

**“THE UNIVERSITIES”. I—UNIVERSITY COLLEGE,
DUBLIN.**

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University education has ceased to excite more than passing interest since the Irish Universities Act of 1908. The University of Dublin, indeed, has been examined by a Royal Commission since that date;¹ but there has been no inquiry into the developments in University education as a whole or into the degree to which the arrangements made in 1908 have justified the hopes reposed in them. The present paper, it is hoped, will be the first of a series in which the progress of the five University institutions will be examined.

It was hoped originally to bring the figures for all five into the one paper. It was soon found that this procedure would involve very great delay, and that its results might well prove too unwieldy to be of use. It was decided, therefore, to split up the work and to devote the first paper to an examination of University College, Dublin, for which statistics were immediately available.²

This concentration on one institution has its disadvantages. Many of the problems that face University College, Dublin, are not peculiar to it; they affect, it may be even more seriously, other Universities or University Colleges. These problems must be examined in any discussion of University College; but it must be emphasised at the same time that there is no implication that they do not exist, or are less serious, elsewhere in Ireland. Wherever possible I have tried to indicate whether my remarks are particular to U.C.D. or are to be taken more generally. It is probable that difficulties of finance and overcrowding, to name only two, are to be found in all our Universities.

One last point should be noted. There are quite a number of points relating to University education, some of them of the greatest importance, that are not examined at all in this paper. For example, it will not essay a judgment on the rights or wrongs of lecturing through the medium of Irish. Nor will it address itself to the question raised lately by the Chancellor of the National University as to the proper function of the modern University. Matters such as these are obviously beyond the scope of a paper read to this Society. Consideration of other problems is postponed until a later date until we have a complete picture of Irish University life. Thus, to take one example, the effects of the Goodenough Report will be of the greatest

¹ Royal Commission on the University of Dublin (Trinity College). 1920. Cmd. 1078.

² I must thank the authorities of University College for permission to use the figures shown in this paper. I need hardly say that any comment made is on my own responsibility. My special thanks are due to the clerical staff of University College without whose constant help it would have been impossible to obtain some of the figures used.

importance to all institutions in Ireland. Reference to it has, therefore, been deferred until we are in a position to take a wider view than is possible in this paper.

Historical.

It is undesirable to prolong an introduction; but neither this paper nor its successors would be fully intelligible without a short sketch of the history of Irish University education. The earliest foundation is that of the University of Dublin (1592), which can claim to share the unquestioned seniority of Oxford and Cambridge in these islands. It contains the one college of Trinity College, Dublin; an arrangement which seems, at least to the untutored, to have resulted in the merging of the greater in the less. A very long gap then comes until we reach the next relevant date which is the passage of the Colleges (Ireland) Act,³ exactly a hundred years ago, on July 31st, 1845. Under this Act, Colleges, then and often still referred to as "the Queen's Colleges", were set up in Cork, Belfast and Galway. It was the first step towards bringing University education within reach of the majority of the population; a process that just then was gathering impetus in Great Britain. The problem assumed very different forms in the two countries. In Great Britain, or more correctly, provincial England and Wales, the difficulties were primarily financial. Matters were more complicated here. The obstacles to be surmounted were not so much matters of fees or equipment as the far graver difficulties imposed by religious belief. These difficulties precluded the success of the Act of 1845. The majority of the people, who were unwilling to attend either the older or the newer foundation, attempted to start its own University. The result was the Catholic University (1854), with which the name of Newman is imperishably joined. This institution, however, received no legal recognition and remained without the power to confer degrees. With so great a handicap, success would have been almost impossible even if other difficulties had not arisen, and by the 'sixties the University was represented chiefly by the teaching nucleus in Arts attached to 86 St. Stephen's Green, its original buildings, and by the School of Medicine, familiarly known as "Cæcilia Street", both of which survived until their fusion with the new University College, Dublin, in 1908.⁴

The next development was the passage of the University Education (Ireland) Act of 1879.⁵ By its provisions the Royal University of Ireland was set up in place of the Queen's University, whose property it inherited. The University itself was purely an examining body without a lecturing staff. The Queen's Colleges were left untouched except for small matters consequent on the change of University.

So far as University education in Dublin was concerned,⁶ lecturing for the degrees conferred by the new foundation became centralised in Cæcilia Street, and in "86" which, after the Jesuit Order took over its management in 1883, became known as University College, Dublin.⁷

³8 & 9 Vict. cap. 66.

⁴The Catholic University is still in existence. Vid. *Thom's Dublin Directory*, 1945, p. 14.

⁵42 & 43 Vict. cap. 65.

The University of Dublin was unaffected by this legislation.

⁷Other teaching centres were at Blackrock, Tullabeg, Rockwell, and elsewhere.

The Royal represented a marked advance in so far as it enabled Catholics to proceed to a degree without hurt to their convictions. But the absence of any characteristic that could induce the corporate spirit essential to a University entailed that it could never be regarded as anything more than a milestone on a journey that must be further pursued. As time went on it became obvious that a new departure was inevitable. After several false starts, and after a prodigious amount of examination by Royal Commissions,⁸ the Irish Universities Act of 1908⁹ made a fresh attempt to solve the Irish University question.

This Act repealed its predecessors of 1845 and 1879. The University of Dublin was not affected. The Royal University was dissolved and the Queen's Colleges were regrouped. Queen's College, Belfast, became the Queen's University, Belfast. The Cork and Galway Colleges were brought, with a new College in Dublin set up by the Act, into the new foundation of the National University of Ireland.¹⁰ The new College, while its activities were now greatly expanded, derived largely from the Arts school at "86" and the Medical School in Cæcilia Street.

University College, Dublin, is, therefore, in the curious, and at times embarrassing, position of inheriting the history of two Universities while being, strictly speaking, one of the most recent foundations in these islands.¹¹

The campaign for the University charter, as has been hinted, was not the comparatively straightforward struggle for recognition of which the Universities of Manchester or Birmingham provide examples. It was something a good deal more complicated in which religious and national feelings were fully engaged. For that reason, it is oddly difficult to place University College on either side of the division between Oxbridge and Redbrick which has been popularised lately by a brilliant study of University problems. In tradition it reaches back to the middle of the last century, and to loyalties that are a good deal older still. In buildings, equipment and finance it is a child of the twentieth century; not always, one feels, a specially favoured child. Quite clearly it cannot rank in seniority with Oxbridge or its Irish equivalent. Equally clearly, it is not Redbrick. That institution has been described by its literary godfather in the following words¹²—" (Their) foundation is due to local effort; their endowments come largely from local pockets; they are aided by grants from local municipal authorities, and their students, though to a slowly decreasing extent, are drawn from local areas". Applied to University College, Dublin, the first and last of these are obviously untrue; and one can only regretfully record the inexactitude of the

⁸ Report of the Commissioners on University Education (Ireland) (the Robertson Commission). 1902. Cmd. 826, 899, 900, 1228, 1229. 1903. Cmd. 1483, 1484. Report of the Royal Commission on Trinity College, Dublin, and the University of Dublin (the Fry Commission). 1906. Cmd. 3174. 1907. Cmd. 3311.

⁹ 8 Edw. VII. cap. 38.

¹⁰ The new College possessed Faculties of Arts, Philosophy and Celtic Studies (hereinafter grouped under Arts), Science, Medicine, Commerce and Engineering. By the University Education (Agriculture and Dairy Science) Act, Number 32 of 1926, the Royal College of Science and the Albert Agricultural School at Glasnevin were transferred to it.

¹¹ University College, Bristol (founded 1876) was erected into the University of Bristol in 1909 and University College, Reading (1892), into the University of Reading in 1926. University College, Swansea, was founded in 1920.

¹² *Redbrick University*. Bruce Truscott. London: Faber & Faber. 1943, p. 16.

second and third. It cannot be pinned down as easily as that. We may now at last turn to trace its development in its short existence of thirty-seven years—a period, incidentally, that contains no fewer than fifteen years of foreign or domestic war.

Number of Students.

In Ireland, as in Great Britain, these years have shown a great increase in the number of University students. It has not been uninterrupted. The upwards tendency prevailing before 1914 was sharply checked by the outbreak of war, but the restoration of peace brought students back in greatly increased numbers. This increase was partially artificial. Many students who entered in 1918 or 1919 would have graduated in normal times in any case. Many ex-servicemen, also, were assisted through their University course by grants.¹³ It was natural that there should be a fall in the number of students when this generation had graduated. It will be seen that University College shared the common trend of British and Irish Universities in the middle 'twenties. Since 1928, however, the position has been quite different. The upward movement that was apparent in Great Britain was intensified in Ireland, and especially in University College. This increase was accelerated during the 'thirties and the war years have shown a yet faster growth.

TABLE I

Number of Full-time Students in British and Irish Universities, 1910-1944.

	England	Wales	Scotland	Ireland	U.C.D.
1910-11 ...	19,617	1,375	6,736	2,531	695
1920-21 ...	33,868	2,838	11,746	3,658	1,317
1924-25 ...	29,831	2,643	11,192	3,249	1,211
1930-31 ...	33,808	2,868	11,150	4,311	1,684
1934-35 ...	36,892	3,500	10,246	5,054	2,063
1938-39 ...	37,189	2,779	10,034	5,370	2,271
1942-43 ...	—	—	—	5,758	2,781

NOTE—The figures for Ireland do not include Queen's University or Maynooth. British figures from the Reports of the University Grants Committee; Irish from the Statistical Abstract.

It should of course be remembered that the course of population in the different areas differed widely. The populations of England, Wales and Scotland increased, while the population of the Twenty-Six Counties decreased from 3,139,688 in 1911 to 2,949,713 in 1943, with a consequent increase in the proportion of University students. Putting the University figures for 1942-43 in conjunction with the registration figures of 1943 we get a proportion of 1 University student in 512. This may be compared, for what the comparison is worth,¹⁴ with similar figures for other countries relating to the year 1934-35. They are as follows—England, 1,013; Wales, 941; Italy, 808; Germany,

¹³ About 2,000 is the figure given by the U.C.G. Report for 1921, page 2. It is probable that the numbers eventually reached a slightly higher level.

¹⁴ The definition of a University institution varies so widely that these figures can hardly be at all comparable.

604; Holland, 579; Sweden, 543; France, 480; Scotland, 473; Switzerland, 387; United States, 125.

To return to University College. Numbers alone provide no proper standard by which a University should be judged; and we will see later that this growth raises almost insoluble problems. But so swift an expansion proves abundantly that the long struggle for a Dublin college sprang from a deeply-seated need. By 1939, University College was one of the largest University institutions in these islands. Among the twenty-four institutions, it came sixth on a reckoning of full-time students. The list runs:—London, 13,191; Cambridge, 5,931; Oxford, 5,023; Glasgow, 4,175; Edinburgh, 3,205; University College, 2,121; Manchester, 2,108; Liverpool, 2,055; Birmingham, 1,433; Bristol 1,005.

These figures, all of which relate to the year 1938-39, may usefully be related to similar statements of the number of teaching staff available in these institutions.

TABLE II

Number of Staff in Various Universities

	Professors	Readers, etc.	Lecturers	Assistants	Others	Total
Glasgow ...	39	6	127	39	—	211
Edinburgh ...	45	20	84	36	—	185
U.C.D. ...	58		116		—	174
Manchester ...	39	13	88	48	18	206
Liverpool ...	49	7	101	24	9	190
Birmingham	35	11	98	9	6	159
Bristol ...	24	11	66	19	37	157

NOTE—Figures for British Universities relate to the year 1938-39; for University College to 1942-43.

Comment on these revealing figures may be postponed until we come to examine finance.

The graph on page 469 illustrates more fully the fluctuations in the number of students attending the College. We do not know yet if the other Irish Universities show similar trends; and it might be as well to defer a comprehensive study until their statistics are to hand. But some general considerations may be advanced.

We may first dispose of the purely statistical aspect of the matter. Obviously the institution of new degrees or diplomas or the lengthening of courses will increase University population. Both causes operate in University College. The medical course, which is attended by two out of every five students in University College, was extended by a year in 1938. The diploma in Library training dates from 1928, and that in Social Science from 1935. Since 1941 courses have been given for a Diploma in Public Administration. There is also a course of lectures in Radiography for part-time students. Courses in Arts and Commerce for evening students were started in 1925.

These courses do not by themselves account for the increase in the number of students in University College or, for the matter of that, in Irish Universities as a whole. Commenting on the fall in the

number of British students after 1925, the University Grants Committee pointed out that economic depression, in an industrial community, may have varying results on the Universities. On one hand, it may happen that those who would normally go at once into employment will go to the University if jobs are temporarily scarce. On the other, if ready money is lacking, the result may be that only one may go from a family in place of the two or even three who might be sent in better times. It is difficult to know how far either of these causes operates here; but it is safe to say that comparatively few cases come under the first heading while bad times and low prices for cattle may bring many into the second. But then we are faced by the fact that such factors do not appear to have operated at all during the lean years between 1932 and 1938. It would seem that in Ireland, as in Scotland, sacrifices in the cause of education are readily accepted and that fees and expenses will be found no matter how great the difficulty may be.

Another point arises here. It has been observed that the increasing student population has to be viewed against the background of a falling total population. That fall has its implications for University students. The number of teachers needed will not increase.¹⁵ The outlook for the professions is not less discouraging. In a society whose numbers are dwindling and which is yearly becoming more egalitarian, the standards of remuneration in Medicine and Law may be expected to be lower than in the golden days of shilling income tax when there were richer and more numerous clients and fewer to minister to their troubles. The only possible conclusion can be that a large number of University students are preparing themselves, or rather that their families are preparing them, for careers abroad; and that the number of students in Irish Universities bears little or no relation to the fluctuations of prosperity at home. It may be that readiness to make sacrifices is not the only thing that the University education of Ireland and Scotland hold in common. However, this is a subject of more general application than University College, and it may be left at that for the moment, although it will be referred to again on a later page.

Women Students.

We may now turn to another aspect of the chart. One of the boasts of the Royal University was that it was the first University in these islands to admit women to degrees. The new University College was founded when it seemed that the gradual removal of professional barriers would result in a great increase in the number of women seeking University education. The graph shows that these expectations have been largely belied. The number did increase greatly in the first twenty years and by 1931 women students were no less than 35.9% of the total. Since then, however, their numbers have declined not only relatively but also, until lately, absolutely. The great expansion since 1930 has had no counterpart in the number of women students. This is the more remarkable since several courses introduced in this period, such as the Diplomas in Library Training and in Social Science, might have been expected to increase their numbers. This decline, it is interesting to note, was

¹⁵ Unless, of course, the present system is expanded in the manner in which it should be.

apparent in Great Britain at the same time. In its Report for 1926-27, the University Grants Committee remarks that the fall may be attributed to the fact that openings in the professions, notably in Medicine, had not proved so numerous as had been expected and, secondly, that in times of depression the education of the sons would take precedence over the education of the daughters. The position in University College now, and in Great Britain in the pre-war period, may be thus summarised:—

TABLE III
Percentages of Men and Women Students in Universities.

	Men	Women
	%	%
English Universities	78	22
Welsh Universities	73	26
Scottish Universities	73	27
University College	75	24

NOTE—U.C.D. figures for 1943-44; British figures for 1938-39. They refer to full-time students only.

Age of Entrance.

The age of students at entrance may be noted at this point. It will be seen that men tend increasingly to enter between 18 and 19 years of age and that women tend to enter a year later.

TABLE IV
Age of Full-time Students entering for First Time with Comparable Figures for Great Britain. By percentages.

Age	1919-20		1930-31		1943-44		1938-39	
	University College, Dublin						England & Wales	Scotland
	M.	W.	M.	W.	M.	W.	M. & W.	M. & W.
Under 17	4.0	—	1.2	1.2	—	—	1.2	5.0
17-18	24.8	27.0	15.2	14.2	23.2	20.7	9.8	28.3
18-19	21.4	36.0	35.1	34.2	47.9	44.3	36.7	35.9
Over 19	49.8	37.0	48.5	50.4	28.9	35.0	52.3	30.8

Since 1943 students are not admitted to the College under the age of 17, and they must be within three months of their eighteenth birthday before proceeding to the study of Medicine. Otherwise these figures presumably reflect the educational system and may be left as they stand for future comparison with the other Irish Universities.

Place of Origin.

We may next examine where all these students come from. Table V shows at once that University College caters to a much larger area than its own locality, and that in this respect matters have not changed greatly over the last thirty years.

TABLE V

Home Residence of Full-time Students in U.C.D.

	1919-20	1924-25	1943-4
Within 30 miles of Dublin	% 28.9	% 31.4	% 30.6
Other parts of Ireland and Gt. Britain...	70	67.5	68.1
Outside these islands but within British Empire. } Outside British Empire }	1.1	1.1	.7 .6

NOTE—1919-20 is the first year for which these figures are available.

Generally speaking, the students who come to College from outside these islands are to be found in the Faculties of Medicine and, though not in recent years, of Law. Under present conditions, naturally, their numbers have declined greatly. In Medicine they come from the West Indies and, to an increasing extent in pre-war years, from West Africa. Law students came principally from India but, even before the war, their numbers had dropped considerably for reasons which are probably to be found in the provisions of the Legal Practitioners (Qualification) Act of 1929, and in the tendency of some British possessions to abrogate the privileges heretofore enjoyed by the Irish Bar. An interesting point, though not of any statistical significance, which turned up in the preparation of Table VI was the surprisingly large number of students born in India, Malaya, China and the United States whose families are now domiciled in Ireland.

It will be seen that the bulk of Irish students come from distances quite outside the possibilities of daily travel to lectures, and that University College has developed into an institution that serves the whole country, a development that carries with it quite a number of implications. In this respect it differs markedly from the majority of British Universities. Similar figures for them, which relate to 1938-39, show that 45.8% of their students come from within thirty miles of the University, 43.8% from other parts of the United Kingdom, 5.7% from outside the United Kingdom but within the British Empire, and 4.7% from outside the British Empire. These figures do not point the contrast fully as they include the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, whose exclusion would greatly swell the percentage in the first group. The contrast is due largely of course to the greater degree of urban concentration in Great Britain.

Place of Origin by Cities and Counties.

When compiling material for this paper, it seemed a pity not to take this matter of origin a shade further. The first class in Table V may indeed correspond to the proportion of students coming from Dublin (though 30 miles brings in Drogheda, Wicklow, Naas and Kildare). The second class, however, is only equivalent to a "somewhere in Ireland". It would certainly be of interest, and possibly of some value, if we knew exactly where students come from—whether they come from country or city, from small farming counties or from grazing or dairying counties, and so on. It was decided, therefore, to enquire what help could be got from the College records, and Table VI is the result.

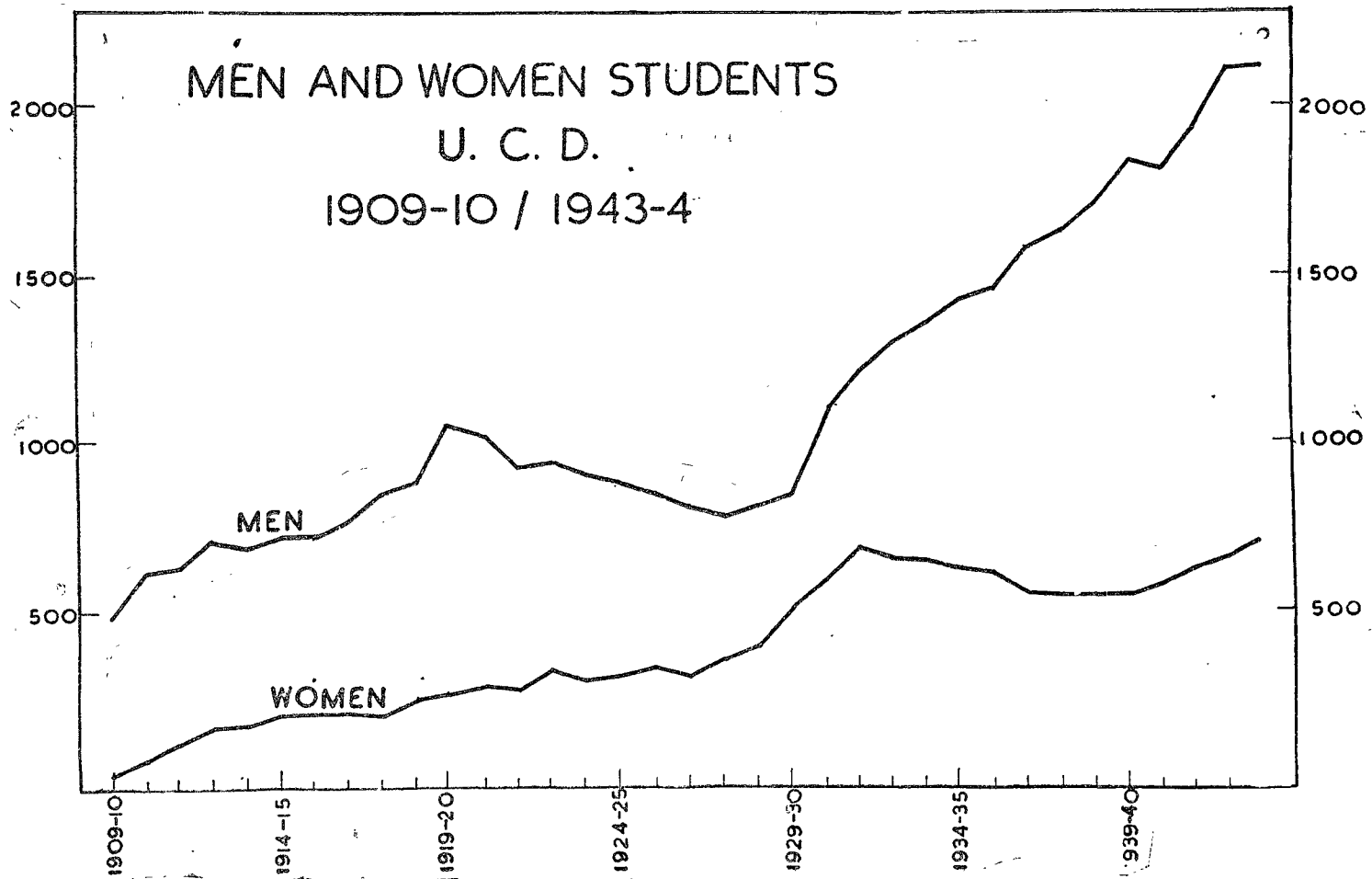
This table is based on the information given by students on their registration cards. A possible source of error or, at least, of indefiniteness, is that a student may be enrolled in two Faculties at once, *e.g.*, in Arts and Law or in Science and Medicine. I hope I will be excused if I forgo comment on this

TABLE VI
Place of Residence of all Students, 1944-5.

	Arts	Law	Medicine	Science	Engineering	Architecture	Agriculture	Commerce	Social Science	Diploma Public Administration	Various	TOTAL
Dublin City*...	223	19	332	73	111	62	1	95	21	26	53	1,016
Cork C.B. ...	16	—	2	1	2	2	2	4	—	—	—	29
Waterford C.B.	6	—	3	—	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	14
Limerick C.B.	19	—	16	7	3	2	1	4	2	—	1	55
Belfast C.B.	4	1	3	2	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	12
Derry C.B. ...	5	—	9	1	3	1	—	—	—	—	2	21
Antrim ...	3	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	8
Down ...	9	—	5	4	8	2	—	2	—	—	1	31
Armagh ...	6	—	8	2	—	—	2	1	—	—	—	19
Derry ...	7	—	6	—	1	—	1	1	—	—	2	18
Tyrone ...	6	—	19	2	2	—	1	1	1	—	1	33
Fermanagh ...	6	—	7	2	4	—	—	1	—	—	—	20
Donegal ...	14	2	38	4	6	2	1	5	1	—	—	73
Cavan ...	9	—	19	2	3	1	6	1	3	1	1	46
Monaghan ...	10	1	12	5	5	2	1	6	1	—	1	44
Louth ...	21	—	26	6	9	—	6	4	1	—	5	78
Meath ...	11	—	12	3	5	—	3	2	—	—	2	38
Dublin† ...	20	—	33	11	18	3	13	5	4	1	8	116
Wicklow ...	16	—	12	7	3	—	3	2	—	2	6	51
Wexford ...	15	—	21	9	4	1	6	1	1	—	2	60
Carlow ...	6	1	17	1	6	1	2	1	—	—	—	35
Kilkenny ...	16	—	26	5	4	1	5	4	1	—	2	64
Kildare ...	12	2	12	4	9	—	6	1	1	2	1	50
Leix ...	8	1	9	5	4	—	4	—	—	1	—	32
Offaly ...	8	—	10	2	4	—	8	2	1	—	3	38
Westmeath ...	12	3	17	3	5	—	8	5	3	1	5	62
Longford ...	5	—	12	2	3	1	—	—	—	—	—	23
Cork ...	43	5	18	3	3	2	14	7	1	1	5	102
Waterford ...	7	—	13	2	5	—	2	—	—	1	2	32
Limerick ...	33	—	23	2	2	3	5	1	2	—	2	73
Kerry ...	36	3	43	6	5	1	6	8	1	5	3	117
Tipperary ...	48	1	31	7	11	—	10	5	—	2	5	120
Clare ...	28	3	40	3	6	—	8	1	1	1	4	95
Galway ...	15	5	24	3	4	—	10	—	—	—	2	63
Mayo ...	34	3	55	3	3	2	4	4	5	—	—	113
Roscommon ...	14	2	20	3	1	1	4	4	—	—	—	49
Sligo ...	3	2	18	1	2	—	2	2	—	1	—	31
Leitrim ...	9	—	17	2	—	—	4	2	—	—	—	34
Ireland ...	763	54	992	198	270	90	149	182	52	45	120	2,915
Outside ...	21	—	32	9	2	2	3	2	2	—	3	76
TOTAL ...	798†	54	1024	207	272	92	152	184	54	45	123	3,005‡

* Including Dún Laoghaire Borough. † Excluding Dún Laoghaire Borough.
‡ Including 14 not classified by area.

MEN AND WOMEN STUDENTS U. C. D. 1909-10 / 1943-4



By James Meenan, M.A.

table. In itself it offers endless opportunity for treatment. This paper, however, is already inordinately long and it is best to leave these figures to the attention of the Society. I will refer only to the manner in which urban students are predominant in the Faculties of Architecture and Commerce, to the remarkable number of medicals from Mayo, to the high average from Limerick, Kerry and Tipperary, and to the extraordinarily low number from Waterford City and County and the Counties of Leix and Longford. One last reflection is that this table shows, even more clearly than Table V, that University College is a meeting place for students from every part of Ireland, and must satisfy a national rather than a local demand. Of the 76 from outside Ireland, 29 were from England and Wales, 14 from Germany, 10 from Scotland, 6 from Nigeria, 3 from U.S.A., 3 from Austria, 2 each from France, India, New Zealand; 1 each from Malaya, Australia, Portugal, Egypt, Spain.

Place of University Residence.

The high proportion of students who are not ordinarily resident in Dublin presents a problem that has not shown any sign of disappearance. University College is very badly served in the matter of University residence. There are four hostels, conducted by religious Orders, that accommodate about 230 students—no great proportion of about 2,700 full-time students. The great majority have to make shift for themselves in "digs". In a capital city this presents a number of drawbacks of which expense is only one. Residential hostels are obviously needed, but it is difficult to see how they can be financed in the absence of benefactions such as have been enjoyed by British Universities. The College itself can do little towards keeping prices down, not being in so strong a position *vis-à-vis* landlords as, for example, the University of Cambridge. It may be suggested that, on the other hand, it might consider if the conditions of accommodation could not be supervised. It will be noted that this dependence on lodging has the effect of increasing, quite materially, the sum needed to put a student through College.

Taken statistically, it will be seen that the position has not changed greatly over twenty-five years except that with the growth of the College the relative importance of the hostels has diminished. Table VII shows a comparison with British Universities; but it will be remembered that in Great Britain the inter-war period witnessed many gifts to the provincial Universities for the accommodation of students.

TABLE VII

University Residence of Full-time Students in U.C.D. and British Universities

	U.C.D.		British Universities
	1919-20	1943-4	1938-39
In Hostels	% 21·1	% 8·7	} 25·1
In Educational or Ecclesiastical Institutions	14·7	14·6	
In Lodgings	44·0	46	33·2
At Home	20·1	30·7	41·7

NOTES—(a) In 1943-4, 1,229 students were in lodgings in Dublin.

(b) Excluding Oxford and Cambridge, in 1934-35, 18·9% of English students resided in hostels, 15·3% of Welsh students and 8·2% of Scottish students.

We may now consider the distribution of students among the Faculties. Here we find a change that has social and economic implications.

TABLE VIII

Distribution of Full-time Students by Faculties with Comparative Figures for Great Britain

	U.C.D.			England	Wales	Scotland	Great Britain
	1914-15	1924-25	1944-45		1926-27		1938-39
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Arts ...	49.1	34.2	31.1	49.2	63.3	56.1	44.7
Science ...	5.8	12.7	7.2	18.8	20.7	10.8	15.3
Medicine ...	31.2	25.8	35.5	20.1	6.9	22.7	27.3
Law ...	4.4	2.3	0.3	(Included under Arts)			
Engineering & Architecture	5.8	9.1	12.6	10.1	5.3	8.4	10.6
Commerce ...	3.7	13.2	8.0	(Included under Arts)			—
Agriculture ...	—	2.7	5.3	1.8	3.8	2.0	2.1

Some points may be disposed of at once. The Faculty of Law, so far as full-time students are concerned, consists of students who, having taken a B.A., are proceeding towards the degree of LL.B. Their numbers do not fluctuate to any great extent but their proportionate importance obviously declines with every increase in the total number of students. In the Faculty of Engineering and Architecture, it has to be remembered that graduates in Architecture in U.C.D. are exempt from the final examination of the Royal Institute of British Architects. The College school is the only one in Ireland to enjoy this privilege. It will be remembered, too, that these proportionate figures are greatly affected by the duration of courses.

Making all qualifications, these figures show a marked change. The number of Art students has just doubled, having been 451 in 1914-15 and 897 in 1944-45. But this increase has been more than off-set by the much greater increases in Medicine (287 to 1,024), Engineering (28 to 272) and Architecture (25 to 92).¹⁶ This corresponds to a change repeatedly referred to by the University Grants Committee in the 'twenties and 'thirties. It, too, noted a decline in the numbers taking Arts and an increase in entries to the Faculties of Medicine and Engineering. This decline, in Ireland as in Great Britain (though no doubt to a smaller extent here), may be associated with social changes. There can be no doubt that to an increasing extent students enter Universities to obtain a professional qualification rather than a general education. This point is too wide to discuss fully here. It is better deferred until we can survey the figures for all Irish Universities. It is plain, however, that in University College the professional schools are becoming increasingly important.

Emigration.

One aspect of this change may be put forward for discussion here although it affects all Irish Universities and not University College

¹⁶ The implications of this change on equipment, accommodation and numbers of staff are obvious.

alone. Broadly speaking, the majority of graduates in these two Faculties will earn their living abroad. The shift into Medicine and Engineering, therefore, is of more general interest than the similar movement in Great Britain or, more specifically, in England. Here it leads directly to emigration. More than that, every graduate has cost a certain sum to put through College and his emigration means a loss both of population and of capital. Quite a long argument can be waged around two points. First, is it a bad thing that these graduates should leave the country? Second, if so, is there anything that the Universities can do about it?¹⁷

The second point is perhaps more readily answered. Leaving aside for the purposes of the argument its duty to promote research, University College¹⁸ was founded to satisfy a demand for instruction in various branches of knowledge. As an institution it holds itself out as being ready to give instruction and, after the requirements of examiners have been satisfied, to give a degree which is equivalent to a licence to practise various professions. While it provides a supply of instruction, it has no control over demand. If parents send their children to University College to receive instruction in Medicine, it is the College's business to teach Medicine to them. It may be that, from a personal point of view, they are unsuited to Medicine or that, from a national point of view, they would be more profitably employed in other activities. But it is not the business of a University, as a University, to tell parents what they should do for their children any more than it is its business, as a University, to provide jobs for its graduates. Undoubtedly, an Appointments Bureau is an excellent adjunct to a University and, in the present connection, it may help to prevent unnecessary emigration. But it is no business of a University, as a University, if its students intend to practise in New Ross or in New York or in New Delhi.

In practice, there is little or nothing that University College can do about it anyway. If, for the sake of argument, it decided to cut down the number of students it will admit to any Faculty each year, even so drastic a step would have no effect on the number of students wishing for instruction. All that would happen is that those students would go to the other institutions in Ireland which possess similar Faculties. And if these institutions, in their turn, adopted such restrictions, the prospective students would go to Universities outside the jurisdiction of the State.¹⁹

Let us come then to the other point. Is it a bad thing that graduates should emigrate? It must be conceded at once that every graduate who goes away represents a loss not merely of his personality but of the money spent on his education. Just at the time that he is in a position to return that outlay he emigrates and the

¹⁷ It may be as well to make one qualification. It may be misleading to regard these Faculties as “emigrating Faculties” merely because many of their graduates leave the country at once. We tend to overlook the fact that, on one side, many medical graduates return to this country after some years in practice abroad, and, on the other, that there may be just as high a rate of emigration among graduates in other Faculties which is not so apparent because it is not so concentrated. It is hoped to examine this point more fully in a later paper.

¹⁸ The name of any other Irish University or University College may be substituted without affecting the argument.

¹⁹ Not all, perhaps, could afford to do so, but it is reasonable to presume that the costs of maintaining a student in Belfast or Glasgow are not very much greater than in Dublin, Cork or Galway.

training that is paid for by his family and (but to all too small an extent) by the taxpayer is given to the citizens of Great Britain or her possessions or of North or South America. Clearly, it is uneconomic. But, it may be objected, is this an economic matter at all? Calculations such as these would be most weighty if applied to, for example, the cattle trade. Can they be applied to human beings? Parents have the right, indeed the duty, to provide as well as they can for the well-being of their children. If that provision leads to emigration, can it be said that it has failed? Is not the parent entitled to take into account the fact that his child may prosper abroad in a fashion that would be impossible at home?

This, of course, raises a subject of perennial controversy in this Society. No doubt it will break out again in this connection. The issue may, therefore, be left at this point for the present though, when we have the figures for all Irish Universities before us, it may be necessary to stir up the embers of argument again. For the moment we may content ourselves with the reflection that this is one of the cases in which there may be a conflict between the advantage of the individual and the interest of the State. But, it is always necessary to emphasise, the University does not provoke this conflict and it has no responsibility for a dilemma that is inherent in our economy.

Cost of University Courses.

The cost of courses links up with the preceding argument in so far as it would be desirable to have some idea of the size of the investment that each graduate represents. It is of importance, from two other points of view—that of the student and that of the College. Table IX represents an attempt to estimate the cost of study in the various Faculties. It must be quite clearly understood that it represents only an approximation to the lowest possible sum for which a University education can be had. The first two columns may be reasonably accurate though incidental fees may have been overlooked. As for the third column, I understand that hospital fees are being increased and that these figures are understated. But we may assume that in these two columns we are not too far from the truth, provided we bear in mind that any error is on the side of understatement. The difficulty comes in the fourth and fifth headings. The basis taken is for lodgings at 40/- a week. It is, one thinks, possible to find "digs" at that price even yet. But certainly 40/- represents the lowest price at which they will be found. The University year has twenty-five lecture weeks, but extra courses and examinations increase that number appreciably. I have taken, then, an average residence in town of thirty-two weeks in the year.²⁰ It will be longer in some years than in others, but thirty-two may be taken as a basis, and I have calculated accordingly on two pounds a week for thirty-two weeks a year. The fourth heading, again, is pared down to the lowest possible figure. We have to take into account travelling expenses three times a year and whatever is spent in getting to and from the College during term. We have also to take out the cost of instruments and textbooks, which will be heavy enough in some Faculties. We have to consider also the cost of grinds if they are taken. Altogether, when these necessary expenses are deducted

²⁰ In some years, in the Medical and Engineering Faculties, the figure would be much higher.

there is not very much left on which the student can live a riotous life.²¹

In other words, the figures in Table IX represent fairly nearly the lowest possible figure. That means, also, that in fact a course costs considerably more than the figures given, since the vast majority of students pay more for the lodgings and do not strike the observer as leading quite so austere a life as is budgeted for here.

TABLE IX
Estimate of Students' Expenses

	College Fees	University Fees	Hospital Fees	Lodgings	Other Expenses	TOTAL
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Arts	60	13	—	192	180	445
Commerce	60	13	—	192	180	445
Law	45	14	—	128	120	307
Science	112	13	—	192	180	497
Engineering :						
Civil	84	14	—	192	180	470
Mechanical and Electrical	112	14	—	256	240	622
Architecture	140	23	—	320	300	783
Dentistry	129	29	28	351	330	867
Medicine	164	34(a)	72(b)	384	360	1,014

(a) Including registration fee.

(b) Now being increased.

Admitting again that these figures make no pretence to full accuracy, they raise some points of the greatest public importance. In the first place we may be quite sure that these expenses will not be reduced in any foreseeable future. Reductions in the cost of living may come when war conditions are over, but how far these reductions will be passed on to the student-lodger, or by him to his parents, is quite another question.

On the other hand, it seems almost inevitable that the cost of courses will go up. Increasing specialisation means that extra fees will be more numerous in courses such as Medicine. This is only the continuation of a process that started many years ago. In its Report for the year 1920-21, the University Grants Committee stated that the cost of a primary medical degree was £141 15s. 0d., made up by £89 5s. 0d. College fees and £52 10s. 0d. hospital fees. (It also stated that lodgings varied from 30/- to 45/- a week.) Table IX shows how greatly the position has altered since. In Medicine, also, substantial extra costs will be inevitable if the recommendations of the Goodenough Report are accepted. Nor is the position very different in other Faculties. If British Universities increase their courses, Irish Universities will have to follow suit.

To a small extent this tendency is already visible in the level of College fees. The calendar for 1910-11 shows the following charges for courses—Arts, £30; Science, £31 to £49; Engineering, £45; Law, £23 12s. 0d.; Commerce, £30; Medicine, £70 15s. 0d. (with 50 guineas

²¹ For all practical purposes our hypothetical student rarely, if ever, smokes, drinks or backs horses and meets the other sex only in the National Library.

hospital fees). The increase since then is small compared with what may be necessary in the future. College finance is examined in more detail later, but it may be said here that (exclusive of the Faculty of Agriculture) its revenue comes from two main sources, a Parliamentary grant of £82,000 a year and students' fees which come to £61,000 a year. The grant was fixed when the number of students totalled 1,154; it has remained unaltered, while the number of students has reached 3,000. This increase has most seriously embarrassed the College. More students mean that classes must be split up if any reasonable education is to be given. That means more staff. It also means capital expenditure on buildings. It means greater expenditure on the Library. It means, in some Faculties, more equipment. If the standards of University education are to be maintained, an increasing number of students must mean greater expenditure. Sooner or later, if the attitude of the State towards education is not amended, University College will be forced to raise its fees.

It may be said that the College should do so and should attempt to work out its own salvation before applying for relief from an Exchequer already heavily committed to unavoidable expenses. The argument is superficially just, if one forgets that a belligerent and far more heavily-taxed Great Britain has just increased the annual grant to its Universities by three and three-quarter million pounds.²² But an increase in fees raises issues of wider scope than the balancing of accounts. University College (and indeed not University College alone) was founded to meet the demand of the Irish people for University education. The Act of 1908 was designed to place that education within reach of the people. It may be that this ideal was achieved in the few years before 1914. It is certain that the course of prices—of cost of living and of technical equipment—has gone upwards almost without interruption ever since. The result has been to remove the possibility of University education from an increasingly large section of the people. Figures already given show that it is, even now, practically impossible for many to send their children to College.²³ A further increase in fees would make the cost quite prohibitive. In other words, whatever the intentions of the Irish Universities Act may have been (and whatever the promises of the Constitution may be), there is no longer any equality of opportunity in education in this country. It is surely needless to labour the point that true democracy demands equality of opportunity and in no sphere of life more than in education. As things stand, University education is now open only to those who are able to pay for it; as much as at any time in the last century it is confined to a class. It may be that it is State policy to promote social inequality side by side with political equality; but one is entitled to ask that its implications be realised by the community.

The reader, especially if he be acquainted with British or American Universities, may reflect that, although the cost of University education may be outside the reach of many, there are no doubt schemes of University scholarships or endowments that help to bridge the gap. It is regrettable that neither one nor the other are sufficiently numerous or adequate. We may divide them into three classes—(a) scholarships given by the College from its own funds; (b) scholar-

²² With the promise of further review in 1947. The Chancellor also accepted the estimate that £28 millions would be needed for capital expenditure after the war.

²³ Particulars of the assistance given by local authorities are set out below.

ships or prizes given by private endowment; (c) scholarships given by local authorities—and deal with them in turn.

The first class presents some interesting contrasts. The College calendar gives particulars of scholarships and prizes in some detail. These add up to the sum of £5,095 a year, a sum which appears generous when one considers the annual revenue of the College. We may divide this sum between the various Faculties as follows:—

1. There are 10 Entrance Scholarships of £100 each tenable for one year. These may be competed for by students irrespective of Faculty though the groups in which they are given (Classics; Modern Languages; Mathematics; Experimental Science) would seem to favour the intending graduate in Arts or Science. But no doubt this is unavoidable.

2. We come now to the prizes in the various Faculties.²⁴

Arts and Science. There are 40 prizes totalling £2,520.

Commerce. There are four prizes amounting (with class prizes) to £75.

Engineering. There are 18 prizes amounting (with class prizes) to £525.

Architecture. There are 10 prizes amounting to £150.

Law. There are 34 prizes amounting to £140.

Medicine. There are 34 prizes amounting to £685.

It is fairly clear that the College considers that Art and Science deserve to be liberally supported. But if the foregoing summary be compared with the tables showing the numbers in each Faculty and the fees payable, one is left with the impression that Medicine, Engineering and Architecture do more than their share as patrons of the more polite forms of learning.

However, our main object is to enquire how far the industrious student can hope to finance himself. Here, also, there are some odd contrasts. We presume that he gets an entrance scholarship and, so great is our trust in his assiduity, that he gets first place in every examination for which he sits. This paragon will find his fortune varying with his Faculty. In Arts or Science he will get £400, in Commerce £155, in Civil Engineering £260 and in Mechanical or Electrical Engineering £330 (exclusive of class prizes). He will get £250 in Architecture and £365 in Medicine. He will do best if he follows up a B.A. with an LL.B. Granted then that he has secured a post-graduate scholarship in Arts, he will emerge from his College career while his brother in Engineering or Medicine is still grinding for a final, with the reasonable sum of £495.

But we are not concerned primarily with the justice of this apportionment. It is only necessary to point out that these sums are the most that any student can hope to get and that, while they might cover fees, they would not go far towards offsetting the other expenses of a University career.

The second class of scholarships, those founded by private endowment, may be reviewed all too quickly. In many cases they represent

²⁴ There is a post-graduate scholarship in Architecture and other scholarships are given by the Department of Agriculture to an amount of £1,200 or £1,300. I am not certain of the manner in which these scholarships are distributed and therefore do not refer to them in the text above.

the income accruing from a fund collected to perpetuate the name of one connected with the College, such as *e.g.*, the Hogan or Delany prizes. In others, they are restricted to certain classes, *e.g.*, the Civil Servants' trust or the Byrne scholarship. The capital sum represented by these endowments amounts to about £15,000.

University College is by no means the only example in Ireland of a strange reluctance to endow education. But a comparison with Great Britain makes painful reading. Many of the British Universities, leaving Oxford and Cambridge aside, owe not only their imposing buildings and halls of residence but also liberal endowments of various courses, to the munificence of private persons or the prudent generosity of business enterprise. One may call to mind at once the gifts of the Wills family to Bristol, of Messrs. Huntley and Palmer to Reading, of Lord Nuffield to Oxford. In years of depression, the period between 1929 and 1935, the English Universities received gifts of £5,250,000, with another £670,000 for fellowships or scholarships. It may be that some gifts are given in the way of business and that their acceptance endangers the independence of the University. But they are in most cases the outcome of local pride and of a sense of duty towards the community. These qualities appear to be severely lacking in this country; at any rate the number of bequests to Universities appears pitifully small when set beside English standards.

Scholarships Given by Local Authorities.

Lastly, we come to the scholarships given by local authorities. Generally speaking, these are granted on the results of the Leaving Certificate examination.²⁵ They are specifically for families of small means. In all there are about 85 scholarships granted each year. The usual number granted by each county is three.²⁶ It should be added that several students in University College hold scholarships from areas in the Six Counties and one, at least, holds a scholarship from Glasgow Corporation.

So far as they go, these scholarships represent a generous gesture of the ratepayer towards University education—all the more generous since the return is so intangible. But it may be asked if, as things now stand, these schemes give the best possible result. The value of these scholarships varies between £60 and £80 a year.²⁷ In many cases these sums were fixed at the time of the Universities Act in 1908 and have not been altered greatly since. At that time they represented a very generous provision indeed. With the change in the value of money, however, they go only a small way towards meeting the necessary expenses. The family must supplement these sums, often with considerable difficulty; and one cannot help feeling that in many cases these sacrifices, however gladly made, bear no proportionate return. It is possible that a reduction in the number of these scholarships accompanied by an increase in their amount would bring better results.

In the session 1943-44, the latest for which figures are available, there

²⁵ It is important to note that these scholarships are not necessarily in University College. Conditions of tenure vary, but, in general, holders may choose their University.

²⁶ Dublin Corporation gives 20. Sligo appears to be the only county that makes no provision of this nature.

²⁷ The highest appears to be Kilkenny (£90). The Dublin Corporation scholarships vary between £50 and £80 according to means.

were 190 County Council scholars in University College, including 15 post-graduate students. They were distributed among the Faculties as follows:—Arts, 50; Science, 20; Commerce, 7; Medicine, 33; Engineering and Architecture, 40; and Agriculture, 39. The total figure represents a very small percentage of the total number of students attending University College. The contrast with Great Britain is illuminating. In the year 1934-5 the percentage of assisted students in Great Britain was as follows:—

TABLE X

Percentage of Assisted Students in British Universities, 1934-35 (28)

	%
University College, Dublin	7.1
Oxford and Cambridge	43.4
London (excl. Medical School)	34
„ Medical School	11.2
Other Universities	52.5
TOTAL: England	40
Wales	62.2
Scotland	51.1
Great Britain	44.1

In Ireland we still lag far behind provision for education on this scale, whether we take the contributions of private persons, of the State, or of local authorities. We may read with envy, in a later report of the Grants Committee, that "It is indeed now customary for the great cities in which the provincial Universities are situated to place at the disposal of the University approximately the equivalent of a penny rate."²⁹

Finance.

The income of the College runs to about £180,000 a year. There are two main sources of revenue—the Parliamentary grant and students' fees, the former of which is £82,000 plus a grant of £24,000 to the Albert College from the Department of Agriculture, and the latter is about £64,000.

The Parliamentary grant was fixed at £32,000 by the Act of 1908. It was increased to £42,000 in 1919. Since 1926, when the College took over the College of Science and the Albert College, the grant has stood, apart from a temporary reduction under the Economies Act in 1933, at its present figure. Students' fees have already been discussed in some detail.

The position, then, may be summarised in this way. The College has a fixed income from the Parliamentary grant. It does not vary with the number of students or with changes in the cost of equipment or maintenance. Since 1908 it has been increased by roughly 175%. The number of students, on the other hand, has increased by 600%.

This increase in the number of students in no way reduces the demands on the College's finances. On the contrary it increases them. They may be placed under three main headings.

²⁸ It is right to add that these percentages are greatly increased by the grant made by the Board of Education to intending teachers.

²⁹ Though, so far as U.C.D. is concerned, the city of Dublin may legitimately plead that in other fields it has to shoulder burdens that are more properly national charges.

In the first place, larger numbers of students mean larger classes. Beyond a point that is soon reached this must mean that the individual student gets no true instruction. The difficulty is probably at its worst in the Faculty of Medicine where some degree of personal supervision is essential. This is not the place to discuss the possible effects of the Goodenough Report on medical teaching in this country, but it is clear that a great increase of staff will be needed if its recommendations are to be implemented. The shortage of staff, however, can be felt in every department and with the same evil results. It means that students do not get the individual attention that they should get; that their difficulties are made unnecessarily greater; and that that personal contact which is one of the most precious attributes of a University is made almost impossible. It means also that research, which is a duty of any University, and which, to put it on the lowest level, may be of great advantage to the State is hindered because of teaching duties. It means that any new development in any branch of knowledge cannot be properly followed up by an already over-worked staff or included in an already over-crowded curriculum.

Undoubtedly these difficulties can be overcome to some extent and indeed they have been surmounted to an amazing degree both by staff and students. But it is essentially unfair to both that they should have to carry so great a handicap. If there is anything worth spending money on it is certainly education, but as a community we have chosen to practise a false economy in regard to the highest level of education.

With increasing students comes an increasing demand for equipment. Here the problem is two-fold. Equipment becomes more expensive as it becomes more specialised. Nevertheless, it must be purchased if the student is to be kept in touch with research. In some ways, perhaps, this difficulty is the most pressing of all. In any of the sciences equipment must be got if the education given to the student is to be kept abreast of what is being given elsewhere. If lack of funds prevents the College from such purchases it must inevitably fall behind other institutions and, from a national standpoint, it is well to remember that this difficulty is shared by every other University institution in Ireland.

In the third place may be put the need for buildings. The present buildings were designed when the number of students was still below the thousand mark. They have now to do duty for three times that number. It may be admitted that in some Faculties such overcrowding is only a matter of physical discomfort—though that is no reason why it should be allowed to continue. But in other Faculties, such as Science, Engineering and Medicine, it may be a danger to health besides being an obstacle to proper teaching.

Another point may be added, that of salaries. Persons engaging in academic life do not expect substantial salaries—they would be very great fools indeed if they did. But they have a right to expect that they will at least be able to live at a reasonable standard that will enable them to give proper attention to their academic work. But, we find, apart from an increase given at the time of the inflation of 1919 and 1920, salaries have not substantially altered since the foundation of University College in 1908. What may have appeared a reasonable allowance then is most certainly not adequate in 1945.

These considerations do not apply to University College alone;

they are, unfortunately, true of every other institution in the country. It is well that the community should realise what its misplaced economy may mean. If salaries remain at their present level while they are increased in Great Britain, it will soon be quite impossible to fill certain chairs, if only because the salary offered will not attract the best men. That, in its turn, will mean that in various Faculties students will not get training that is up to date. That in its turn will mean that students will not go to any Irish University. They will be sent abroad. It may be objected that this will involve expense. In practice the expenses may not be very much greater (*e.g.*, in Medicine); and the extra expense will bring in a better return.

The kernel of the difficulty lies in the fact that British Universities are better treated by the State and enjoy immensely greater facilities than is the case in this country. Even before the war, as has been evident from tables already quoted, the assistance given by the State and by local authorities was altogether out of proportion to the sums given in Ireland.

The contrast can hardly be more apparent than in the following table.

TABLE XI

Comparison of Annual Revenue—Universities of Birmingham, Liverpool and Manchester and University College, Dublin (a)

	No. of Students	No. of Staff	Endowments	Donations	Local Authorities Grants	Parliamentary Grants	Fees	Other Sources	TOTAL
			£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
U.C.D. ...	2,654	174	1.9	—	.5(b)	109.5(c)	64.9	10.7	185.1
Liverpool ...	2,055	190	38.7	7.2	34	102.6	81.3	7.1	271.2
Birmingham	1,433	159	37.5	6.9	31.7	86.5	57.2	10.9	230.7
Manchester	2,108	206	57.8	8.5	28.4	100.8	73.9	27.2	291.1

(a) English figures for 1938-39. U.C.D. for 1943-4.

(b) Money received for County Council Scholarships is paid by U.C.D. to scholars, after deduction of fees.

(c) Excludes special grant for reduction of debt. Includes special grant for Modern Irish and grant for Albert College.

It may be left to the reader to draw the moral.

It is important to realise that this disparity will increase after the war.³⁰ Enlightened opinion in Great Britain has long realised that a considerable increase in the Parliamentary grant to the Universities is long overdue. In the first place, the number of University students may be expected to increase after the war. The increase may be expected to be permanent on account of the reform carried through by the Butler Act. (With us, there seems every reason to believe that the student population will continue to increase even in despite of educational reform.) In the second place, there are now eight years of arrears in buildings and extensions. (With us the arrears are very much greater.) In the third place, it is realised that the productive efficiency of the country is intimately linked with the capacity of Universities to impart instruction and to carry on research. (It would be kinder to make no comment on the position

³⁰ The argument, of course, applies to all Irish Universities and is not confined to University College alone.

here.) We find, therefore, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer—in time of war and of unprecedented taxation—is prepared to allocate £5·9 million as a grant-in-aid on the grounds that “. . . It is clear that if the Universities are to play the part which they should play in the reconstruction of our national life after the war, they will have to incur expenditure on a very much higher scale than before the war. It is clear that if the future financial needs of the Universities are to be met, a large share of their new expenditure will have to be met by the Exchequer”.

He continued, “As regards expenditure for capital purposes, the needs of the Universities have been met in the past for the most part by private benefactions. I am advised . . . that this source of support cannot be expected to meet the needs of the Universities for capital developments in the years following the war, and that, if the building programmes of the Universities are to be carried out, a large share of the cost will have to be met from the Exchequer”.

Enough, perhaps, has been said to point the contrast.

This paper has now reached so great a length that little time is left for other points. Thus, nothing has been said of the development of diploma and evening classes or of the extent of post-graduate study. These must be left for consideration at some later date. It is probable, too, that other points have been left untouched since their importance has not been realised. It can only be pleaded that this is a first attempt at a University survey, and no doubt its scope will grow as it goes on. Many matters, no doubt, will arise in the discussion.

To recapitulate shortly. We have seen that University College came into existence a comparatively short time ago. Even in that time the number of its students has grown beyond any possible expectation, and since these students are drawn from every part of the country it can justly claim to be a national rather than a local institution. We have seen also that this great increase has been the cause of increasing difficulties and that the struggle to provide adequate instruction with inadequate resources grows yearly more difficult. In the last resort, this is a problem that must be resolved by the nation. It is for it to decide whether the College, and every other Irish institution, will be able to maintain the traditions of Irish scholarship. There are some things that a democracy neglects at its peril and certainly education is one of them. It is to be hoped that help will not be long delayed and that our Universities may be endowed on a scale worthy of the nation. Until then University College must greet its students with the qualified welcome—

*aude, hospes, contemnere opes et tu quoque
finge deo, rebusque veni non asper egenis.*

DISCUSSION ON MR. MEENAN'S PAPER.

Senator Professor Johnston drew attention to Act 36 Vict. which opened Fellowships and Foundation Scholarships in Trinity College to non-members of the Church of Ireland, thus making, *e.g.*, Presbyterians and Methodists eligible as well as Roman Catholics. He thought some mention of this was needed in the historical introduction to the paper.

He considered that the paper had made a strong case for much more generous financial support for University College, Dublin, on the part of the State. If he were to state the claims of Trinity College in this connection and anyone said that Trinity College was always asking for money he would remind them of the story of the negro who complained that his wife was always asking for money. When asked what she did with it, when she got it, he replied that he did not know as he hadn't ever given her any. Briefly, the facts are as follows: After the first World War the financial position of Trinity College was so serious that it was examined by a Commission in 1920. It recommended an annual subsidy of £49,000 from the State and a block grant of £113,000 for buildings. The Government of Ireland Act, 1920, contained a clause providing for an annual subsidy of £30,000 (but no block grant) from the Irish Exchequer. University College was to receive an annual subsidy of £42,000 under the provisions of that Act. Apparently University College got the amount contemplated, which was later increased, but the £30,000 contemplated for Trinity College met the fate of the 1920 Act. Our total grant from the State at present amounts to £2,250 annually.* We do not wish to be a "silent sister" in this connection and we hope University College will succeed in obtaining the additional funds she obviously requires. Doubtless, when the matter is fully looked into our claims too will receive practical recognition.

On the question of the export of graduates a certain conflict between private interests and the public interest might be admitted but the reconciliation of these was a matter of public policy not of internal University policy. Universities belonged to the world as well as to the nation and we must not regard such export solely from the point of view of the economic calculus.

Perhaps if we exported more grads., especially agricultural grads., we would not require to export so many men and women. Agricultural output per man and per acre could be extended so as to occupy an additional 100,000 workers on farms over 50 acres in size and add some £20,000,000 to agricultural output, in terms of 1929 prices, in the course of the next 20 years. Such an expansion would provide a great internal demand for the services of university trained men and women.

An important step forward has recently been taken in associating Veterinary with University education. Preventable animal diseases cost us some £4,000,000 a year. There is room for much research in this field and it can best be done by men and women of University and Veterinary status and training. The application of scientific knowledge to agricultural practice has a long way to go before our agriculture can be said to be reasonably efficient.

Large scale commercial organisations for the processing and sale of agricultural products must be a feature of any serious agricultural

* I should have mentioned that another item of £3,000 regularly appears in the Estimates. This is compensation for loss of income suffered under the Land Act of 1923 and therefore constitutes no net addition to our income.

expansion. These will require the highest kind of trained capacity in business administration, as well as in scientific supervision and research, and this our Universities are well fitted to supply—or will be when they are adequately financed.

The Universities have an essential part to play in modernising our economy in its agricultural and other aspects, and it is the worst form of financial economy to deprive them of the access to the resources which would enable them to discharge these functions adequately, efficiently, and without impairment of their other essential functions.

The treatment of Irish Universities by the State in recent decades is so un-Irish, and so unpleasantly unique in the civilised world, that one feels that the matter has only got to be made public in order to be remedied. Mr. Meenan's paper is a valuable contribution to that desirable publicity.

Miss Beere : I should like to join in the general appreciation of Mr. Meenan's most interesting paper. There are just a few points to which I wish to refer :

Mr. Meenan expresses the view that the University gives "a supply of education but has no control over the demand" and he refers to the investment that each student represents. He does not, however, attempt to assess the dividends. I cannot agree that the University should entirely dissociate itself from the practical aspects. Students are, I believe, entitled to a sensible and informed forecast of what the future holds in store for them and the University should, I think, attempt to exercise some influence on the direction of its students into fields in which they can reasonably hope to find an opening. Some years ago a very interesting follow-up study was made of Minnesota graduates for a period of nine years—1928-1936, inclusive. About 6,000 graduates replied to a questionnaire, representing approximately one-third of the graduates for the period. The chief purpose of the survey was to show the trends in salaries and the occupational opportunities of graduates. The information sought included the length of time after graduation until first position was obtained; relation of that first position to the student's field of specialisation at the University; relation of the student's later positions to his field of specialisation at the University; his occupational classification each year since graduation; and his annual salary or income each year since graduation. Supplementary information included the length and dates of any period of unemployment and the length and dates of any further educational experience. The results of the survey proved most interesting. Over 80 per cent. of the men and women were employed three months after graduation, except during the depression year, when the percentages were 65 for men and 52 for women. About 60 per cent. of the graduates found employment in the same field as their college specialisation and 80 per cent. said that their work was in the same, or a related field to their college specialisation. The proportion professionally classified in each graduating class tended to increase with the number of years since graduation and eight years after graduation 63 per cent. of the men who had graduated in 1928 were employed at the professional level. The average beginning yearly salary of men graduates ranged from £380 in 1928 to £250 in 1932 (depression). After eight years the median earnings of men were about £520, the corresponding figures for women being only £280. Unemployment among graduates was, generally, about 4 per cent., but rose to 10 per cent. during the depression. About 10 per cent. of the graduates continued

their University training after taking their first Degree. It is interesting to see that graduates in Agriculture earned relatively high salaries, being considerably in excess of salaries earned by graduates in business, Education, Engineering, Science and the Arts. The poorest paid of all University graduates were those in Education. The experience of University College graduates would probably be very different from that of Minnesota graduates but I am merely trying to show that there would be an interesting field for further inquiry something on these general lines.

Mr. Meenan gives very interesting figures of the cost of University education. We have no information, however, as to the extent to which it is possible for the student to help himself financially by means of part-time work. In America and other countries students are encouraged to combine study and work and there are many opportunities for self-help available to them. Generally speaking, similar opportunities seem to be lacking in this country and even if they were available it is, of course, doubtful whether students would be anxious to avail of them to any extent.

Mr. T. W. Freeman thanked Mr. Meenan for his excellent paper which raised so many questions of interest to all whose lives were connected with Universities. From his experience in Leeds, Edinburgh and Dublin Universities, he would like to comment on five main points :

- (1) Grants to students should, if possible, not be linked with obligations to follow a particular career. The English system of making a boy or girl of 18 a "recognised student in training" (for the teaching profession), and giving him approximately £60 a year, tended to produce a highly materialistic frame of mind with attention fixed on the ultimate pension in some extreme cases.
- (2) The social needs of student life were best met by residence in a community attached to the University but, failing this, there should be adequate supervision of lodgings. Many students in Edinburgh changed their lodgings each term in order to avoid paying retaining fees during Vacations and supervision was sometimes regarded as an infringement of student liberties.
- (3) Earning one's way through College placed a severe strain on many students and removed the leisure so necessary for good scholarship. One Edinburgh student known to the speaker, now an Honours graduate, worked every Saturday as a golf professional, every Sunday as a Church organist and acted as a tutor to backward boys in vacations. But it was an excessively austere way of living, fitted only for the strong.
- (4) British Universities were generally able to draw on benefactors, who would provide a library, a new chair with endowments, a gymnasium or a swimming bath. It might perhaps be too much to hope that some such benefactors would appear and supply some of the many needs of Irish Universities.
- (5) The staffs of Universities were expected to teach, read, administer, examine, research, speak at meetings of all kinds, to be socially charming and always leisured, and to have homes hospitably open to students and furnished with well-brought-up families. Their incomes should be sufficient to give freedom from want

and remove the grinding necessity of taking examining jobs to make ends meet: these hack jobs prevent many young University teachers from doing any effective research work. It should be possible for every University teacher to devote at least half his time to research for this, above all, was one of the ways in which the University could serve its day and generation.

Mr. E. R. Richards Orpen : First let me congratulate Mr. Meenan on his interesting and informative paper, which not only shows the general unsatisfactory position in which our Universities find themselves placed in regard to the provision of facilities for teaching and training students but, despite these handicaps, it also shows the astonishing growth of demand for University training over the past 15 years in U.C.D.

First, let me draw attention to Table VI which gives the geographic location of existing students. This interesting table would be enhanced if, in addition, we had an analysis of the occupational groups of the students' parents. The number of students emanating from any one county does not seem to be directly related to the economic prosperity of the county but appears rather to be a function of the population only, in a ratio of 1 to 1,000, except where one of the other universities is in close proximity.

To my mind Table VIII showing the distribution of students by Faculties brings into prominence a very serious state of affairs. In this country, where the prosperity of the whole community depends mainly on the level reached by our agricultural output, we find that the number of students taking agriculture in U.C.D. is only 5.3 per cent. This figure, though double that of 20 years before, shows that something is seriously wrong with our outlook towards agriculture, more especially as the majority of these students ultimately accept positions in the Department of Agriculture, either as new administrative officials or at best they form part of the advisory service for agriculture. The number of agricultural students who proceed with their studies beyond B. Agr. Sc. is almost nil, yet the whole agricultural industry is hampered in every direction for want of accurate knowledge based on facts ascertained by experiment under conditions which obtain in this country. Professor Dillon has just given us a moving picture of the lack of facilities for training the research worker in medicine; bad as the position is in that Faculty, it is far worse in agriculture, in fact it is almost true to say that with very few exceptions we have not as yet even tried to train the agricultural research worker at all. Everywhere the farmer is asking for answers to the various problems with which he is faced yet the farmers are still fed with the ordinary text book explanation which has, of course, no bearing at all on problems which occur in daily practice in the field.

Modern research is now a matter of team work and to be of any real value it must have regard to field scale production under our conditions. The laboratory solution is often misleading on a field scale, just as any first year student in chemistry can produce a product in the laboratory which, however, requires an immense plant of the utmost complexity when it comes to a question of commercial production.

The first-class research worker will in time gather up a band of enthusiastic assistants if the opportunity is given him, but so long as the few fully qualified men we have in this country who are capable of research are forced to devote their time to elementary instruction, which can be found in any 10/- text book, no real purpose is likely to follow.

Can it be that our agricultural teaching in the universities and hence our advisory service to the farmer has become something taken in the nature of a dogma too much divorced from the realities of agriculture, and that those of us who have to solve problems presented by practice in the field find the academic explanation often misleading and inapplicable in actual practice ?

Professor Shields agreed with the previous speakers that Mr. Meenan's paper was worthy of appreciation. He had broken new ground by his statistical survey of U.C.D. Apart from his interesting outline of the history of University Education in Ireland, he had collected some useful statistical data, some of which are taken from the annual reports of the President of U.C.D. In this regard, I may be allowed to pay a tribute to the work of the late Dr. D. J. Coffey, who, during his thirty years as President, laid the foundations of valuable statistics on the age of entrance of students, their home residence, their distribution among faculties, and the general growth of the College in respect of numbers of students and degrees and diplomas conferred since 1909. Mr. Meenan had gone further and had made comparisons with British Universities, and for this we are grateful.

Three important factors have, *inter alia*, influenced the development of the College since its foundation ; the almost uninterrupted annual increase in the number of students, the inadequate and stationary annual State endowment for the last 16 years, thereby causing a difficult financial position, and the vast amount of brilliant research and publication work carried out by the various departments. Between 1928/29 and 1943/44 the student roll has grown from 1,358 to 2,822. During that time, apart from the yearly grant to the College Department of Agriculture, the annual State endowment has remained at £82,000. In addition, there is a small State grant of £2,600 per annum to the Department of Modern Irish, while two years ago a sum of £70,000 was given by the Government to wipe off a debit bank balance, on which over £9,000 was paid in interest in the course of seven years. The general progress of the College has been greatly handicapped by lack of financial resources, which must exercise a potent influence on its attempts at specialisation and its ability to adapt itself to the vital economic, cultural and professional needs of the country. Compared with the British Universities mentioned in Table XI, p. 480 of this lecture, a brief analysis will make this manifest : the average income from all sources per student for these institutions was : U.C.D., £70 ; Liverpool, £132 ; Manchester, £138 ; Birmingham, £160.

A University institution to be worthy of the name should be properly endowed with respect to buildings, up-to-date equipment for its different departments, adequate facilities for research, and sufficient staff so that all its students will receive due attention in the course of their academic careers. I would suggest the appointment by the Government of a University Grants Committee to analyse the income and expenditure of the various University bodies in the country, to consider pleas for additional State endowment, and make the necessary recommendations.

Mr. Orpen has raised the question of the occupations of the parents of students, not referred to in this paper. For a number of years I have compiled statistics on this subject in connexion with day students in our Faculty of Commerce, with some interesting and somewhat surprising results. To take one Session, 1939/40, in the case of 100 students the occupations of their parents were : employers, 47, of whom 22

and 17 were shopkeepers and farmers respectively; employees, 18; the largest groups being clerks and skilled workers with 5 each; teachers: University, secondary, technical and primary, 14; public administration: central and local government, 13; professional, 4, and retired, 4. Co. Council and Co. Borough Council Scholarships in this session were held by children of the following classes: employees, 6; farmers, 5 and shopkeepers, 3. On the question of the total expenses of University education, I have come to the conclusion, as a result of a long experience of students attending U.C.D., that parents make a considerable sacrifice in many cases in enabling their children to receive the benefits of University education.

There is one Faculty in which the number of students is not commensurate with its economic importance to the country. I refer to that of Agriculture, in which the percentage of students is only 5 per cent. of the total number in U.C.D. There are too few students attending systematic educational courses in agriculture either in the University or in the residential schools of agriculture or in the classes under the auspices of the County Committees of Agriculture. The statement made by a previous speaker that there was no agricultural research in this country was not correct, so far as the professors in the Albert College, Glasnevin, were concerned. In 1938 I met a number of agricultural experts from different countries, who were attending the proceedings of the British Association for the Advancement of Science in Cambridge, and they spoke in the highest terms of the important research work of the professors of the Albert College.

It would be interesting to ascertain the percentage of students leaving secondary schools who enter University institutions in the country in the course of (say) the last twenty years.

The fact that 46 per cent. of the male students in U.C.D. are forced to reside in digs is a serious defect, pointing to a lack of hostel accommodation. The extension of hostel accommodation for University students would result in greater comfort, closer contacts, more lasting friendships and greater opportunities for cultural development.

A few references to the question of emigration of, and positions held by, U.C.D. commerce graduates should be interesting. Between 80 per cent. and 90 per cent. remain in the country. Some years ago a survey of the appointments held by commerce graduates disclosed the fact that a little more than one-third entered business life, about 25 per cent. public administration services, and the remainder became either secondary or technical teachers.