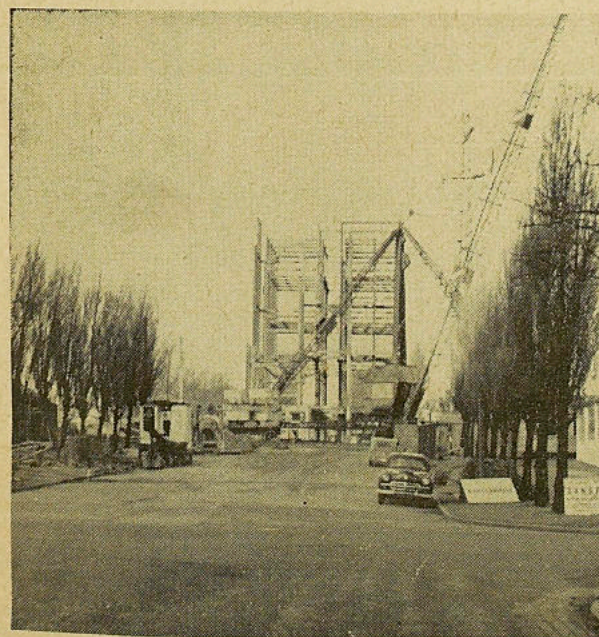
"Carnival is coming!
Now what d'you think of that?
Please put a penny in the old
man's hat."

(English traditional song.)
The University Carnival will be opening on Monday, October 13, and will last for three weeks until Carnival Day, November 1. We need help from everybody in the Guild, and from Freshers in particular. The latter will find that Carnival will prove to be a most enjoyable introduction to the Guild and University life.

Next week's *Guild News* will contain a special Carnival supplement which will give you all the information on Carnival, 1958. So don't forget.

See next week's
"GUILD NEWS"

THIS IS THE UNIVERSITY



OLD . . .

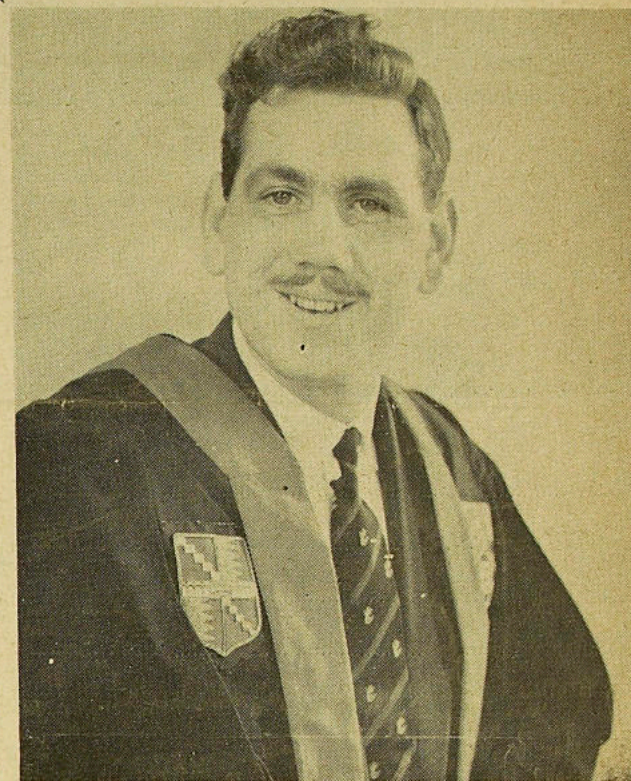
AND

. . . NEW

—or at least it was, the assorted mobs of builders including, temporarily at least, several well-known Guild characters, are doing their best to transform it. The large central erection—popularly known as Joe, or more correctly as the Joseph Chamberlain Tower—is not used by Muslim priests to call the faithful to prayer, despite the resemblance to a minaret. The rest of the buildings have a sort of attractive ugliness which seem to grow on one. It is very much a matter of debate how well the newer buildings blend with the older ones down here, but one thing is certain, that for good or ill the whole appearance of the University is rapidly becoming very different from anything those responsible for the original plan can possibly have envisaged.

To the right is the type of scene that is going to confront you in the next few years. We must resign ourselves to the inevitability of resembling a builders' yard, remembering that it will doubtless be worth it.

The president speaks



'WE ARE HERE TO HELP'

Crane and jib, pit, hole, and prop, soil and soot — these are the immediate characteristics of the University scene that will most readily engage your imagination. You will discover quickly that, although it is a statistically uncorroborated fact, two-thirds of Birmingham's citizens are addicted to soft-soled canvas shoes, which they wear even when it rains. One devotee of regional pedology has recorded seeing 82,332 pairs of "soft-soles" within a two-mile radius of Chamberlain Place.

You are able, within a short period of residence at the University, if indeed you are so inclined, to become initiated into the rapidly growing specialism of "liber stepology," which concerns itself with a qualitative appraisal of stairway arrangements in the various city libraries. To these and various other branches of Potter-manship I am delighted to welcome you on behalf of the Guild of Undergraduates.

Of the Guild of Undergraduates and the Union much could be written, since within them centres the whole student social and extramural life of the University. It is

your club. We are fortunate in Birmingham in having a Union which in its buildings and administration is universally admired. This admiration can only continue if each and every member actively contributes his or her part to Guild life.

"If you want anything doing, try shouting: if that fails, then do it yourself." Upon this highly respected axiom—although of dubious origin—rests the success or failure of the Guild. You will find the Union a rich and rewarding society.

Physically, you may find the Union and Guild Club a little uncomfortable, but the overcrowding which is its major cause is symptomatic more of growth than of decadence.

I hope that the Freshers' Conference is helping you to find your feet and assisting in the solution of the many problems that will arise at first. On the other hand, if I or any member of the Executive can be of any help in overcoming these difficulties, then please do not hesitate to come and see us.

Finally, I will wish you every success in your professional life as an undergraduate. As the sages say, "Sow a good seed then reap a good harvest."

Best wishes,

JOHN JARVIS

GUILD THEATRE GROUP

AUDITIONS

for the Autumn Major Production
"SIX CHARACTERS IN SEARCH OF AN AUTHOR"

by LUIGI PIRANDELLO, translated by Frederick May,

will be held in the

DEBATING HALL, THE UNION

on MONDAY, OCTOBER 6th, TUESDAY, OCTOBER 7th
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 8th, at 5.15 p.m.

All Freshers interested in drama are invited to attend. This is one of the best plays by one of Italy's greatest playwrights and offers ample opportunity for good acting. Many actors are required in both large and small parts, so even if you have had little or no dramatic experience, you will be very welcome. If interested, but unable to attend auditions, please contact the Secretary, G.T.G., The Union.

EDITORIAL

Guild News



Number
533

Selly Oak
1841

THE UNIVERSITY NEWSPAPER,
THE UNION,
EDGBASTON

Editor Cyril Hershon
Business Manager Guy Rastall
Advertising Manager Enid Burrows
Circulation Manager Mark Seaward

It is often levelled against university newspapers—and this one has had its fair share of criticism—that they take themselves too seriously. This is equally said of any society which seems to be active and thriving.

Perhaps it is a thorn in the side of the majority of the student population, who are already overblown with sloth and indifference—that there are some who are interested enough to want to give up time and energy to a worthwhile cause. If so, their criticism is hardly valid.

Indeed we do take "Guild News" seriously—as seriously as the Guild takes itself, and you can be sure that if the latter failed to produce the amenities that it gives there would be a loud outcry. We are duty bound to represent in print the current trends of Birmingham student thought and activity, and you may be assured that this policy will be carried out to the full.

Not only is the newspaper an independent Guild concern in its content, but it relies almost exclusively upon the student body for staff and readers. In the latter case you may all participate, and we hope that you will all buy your weekly copy during the coming years. In the former, you will be more than welcome into our ranks. There are inevitably, at the beginning of the session, vacancies in all departments of "Guild News" for staff. Your interest may be in writing, selling, or just plain typing. But whatever it is, we welcome you and hope that your journalistic ambitions will find some fulfilment with us.

The last thing you should feel, especially Freshers, that your experience is too meagre or even non-existent. It will hearten you to know that the present Editor was a mere seller, and that this year's Business and Circulation Managers have never had experience with us before. If, therefore, you would like to take part in the production of "Guild News," please fill in the form below, and send it in to us.

Vacation jobs decentralised

An exciting new scheme has just been proposed by N.U.S. which, if it is adopted at a conference on October 18, will make it much easier for students to obtain vacation work. Up till now the organisation has been purely from the central bureau: the new scheme provides for thirteen regions, one of which has Birmingham as its centre.

This would of course mean the employment of a professional secretary, and the establishment of an office in the Union. It would also increase the importance of the Guild Vacation Work Secretary, whose work would be greatly increased.

Each bureau would be responsible for getting jobs from employers in its area, and for placing students from all the colleges in N.U.S. who applied for work in that particular area. The scheme would be financed by making a charge to employers of two guineas to firms, and one to private people. (Agencies usually charge about 10 guineas).

Naturally it is realised that there may be weaknesses in the scheme, but that is for the college representatives to discover on October 18. Every student will follow the course of events with interest, since it has his financial advantage at heart.

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A SPUR TO STUDENT DRAMA

WHILE the average Birmingham undergraduate seems to spurn our own Guild Theatre Group—for reasons best known to himself—the student body of Great Britain as a whole is extremely drama-conscious. It is a complete error to mistake the complete friendliness and informality that reigns in G.T.G. for snobbishness or exclusiveness. On the contrary, G.T.G. welcomes everyone in the University who is interested in any aspect at all of the theatre—even front-of-house activities—and they readily accept newcomers into their midst.

Once again we hope that they will be entering the National Union of Students' Drama Festival which is run in association with the "Sunday Times." The Festival, held in London from December 29 to January 3, is ridiculously cheap to attend, and we trust that G.T.G. will be there as finalists in the competition.

A whole galaxy of famous names are to help in the proceedings—names like Sir John Gielgud, Anthony Quayle, Peter Ustinov, Emlin

Williams, and Sam Wanamaker—and there are not only performances and talks, but practical visits too.

This year a record entry is anticipated from University Drama Societies, and it is a great morale-booster to read of the success with which last year's winners, the Cardiff University Players, have performed Fry's "A Sleep of Prisoners" at the Brussels World Fair. There was great interest in University Drama at the Fair since there were productions by eleven British groups, and groups from America, Yugoslavia, Portugal, Istanbul, Venice and Louvain.

This is a tremendous spur to us in Birmingham, and it is to be hoped that Bob German's committee and members will rise to the occasion. Perhaps not all our readers will be able to take part on the far side of the footlights, but let them not be backward in supporting their own drama group, whose productions are always worthy of large audiences.

MERMAID—WHAT IS A MAGAZINE?



The balance of expressed thought and opinion within the Guild is distributed among "Mermaid," "Guild News," and "Wall Newspaper." "Mermaid" exists for the publication of student verse, articles, and stories on the "highbrow" level. In the past, her appeal has been limited and her thought often obscure. We are hoping to make her more attractive to a wider audience.

The first edition of the year will be on sale soon after term begins, and even by then we shall be canvassing for material for the next edition. The organisation of the magazine is completely in student hands, from the running of finance to the adjudication of contributions. It is our proud boast that at the moment we are virtually independent of Guild subsidy.

In the long run such a periodical depends on undergraduate contributions for its success. Each new

generation of students inherits the responsibility and honour of supporting it. At some time, we have all felt the urge to write, whether in verse or prose. Yet the *raison d'être* of "Mermaid" is exactly that—to satisfy and test the worth of our ambition. Our only demands are, that whatever is published be interesting, possibly amusing, but above all readable. There is plenty of scope in this for all.

As an example of what we are trying to do, we hope to present a series of articles on the Victorian era, taking Cardinal Newman, Darwin's "Origin of the Species," and Disraeli's novels as "representative." We will welcome from you contributions ranging from discussions on philosophy to adventures in Spain, scientific technique to vintage cars, verse from the serious to satire and parody. We are also hoping to institute a prize for the best undergraduate contribution, and one for a photographic cover for "Mermaid."

Once again we depend on your contributions. In fact we are continually emphasising that the success or failure of "Mermaid" does depend on you as readers and writers. We shall be delighted to hear from you in the future.

ROBERT COWLEY
(Editor, "Mermaid")

Jewish Society

We extend a hearty welcome to all Jewish Freshers, and say "Shalom Aleichem." Jewish Society is one of the most thriving societies of the Guild, and we look forward to having you in our circle.

Many activities are carried on—socials, dinners, talks, discussions, and an annual revue or play. Please come and join us, and you will find a "heimischer" welcome. For details, see our notice boards in the Union and Guild Club, and contact either Henry Cohen or Judith Letchner via the pigeon-holes.

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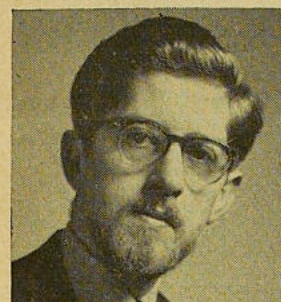
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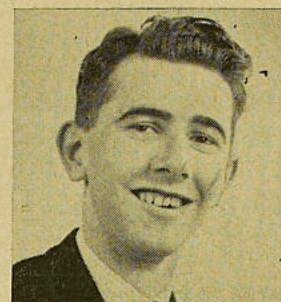
GUILD OF UNDERGRADUATES EXECUTIVE FOR 1958—1959

M. J. STANLEY, Guild Secretary. The scribe of the Guild, he is also responsible for convening council meetings, recording its minutes, carrying out correspondence, and generally co-ordinating the Guild machine.
M. J. HESELTINE, Guild Club Secretary. He is responsible for carrying out the directives and policies of Union Committee in the management of Guild Club.

Mike Stanley



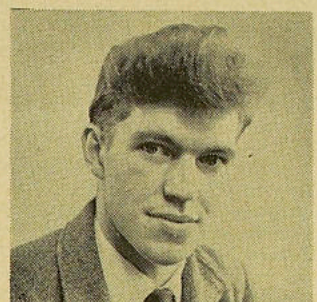
Mike Heseltine



Tony Revel



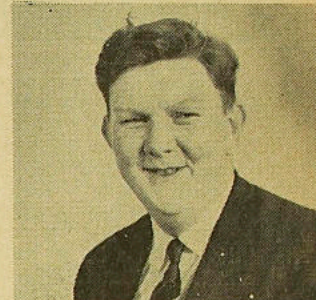
J. Betteridge



P. K. Sellers



Matthew England



MATTHEW ENGLAND, Union Treasurer. He supervises the Union accounts as distinct from those of the Guild, pays all bills incurred in Union management, and is chairman of Guild Publications Committee.

We regret that we have as yet no picture of the Internal Affairs Representative, Michael Gledhill, and of the Guild Treasurer and External Affairs Representative, as these two posts are unfilled.

EDMUND STREET COLUMN

FIRST of all, this column would like to bid all Ed. Street Freshers welcome to our darkened doorsteps. We would have got a red carpet down but decided that certain political susceptibilities might be offended. There's also the fact that the only carpet in the place is coffee-stain tinted. Usually everyone blabs about what to see and do in Ed. St. and how not to get lost there—we just say that once you've got the hang of the corridors it's plain sailing.

This column is generally associated with triteness and unoriginality—a reputation gained over the years and "The Mermaid" bar—through no fault of its own. Talking of "The Mermaid," has it been repainted or something?

Up in Guild News office there is a frantic inertia that is only dispelled about ten minutes before everyone decides to go home. In this final whirligig Ed. Street Column is struggling for breath and manfully trying to be as important as the others. But at this end of the week, a rigorous slimming course known as editing has reduced Ed. St. to a mere nonentity. He is shoved in unceremoniously at the last minute in a small space at the bottom of a page—he hasn't been shoved there yet, but after *The Ed.* reads this there won't be much doubt—with only a few stale remarks wrung from his aching (censored), about "The Mermaid," the Bridge fiends, or the ever recurrent Ed. St. brews—coffee or beer or both—to bolster himself. Our vines have sour grapes.

P.S.—Did you notice our absence last week? No—we thought not.

P.P.S.—The great thing about it is that it is our column—so we are going to make an appeal to all Freshers at Ed. St.—for Pete's sake do something illegal sensational or scandalous—we've just got to have material.

MASTERS ALL

After months of solemn silence, punctuated by the odd tipple of our favourite librarian's stiletto heels, Edmund Street suddenly burst into

life last Monday. A mass of eager-looking men and women, all clutching their brief-cases (doubtless padded with newspapers to hide the fact that they were empty), purposefully made their way up the central staircase to the English Theatre. Once again the Education Department was opening its proceedings, and preparing to send another band of would-be dominies to set upon an unsuspecting populus of young delinquents and seekers after knowledge.

One sometimes wonders why the more prominent members of the Guild take this course, unless it be to give them another year of freedom, or rather escape from responsibility. Yet they were all there, largely packing the back rows, stamping at the witticisms, clapping in appreciation.

Among the many we were able to pick out last year's Guild News Editor, Keith Tancock, now relieved of his beard, doubtless afraid that he might scare the horses by retaining it. In fact, Pubs. Comm. was in full force: Ben "Mermaid" Cowley all but crushed the visitors from other universities in his hurry to pick up his copy of "Roaring Boys" from the Departmental Library. There too was Jim "Mermaid" Fletcher, looking less anxious for knowing that his last edition has been put to bed.

On the artistic side, Mike Dames sat idly gazing at the ceiling, obviously speculating as to how he could decorate it with a mural, while Lis Canneaux, fresh from a year's real teaching, earnestly concentrated, bent on getting her money's worth. Bob Kerry, equally bent... on green fields, etc., was seen to prick up his ears when the Lancashire dialect was given a mention, but the expectation was short-lived. Dare we suggest that the awful ceremony of graduation has subdued the eager-beavers? Why, even Johnny Wallace has stopped conducting—or is it matrimonial blues?

THE '56 SOCIETY

The '56 Society emerged to satisfy the need at Edgbaston for some sort of organised appreciation of the Arts, particularly the visual, among Science students. With the added presence of the Barber Institute at Edgbaston, with its fine collection of paintings and sculpture, it was felt by many people that a more dynamic interest in art should be fostered by a society explicitly devoted to its appreciation, and consisting chiefly of students from Science departments where all too often the lack of facilities to encourage such appreciation led to its neglect.

After a very successful year and a half of talks, discussions, excursions to art galleries and exhibitions, an idea to hold an exhibition by the

PRESS POST

Dear Sir,
Not only do the authorities regard undergraduates as pigs—they now treat them like pigs!

For some weeks now the University Road has resembled a cross between a sea of mud and a pig-sty. At first a mild attempt was made to clean this mess, but the condition has steadily declined to nothing better than a cess-pit.

To correlate the gravity of the situation, I must point out the fact that the public no longer uses our road as a short cut. Surely something should be done? And while we're about it, how about the rest of the pavement up towards the Medical School and No. 2 bus stop?

Yours, etc.,
BERNARD A. JUBY
(Medic. 4).

Dear Sir,
Taking a broad sweep on my bicycle out of the entrance to the Barber Institute last week, I had the misfortune to see my front wheel disappear from beneath me. As I landed on the ground, I was in an excellent position to view the cause of my mishap. My front wheel was nesting in a great hole of enormous proportions.

Sir, would it not be possible for just a little of the cement, being choked out by the large mechanical contrivances on the opposite side of the road, to be used to bridge this highway foramen magnum?

Yours, etc.,
M.R.D.S.

Dear Sir,
May I, on behalf of all the regular users of the Coffee Room, express gratitude to Mr. Dames for the work he has put into his preliminary design for a mural. And may I recommend that this work be rewarded by Guild Council at its next meeting by permission to start painting the mural itself as soon as possible.

Yours, etc.,
J. MARWOOD.

President. It proved a great success and showed fully that beauty of pattern, form, and colour was ever present, even in the most mundane scientific investigations.

Besides serving students whose interest in the Arts is long established already, encouragement to join the Society is given to those who are concerned with the tendency to over-specialisation which besets the present trend in scientific education and who feel that an appreciation of artistic activities provides that essential antidote to create a balanced education and to extract a fuller appreciation of the world around us.

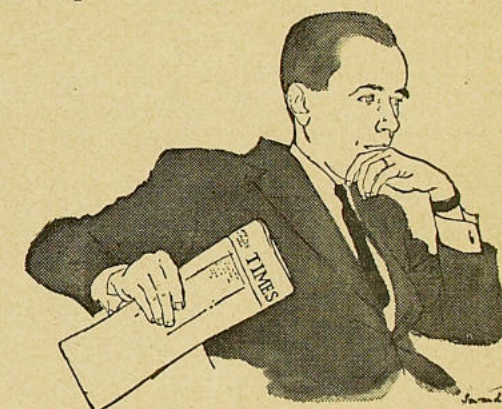
Chess Club

THE Chess Club extends a warm welcome to all players of any standard, and invites you to a Freshers' Lightning Tournament, which will be held on Wednesday, October 8, in the Council Room of the Union. Details may be obtained from the Chess notice board in the Union Common Room.

In past years, the club has received much support from Freshers, and it is our sincere hope that this year will prove no exception. So why not join us next Wednesday for an evening's entertainment?

K.W.M., J.C.D.

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SPORT IN PLENTY FOR THE FRESHER

Many of our Fresher readers have doubtless been notified of the fact that the Sports Trials for Freshmen will be held on Saturday afternoon. This, therefore, is in the nature of another reminder and some very general information about University sport.

Since the Freshers' Conference is somewhat shortened this year, there will be very little opportunity for you to register with the club of your favourite game. We therefore wish to remind you again to attend the meeting for sports-minded Freshers in the Debating Hall on Friday at 6.30.

If you wish to make doubly sure about your registration, you may also sign your name on the appropriate lists displayed in the Mixed Common Room of the Union.

Sport within the University is controlled by the Athletic Union, and executed by many of its affiliated clubs. Particulars of its functions and details of individual club officers may be found in your Guild Diary. We advise, and even request you, to contact your club Secretary with regard to anything you do not understand.

The University has been, and indeed still is, one which commands considerable respect in the sporting world, both in relation to other universities and to clubs of high repute.

The maintenance of this high standard will rely, for the most part, on your support. The more the student population increases, the more the burden of achieving sporting success falls upon the shoulders of the Freshers.

We cannot insist too much on the need for consistent support of the Athletic Union clubs which you join. May we wish you success in the Trials, fair weather, and a fruitful season.

A.J.T.



Departmental sport

Having once been Freshers ourselves, we know all the worries that beset newcomers, even (since we ourselves are bone idle) with regard to sport. Perhaps the Fresher feels that he cannot possibly get into one of the University teams, no matter how hard he tries. Let him try first.

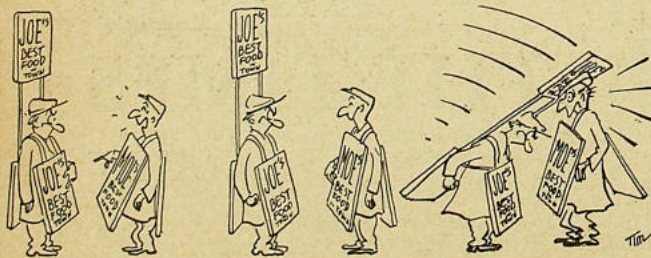
If this fails, and he still wants to play, then let him not despair; Departmental Sport will come to the rescue, and not only that, it is regarded as the most enjoyable branch of University sport.

All departments have a sports representative (we hope!) He will arrange games, provided that you are sufficiently keen, though not as regularly as official games. Nevertheless, there is a thriving inter-faculty league in several sports, not to mention the ever-popular mixed hockey matches.

Even if you play badly, or not at all, it's the willingness that counts. Do get in touch with your rep., and don't forget to make him send reports of matches to our columns. Good luck, and we look forward to seeing many of you joining the fun.

Student paper censored

"Scinteia," organ of the Rumanian Communist Party, recently revealed that "Important changes" had taken place on the editorial staff of the student newspaper, "Viata Studentesca." This paper was criticised by "Scinteia" a few weeks earlier for lack of strong efforts against "bourgeois infiltration" of student life.



KNIGHT-ERRANT

THE Russian cinema, insofar as we know anything about it is something of an enigma. "Potemkin" and more recently "The Cranes Are Flying" have set a standard by which we may judge films produced in any country. There has, however, been a tendency for political moralising (if there is such a thing) to batter its way through the most sensitive film. The persistent and banal music track imposed on "Potemkin" left no doubt as to the modern conception of Eisenstein's masterpiece. Such a tendency has often nagged the cinemagoer; the heights of enjoyment unreached because of such stumbling blocks.

It is a pleasure, therefore, to be able to recommend unreservedly the film at the Cinephone, "Don Quixote." This film does, in fact, transcend that stamp of nationalism which rears itself with varying degrees of ugliness through almost every film. Cervantes' book, a reaction against the literary trivia of the 17th century, emerges as a strange and rather beautiful creation. I do not think it necessary to review this film in detail, indeed your critic for this week could do no better, having begged you to see it, than to lay down his pen. There are moments, however, which if only for selfish reasons, must be mentioned. Of these the scenes set in the Spanish Court are memorable. The Duke welcomes the Knight with mock ceremony, his courtiers glide and bow while the haggard Quixote stands bemused and tragic yet with a sincerity which exposes the rottenness of all around him. These scenes are brilliantly directed, and for sheer atmosphere the contrived funeral has a haunting edge to it.

Throughout the acting is beautiful. Sancho Panza, the faithful servant, is nobly conceived. He waddles behind his master, often far behind, his devotion to something intrinsically good, even though he does not completely understand. Quixote is touching, while his installation as Governor of his "Island" is something to remember.

The dubbing of English (as opposed to any other language) is masterly. Quixote has a slightly tremulous and soft voice which suits the Knight, perfectly, while Howard Marion Crawford's Panza is as gruff and devoted as one could wish.

The music by Kara Kabayev resorts to a few hispanisms with some remarkable flashes of sub-Prokofiev, presumably the genre in Russia today. This, however, is the only reminder that the film is of Russian origin.

Do go and see it, good films aren't often retained at the Cinephone.

U.F.A.W. SUMMER SCHOOL—1958

THIS year's Summer School and Reunion of the Universities' Federation for Animal Welfare was held at Culham College, Abingdon, Berks. Amenities of the College included single rooms, tennis courts, table tennis, swimming and boating, the Thames being about half-a-mile away.

The gathering was international, having representatives from Austria, Germany, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Spain, Wales and West Africa. The programme was designed to interest and inform students of ALL faculties.

In addition to visits to Compton Agricultural Research Centre, to animal laboratories at Harwell, and to the Clarendon Zoology Department, Oxford University, there were also various talks, films and discussions on topics of animal welfare and allied subjects. Speakers included Dr. Chance, of Birmingham University, Dr. J. R. Baker, of Oxford University, and Major C. W. Hume, the Secretary-General of the Federation.

There is undoubtedly increased interest in the work of the Federation, especially as it is designed to suit every type of undergraduate. For further information concerning the work of the Birmingham branch, contact Mark Seaward via the pigeon-holes.

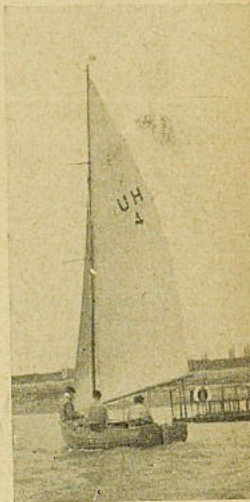
STOP PRESS POST

Dear Sir,

I would like to draw the attention of the members to yet another example of petty officialdom. As a general rule, the Gramophone Library is open on all weekdays. Many post-graduates and others who have to spend the summer months here find the library very useful; for one thing this is the only time of year that one stands much chance of booking the room at all, it is so popular with students nowadays. However, at the beginning of the Long Vacation an abrupt little note signed by a gentleman called "Secretary of the Gramophone Library Sub-Committee" appeared on the door, informing one and all that the library will be closed until the end of the vacation. No explanation was offered, and it is impossible to guess why this step was taken. Perhaps the gentleman would care to offer some explanation of his arbitrary action through your columns.

Yours, etc,
BRIAN J. B. WOOD.

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