

## SOME SOCIAL ASPECTS OF THE UNIVERSITY COLLEGES OF SYDNEY AND MELBOURNE\*

BY ALAN DOUGAN

**A**LTHOUGH a major history of the University of Sydney, such as has been written on Melbourne by Professor Geoffrey Blainey, and Western Australia by Professor Fred Alexander, still remains to be undertaken, much interesting investigation into its founding has been carried out by Associate Professor Kenneth Cable and our former Archivist, now Professor David McMillan of the University of Trent, Toronto.

Both have examined the tangled mass of material which shows the conflicting forces, some representing the tradition of the ancient Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, some the pattern of the then new University of London (which in essentials is in some respects a vast extension of the Oxbridge principle), others the interests of the divided churches—the Anglican bishops robbed of official status as established Churchmen; the Roman Catholics, a Benedictine enterprise under pressure from the Irish Mission; the fissiparous Presbyterians led by John Dunmore Lang, embodying a strange concoction of traditional Scottish Churchmanship and Republicanism and also much respect for the University pattern developing in the United States.

Cable and McMillan have told the story of the struggle between those who thought the new University should be essentially an examining and co-ordinating body, and those who wanted it to be the teaching body. When the first Principal, Woolley, arrived, deeply influenced by the Arnoldian tradition, it had been decided that there should be a non-academic Senate, in the sense that no professors were to be members, and a University College in which the Professors would teach. There would also be affiliated Church Colleges (indeed St. Paul's College was already in embryo, to be called Queen's College). This was similar to the plan of the founding fathers at Toronto, Canada.

Woolley finally won the battle for the University of Sydney as both the teaching and examining body, and thus virtually created the prototype of the new "red-brick" universities of Great Britain.

I cannot help suspecting that the Sydney solution influenced the Royal Commissioners who initiated the changes under the Universities (Scotland) Act, 1858, and the later Act of 1889. It is possible that the Sydney creation may have been noted by the Scottish Commissioners and that the Edinburgh constitution owes something to it. This should be a subject for further investigation.

\* An address delivered to the Association on 16 October 1973 by the Reverend Alan Dougan, M.A.

The struggle in Sydney to create the actual shape of the new University detracted from thought about its function and style, and its curriculum remained rather narrow and conservative. As McMillan says :

By 1865 the pattern had been established, and the principles had been worked out, but the University was still regarded in some quarters as a failure, or, at best, an expensive novelty. It compared unfavourably with Melbourne in its range of teaching, and in the narrower limits from which its students were drawn.

The first concern in Sydney had been *not* as to whether Colleges were to be the point at which religion found a recognizable place within the secular University, but originally as to whether or not they were to be part of the teaching body. In the end of the matter they retained only the right to establish tutorial programmes to assist students. The University and University Colleges Act finally decreed in 1854 that the Colleges were to be places "within the University of Sydney, in which College systematic religious instruction, and domestic supervision, with efficient assistance in preparing for the University lectures and examinations, shall be provided for students of the University . . .". They were, however, probably as a consolation, to be the recipients of state endowment both for buildings and for the ongoing emolument of the College Heads. Sub-grants of University land were made to bodies of trustees, separate from the College Councils or governing bodies, to be held under strict terms requiring the Colleges to adhere faithfully to their charters. Although the terms of the sub-grants to the several Colleges vary slightly, the intent is clear. The Colleges hold their lands so long as they conduct the kind of college laid down in the Act of 1854.

Colleges were established in the University as provided for under their separate Acts of Parliament, passed for St. Paul's College in 1854, St. John's College in 1857, and St. Andrew's College in 1867. A move to found a Methodist College in 1861 came to nothing and funds were converted to found a school, Newington. The Wesley Act did not pass until 1910.

In the light of their ongoing history, especially when compared with their sister colleges in the University of Melbourne, a reference might be made to the Sydney College constitutions. They are all bodies corporate and politic by their own Acts of Parliament, their governing bodies, namely the Warden and Fellows of St. Paul's College, the Rector and Fellows of St. John's College and the Principal and Councillors of St. Andrew's College are autonomous and independent. All these parliamentary Acts have the common requirement that the College Head shall be in the clerical orders of the founding Church and the official Head of the Church shall be the official College visitor. Members of Councils are required to be partly lay and partly clerical. Paul's and John's comprise the Head and eighteen fellows, six in orders, and subject to periodic election by those of the graduates who are elected to remain on the books of the College. The Andrew's Act limits the number to the Principal and twelve Councillors, four in orders and elected with no limitation of tenure. The Colleges' active link with their related Churches is through the Official Visitor who has defined rights and through the Head himself who, being a clergyman, is subject to the discipline

of his Church. Otherwise these Colleges are not subject to Church control in any other way. I suspect this was arranged to check Church interference.

This arrangement was not happily accepted by any of the three Churches. The Anglican See of Sydney was vacant when the St. Paul's Act was passed and the new bishop, Barker, arrived in May 1855. Professor Cable relates that "he pondered in his diary 'about the St. Paul's College and the exclusion of the bishop from the management of it. The three courses open are a change of the law, my own election or my retirement from the College.'" He did none of these and the College still survives, nearly 120 years later. The struggle in John's is evident when one finds that the Archbishop, apparently assuming that it was within his powers, commissioned William Munro (the architect who later built Andrew's) to prepare plans for the building of St. John's College, only to have them rejected by the Council. Fortunately, the St. John's Council appointed William Wardell, who built for them one of the finest of our University buildings. Nor were the Presbyterians happy, for the Act which the General Assembly approved was amended, mainly by Lang, in its passage through the Parliament so that the Church's control was removed. The General Assembly only finally accepted the situation by a very narrow majority and much grumbling has taken place from time to time since.

So, on the Grose Farm, bounded generally by Parramatta Road, Missenden Road, Bligh Street and King Street, rose Blacket's noble University pile facing the City, Blacket's rambling and beautiful Paul's on the City Road border, John's on the Parramatta Road-Missenden Road corner and later Andrew's on the Missenden Road-Bligh Street (later St. Paul's Road and now Carillon Avenue). Between them were green paddocks and a small stream meandered from the Andrew's hillside to somewhere near the present Ross Street University Gates.

The University was however under constant criticism. It was considered the mad dream of "futurity"; Merewether and all who write of the period quote the letter of a "Graduate" writing to the press in 1865 who pointed out that only 59 B.A. degrees had been awarded up to that year, i.e. over a decade (*S.M.H.* 23 August 1865).

Some years ago one of Australia's most distinguished men of letters who was a College guest asked me when I came up to this University, and when I replied "I was a freshman in this College in 1926," he replied "Ah, that was the time when Sydney's Golden Age which began about the 1880s was coming to its end!"

I thought about that, and I remembered names like Mungo MacCallum, Edgeworth David, J. T. Wilson, W. J. Woodhouse, G. A. Wood, Chris Brennan, Carslaw, Liversidge, J. A. Pollock, Anderson Stuart, Francis Anderson, and Griffith Taylor. Radcliffe-Brown came to Sydney that very year and was to go on to become Professor of Anthropology at Oxford at the culmination of a brilliant career and John Hunter and Norman Royle had just made their great contributions to medicine.

This is not of course to deny the distinction of the staff from 1920 onwards. It is to indicate that in this earlier period Sydney's staff was unique in Australia.

For the first thirty years of its history however the University failed to appeal to students. MacMillan gives the figures in 1861 at 50 students and between 1852 and 1861 there had only been 120 enrolments altogether. In 1862 the intake was only 9.

If the University of Sydney failed to attract colonial students, the Sydney Colleges were, perhaps for that very reason, no more successful. Dr. Lang, writing in pique consequent upon the failure of the St. Andrew's College Council to elect him first Principal, ridicules the Warden of Paul's and the Rector of John's :

One of the reasons why I wished to be appointed Principal was that the clerical party opposed to the establishment of a Presbyterian college was still predicting the entire failure of the measure and would probably do what they could to fulfil that prediction. I foresaw that there would probably be no students for the College in the first instance, or perhaps only one or two, and I determined that I should never consent to be going about, perhaps for years together, as the heads of other Colleges had been like a hen with a single chicken in a barnyard. I had therefore resolved that, if elected principal, I would forthwith visit all the more populous places to select and enlist a suitable number of young persons of piety and promise as candidates for the Ministry.

The quotation underlines the difficulty which Scotsmen had in understanding the very nature of the kind of college they were founding. A reading of the evidence taken by and statements made to the various Select Committees which deliberated on the founding of Andrew's indicates that some Scots imagined they were founding an academy or a grammar school, and others a theological institution rather than a new kind of Oxbridge college.

The problem at Sydney was to get students to fill the rooms and buildings. The opposite seems to have been the problem at Melbourne. There, accommodation was not sufficient for the classes or students.

There does not seem to have been any great agony in determining the shape of the University of Melbourne. Compared with Sydney, it was an easy birth. It closely followed the pattern over which Sydney had been years in labour, and the University there prospered for at least its first thirty years.

The reasons are not hard to discover. There were as I think there always have been and still are sociological differences between the two cities. Professor C. M. H. Clark has attempted to analyse generally the different cultural attitudes of the two oldest Australian cities—that possibly “the main confrontation in Australia today is between the main schools of faith which divide unbelievers. Both are secular humanists, but disagree in their conception of man and the meaning of life as much as the believer and the unbeliever. One has been the product of Melbourne ; the other has been the product of Sydney. One has been the product of Liberalism, secularism, Marxism, Australian cultural chauvinism . . . The other has also been the product of liberalism and secularism, but looks to Joyce, Nietzsche, Vico, Dante, Socrates and Heraclitus as its teacher and prophets. The one supports all left-wing causes, all peace movements . . . In domestic politics they support every move to

concentrate political power in one source and in general, every permissive move . . . The other dismisses all peace and friendship moves as the work of international communism . . . and is a pluralist rather than a unitarian in domestic politics."

It is unfair to Clark, so to summarize him in a passage written in 1962. But I come to the core of his analysis :

The one, which sees all history as the history of class struggles, explains its own faith as the ideology of the working classes intellectually who came to prominence in Melbourne as a result of gold, protection, secularization of the State and industrialization, and that of its opponents as the ideology of that ancient nobility of New South Wales, the pastoralist whose capital has always been Sydney.

Clark certainly makes out a case and one remembers that about the same time another historian, Russel Ward, was similarly relating our Australian ethos back to its beginnings.

Perhaps Sydney University's early difficulties related to the fact that its earliest colonial society comprised officials and convicts—minor county gentry and the social outcasts of London and the new industrial cities. Melbourne's society grew with the quickly enriched gold seekers and the prospering sons of impoverished English and Scottish tenant farmers who made the most of the rich lands of the Western District of Victoria, as Dr. Margaret Kiddle has shown.

The nostalgic Sydney "officials" sent the boys "home", to school and on to Oxford or Cambridge; the wealthy Victorian citizen sent his son to Melbourne Grammar or Geelong and to Melbourne University, and richly endowed his University and its affiliated Church Colleges.

Professor Cable, Dr. David MacMillan, and Professor Blainey have shown how the wealthier state of Victoria and the citizens of the larger city (then) of Melbourne richly contributed to the University of Melbourne.

Nor did the University of Melbourne become emmeshed in classical studies, like Sydney.<sup>1</sup> It has the honour of founding the first Medical School in the Southern hemisphere under Halford and McCoy<sup>2</sup> in 1862, when but three students enrolled in that University for Greek and Latin I under Professor Irving, by the way a son of the famous Scottish cleric, Edward Irving, who had held all London, including Gladstone, under his spell as a preacher at Crown Court Church, until his fanatical interest in Glossalalia and other spiritual manifestations led to his deposition by the Church of Scotland and the formation of the interesting but now almost defunct Catholic Apostolic Church.

Professor Cable has described the comparative support of the two Universities of Sydney and Melbourne as follows :

It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that political prejudices, social differences, and distrust of innovation influenced these cities; and that the basic

<sup>1</sup> The matriculation examination of 1856 required fairly searching knowledge of Xenophon's *Anabasis* with Greek grammar and history and also Sallust and Vergil's *Aeneid*. The Mathematics paper included this question: "Add together  $\frac{2}{3} + \frac{4}{14} + \frac{1}{8} + \frac{5}{31}$ ."

<sup>2</sup> Both Halford and McCoy denied the Darwinian theory of Evolution until the end of their days—see G. Blainey, *A Century History of the University of Melbourne* (M.U.P., 1957), p. 29.

causes of Sydney's slow development were, in fact referred to. These were the crippling lack of finance, and the absence of good secondary schools which could supply a flow of students. The lack of Government finance needs no special emphasis for it is factually, distressingly and historically true.

The accusation against the New South Wales schools needs a little more investigation. There has, in fact, grown up a legend about the excellence of the Victorian public schools (in the English sense) to the detriment of the N.S.W. schools of the period, the King's School, Sydney Grammar School, Newington, and Shore, not to mention the great Catholic schools, St. Ignatius' and St. Joseph's. It has been believed that the Victorian schools were far ahead of the Sydney schools and that that is why so many Melbournians made and still make sacrifices to send their sons to the great Melbourne public schools in preference to the State high schools! I have always accepted this reason, until quite recently it was suggested to me that the Sydney independent and church schools were not necessarily inferior to their Melbourne counterparts, but that the Victorian high schools may not have been as academic as Sydney High, Fort Street and North Sydney High!

In so far as results are concerned the University of Sydney and its Colleges have little to fear by way of comparison, but some expert investigation should be done in the matter.

The University of Melbourne was established by Act of the Victorian Parliament in 1853. Immediately there was a grant of 25 acres and 75 more were reserved for University use in the suburban area between Parkville and Carlton. The secular nature of the University of Sydney had been a burning question there but the Melbourne founders were even more determined to exclude religious and clerical influence. The Melbourne historian, Blainey, says that "In its first twenty years Melbourne University was probably the most secular university in the British dominions . . . A cultivated Englishman who read the constitution of Melbourne University might have concluded that Victoria was a godless colony."

However godless, the University prospered and not only did the Victorian government make much more substantial grants to Melbourne than the Government of N.S.W. made to Sydney, but private benefactions poured in, particularly from the Western District pastoralists, themselves comparatively unlettered. Between 1870 and 1890 the University and its Colleges received from private benefactions over £300,000. Cable points out that in the early 1860s Melbourne University's state endowment was £11,000, more than twice as much as Sydney's.

It was not, however, until 1870 that the first steps were taken to establish affiliated colleges in Melbourne with the founding by Bishop Perry of Trinity, which was to provide not only residence and tutorial assistance akin to that provided by the Sydney Colleges, but also theological training for students for the Anglican ministry. The churches were granted ten acres each of government land for residential colleges. There had been a preliminary struggle at Melbourne, for the government at first insisted that if it gave land, it should also appoint the trustees. This the Churches

refused to accept and the deadlock was resolved in 1869 when the government offered to appoint only nominees of the churches. Thus the Melbourne Colleges were controlled by their founding Churches and in at least three, Trinity, Ormond and Queen's, theological teaching was provided. This of course greatly differed from the Sydney situation, where the Churches handed over their control to corporate bodies and Colleges could only be retained so long as they maintained the kind of independent college the University and University Colleges Act defined. Theological teaching has only ever been given in Sydney in Andrew's and as instituted in 1874 it was possible legally only so long as those taught were graduates of the University. So much has this situation changed that it is expected that classes in theology, other than those for students taking the University of Sydney's own divinity degrees, will cease in Andrew's in 1974—tragically in the centenary year of the Theological Hall's establishment!

It is interesting to note that the fact that the Colleges' lands were sub-granted under strict terms was apparently early forgotten by both University and College authorities and it was not until about 1955 or '6 that a particular event led the recently retired Deputy Principal to look into the matter and discover the facts. At that time all the Trusts for College land had to be re-established. So unaware was one College Council of the situation that in 1916 it actually offered to give part of the lands it did not own to the appropriate Church Trustees for the building of a theological institution! Mercifully, though in ignorance of the real facts the Church authorities refused the "gift".

It is said that Trinity in Melbourne had a very weak beginning. Blainey quotes a Melbourne reporter as saying: "I was told it was a school, a college, a theological seminary, a home for distressed persons, and the house of a caretaker. Now it is a small building and could not be all these, so I give it up."

Soon after, however, Alexander Leeper, a brilliant scholar of Trinity College, Dublin, and St. John's College, Oxford, was elected Warden of Trinity at the age of 27. He was the first of a mighty triumvirate for he was joined in 1881 by John MacFarland of Queen's, Belfast, and St. John's College, Cambridge, who became Master of Ormond College, founded by the Presbyterians, and by Edward Sugden, who was elected to Queen's, a scholar of English Literature and music who also held a Science degree from London. These three great men built colleges so strong that they almost achieved Leeper's boast in 1880 that the Colleges would some day overshadow the University. The Colleges built solid buildings with magnificent tutorial systems, and enrolled non-resident students. As lectures in Arts and Law were not compulsory and the University had allowed its own teaching standards to run down, students flocked to the College tutorials as non-resident members and left the University's own class rooms empty. A Royal Commission found that the Colleges were actually dictating to the University in educational matters. MacFarland became Vice-Chancellor of the University and was later its Chancellor until his death on 22 July 1935—the day Sugden also died. He was knighted in 1919. Other

Colleges were founded, Newman (with buildings in blue stone designed by Burley Griffin, and another great Rector, Jeremiah Murphy) ; St. Mary's for Catholic Women, the Women's College, Janet Clark Hall for women, and more recently Witley and Ridley. They are all controlled by and financed by their Churches. They received no university or government subsidy until the last decade when, following the publication of the Murray Report, the Australian Universities Commission recommended grants for buildings and also recurrent grants for tutorial and administrative purposes.

This College success story contrasts with the Sydney situation. While the College Heads in Sydney were good Christian men but not professional scholars, with the exception of Andrew Harper of Andrew's, 1902-1922 (who came from Ormond's Theological Hall staff) and Maurice O'Reilly at John's, no Sydney Heads of the period were of the academic and administrative calibre of the great Melbourne trio.

Nor were numbers great in the Sydney Colleges. Paul's never exceeded 38 until after World War I and John's housed only about 30 until after World War II. In Kinross's period at Andrew's, 1875-1902, numbers never exceeded 32. With the advent of Harper numbers rose quickly in Andrew's to nearly 90 between the Wars, but tutorials were very few and far between and the Colleges lacked money and their buildings ran down. Andrew's attracted trust funds under Kinross and Harper but almost exclusively for scholarships and bursaries and mostly for students for the ministry. Its sister, Ormond, received altogether from Francis Ormond £111,970.<sup>3</sup> He also gave almost as liberally to other University and academic concerns. The Wyselaskie gifts to Ormond for buildings in this period exceeded £10,000.

I have always suspected that part of the success of the Colleges in Melbourne lay in the fact that they were so obviously Church Colleges. Not all churchmen, including laymen, know what Universities and Colleges are really about. The Sydney Colleges have had some difficulty in that their governing bodies are not in any sense related to the day-to-day life of the institutions as the Oxford dons are, but over the years those elected are more and more former College men and almost invariably University men. Senior resident academic fellows of the Colleges now also attend Council meetings. In Ormond in particular the Church has several times differed from the College on the question of alcoholic liquor. One General Assembly some 15 years ago declared the College "dry", which provoked a wickedly humorous article in the *Nation*, and at the Annual Moderator's Reception held at Ormond the good ministers and elders of the Kirk were puzzled to see a flag flying from the tower of the great Scottish baronial building, which resembled the heraldic devices of the College, but enshrined thereon was a representation of a bottle of Melbourne Bitter and under it in the escroll not "et nova et vetera"—Ormond's motto, but better still that of the Presbyterian Church which refers to the burning bush which Moses saw in the wilderness—"nec tamen consumebatur"—"nor however will it be consumed"!

<sup>3</sup> Andrew's received a similar sum from a most devoted benefactor in the 1960s, but in actual purchasing power Ormond's would be perhaps five times greater.



The strength of the Melbourne Colleges, however, did not save them when disaster fell on the University. The financial catastrophes of the 1890s impoverished the Colleges so that Blainey records that in 1895 Queen's was in debt £17,000 and the Master had to take on an outside job and his wife acted as Matron; Trinity, farmed to the Warden, lost him £12,000 in one year. In the midst of all their financial problems the University accountant was found to have embezzled £23,839 of University funds.

While the Sydney Colleges remained weak until the turn of the century the University of Sydney does not seem to have been much affected by the 1890 financial crises and received the great Challis and the Peter Nicol Russell bequests as well as many others. Indeed as far as the two institutions were concerned it was certainly a case of "Hodie me, cras tibi"!

As I have observed the Colleges in both Universities, I have noted their problems and that of their students, in relating to the University. This has probably been more difficult in Sydney because its campus terrain is differently organized and the Colleges are more remote from the heart of the place. In both cities, however, the problem of relation manifested itself in two ways. There developed initiation ceremonies which sometimes became quite brutal. In Sydney the first-year student became a lowly fresher, than which God had created no known object more vile or despicable. In Melbourne the new man was addressed as "scum". You can read a lively description of what happened in Melbourne in the second volume of Colin MacInnes's biography. In Sydney this persecution went on for the whole year. The fresher was subjected to constant indignity, his furniture (provided in those days by himself) constantly thrown out and distributed about the University grounds. This was said to create College spirit. I am happy to say that although I suffered it myself in 1926 it is now, I believe, in all Australian Colleges a thing of the past.

There is no doubt that such practices took place in earlier centuries in the ancient continental universities but the evidence is that at Oxford and Cambridge they have been unknown for several centuries.

Sociologically, I believe that the Colleges, lacking real teaching rights, had to struggle to believe in themselves as academic communities and hence the community had to be tightly knit together. College men must be forced to conform to a set image.

In one college a student who was accidentally killed became an embodiment of the ideal. These practices also grew up in the residential halls of some of the provincial universities of England, and I suspect for the same reason. It is surprising then to find Andrew Harper, who constantly complained about what he called the "hazing" of freshmen, writing in the College magazine and insisting that the University was so big (it was, when he retired, only about 2,000 students) that College men should relate to their colleges, as microcosms of the whole. Apparently he did not realize the relation between hazing and the need to maintain identity.

Perhaps also the "fresher system" as it came to be called did perform a social function in overcoming social differences in entrants. Men from English Public

Schools going up to Oxford or Cambridge were already modelled. The mixed groups, after the turn of the century, of Sydney or Melbourne freshers, from the most fashionable independent schools and those on State Exhibitions and College scholarships from small country high schools differed widely socially. By the end of their fresher year one could hardly pick one type from the other.

The greatest change in the history of the Colleges has taken place in the last decade. It began with the expansion of Universities and Colleges following the setting up of the A.U.C. It was clear from the beginning that the Government wanted to increase University residence and I believe the affiliated colleges were particularly well treated because the Prime Minister, Sir Robert Menzies, who had been an extra-mural Ormond man, believed in them. The quickest and cheapest way to increase resident places was obviously to develop the old existing college. This meant in some cases increasing facilities, common rooms, dining halls, kitchens and the like.

In 1960 there were nine universities in Australia and 30 affiliated colleges and 11 halls of residence. In 1968 there were 15 Universities and in all 93 colleges and halls. Sydney had then 748 men and women in residence and Melbourne 1,001. The University of Sydney had 11,850 and Melbourne 11,073. In 1972 college and hall places in Sydney had risen to 1,342 out of a university population of 17,112 and in Melbourne to 2,140 out of 14,984.

Most of the old affiliated colleges increased numbers from about 100 to 200 rather unhappily, fearing that increases would affect adversely the social characteristics of the community. There is no doubt that great changes did occur. The type of college student changed. He was a year or two older, consequent upon the change from the Leaving to the Higher School Certificate. Until the quotas were applied to all faculties, any student who could pass the necessary subjects at matriculation level and pay necessary fees could enter University and College and remain as long as he could afford it. There was a very heavy demand for college places—I will quote Andrew's figures in the rest of what I have to say because they will be typical of most other affiliated colleges. The total intake in 1914 was 19, and this was roughly the picture (22 in 1934) until the post-World War II period when it grew decade by decade from 39 in 1954 to 81 in 1973. The social background of the College intake also changed radically. I give the percentage of freshmen coming from independent schools: 84.2% in 1914; 1924-72.3%; 1934-77.3%; 1944-52% (I find this drop difficult to account for); 1954-61.5%; 1964-68.8%; 1973-22.4%. In 1960 however we were choosing one out of every four applicants, in 1972 in common with most other colleges we had vacant places (in our case an average of 14 through the year). For some reason in 1973 we are more crowded than ever.

The change in the type of student has meant a loosening of the old traditions. Formal dinner with gown, candles, wine and the old ceremony is increasingly under criticism; new colleges find it difficult to introduce these pleasant customs. It seems a pity that a custom which began in the ancient English colleges in the fourteenth century should now disappear. The custom continues still in the older

Sydney and Melbourne colleges. The dress standards, which were very high in Sydney, much more so than in Melbourne, fell to pieces three years ago. Initiation of freshmen has virtually disappeared. Until about 1965 women were allowed as visitors in men's colleges only on two open nights each term, when conduct was strictly policed by the students' own House Committee. Now in almost every college visitors of the female sex remain at least until midnight and conduct is not policed—there would be a tremendous revolt if it were. A number now admit as students in residence members of both sexes.

Changes in the background of those coming up to universities and colleges have, certainly had their effects on University and College life, but society has also changed. These changes have been intensified by two factors. One, the rise of the technopolis in which the old family relationships break down, and as Harvey Cox has shown society becomes anonymous and mobile. The other factor is the decline of Christian culture which began nearly two centuries ago and the results of which are now clear for all to see. The whole of our cultural values are involved. For a long time values which were dependent on the old tradition survived, as flowers cut from the plant survive for a while in water. Ultimately they die. Hence our permissive society.

Add all this together and one finds a society which does not require an individual to accept any person on intimate terms in a given community, as one did in the town or village situation. The individual in the technopolis chooses his or her own selected community. Students eschew the old communities for small groups in flats.

The old college community presented the individual with a given group and other individuals he himself did not select, and with them he had to communicate. Youth do not accept this situation in the age of the technopolis. That is one of the reasons why students have allowed the old machinery such as initiation and House Committee control to disappear so easily. That is why there is the constant exodus out of College into flats. We need not really have been so amazed that in 1971 several of the Melbourne Colleges, even select Trinity, could not fill their rooms and most Sydney Colleges, certainly Andrew's, had the same problem in 1972. The increasing numbers forced on the Colleges by University expansion of course did not help sociologically, though it did financially.

The older Colleges of course have found it difficult to understand the student's rejection of the Christian "morals" and the College head appearing as a "father figure". I myself have learnt to understand many of these changes the hard way. Some of my men behaved badly at a college administered by the Dominican Order and those students retaliated vigorously on a visit to Sydney. The good Dominican Father Head and I later discussed the matter and thought sadly of the ways of young men today and I said to the old Irishman, "Father, why do you and I keep on doing this job when we could be gentle shepherds of some small flock in a pleasant country village?" And he said, "Principal, wherever the people are, particularly in frontier situations, the Church must be there—there to offer the best. In Universities to offer good accommodation, good food, good tutorials, to be there to help unobtrusively, to watch for the lonely, to spur the slack, to give any help needed.

The Chapel will be there and the Head will pray and give opportunities for worship—but never, never must there be compulsion: never must it appear that we offer facilities or service on condition students accept the faith or the ethics. We must be there to offer, and have what we offer accepted and perhaps our reason for offering it spurned and rejected. It is the way our Master went.”

The College I entered as a freshman in 1926 and to which I returned in 1956 as Acting Principal was virtually the same kind of institution—it could be described as a mixture of a superior great public school and a military academy. The Colleges of today are in revolt against every kind of institutionalism. They have become nevertheless rather pleasant and relaxed academic communities. Instead of reacting against the University, College men now relate to it.

For my part, I believe in the old-fashioned colleges as academic communities where mature scholars and the youngest freshman now can commune together in a free and pleasant atmosphere. I have learnt to accept the changes which have taken place in my own term as a College head. I hope we can retain what still remains.

Young undergraduates should be rebels, they should be sometimes in revolt. Their job is to be re-thinking, to be testing and challenging the old opinions. They are finding many of them today no longer valid and they see much in our social life that is unworthy and unacceptable—what can they do?

In a graduation address, some years ago now, I said that when faced with the world's incongruities and inconsistencies and irreconcilables one must either laugh or pray—that is part of the social function of humour and religion. Many students find it hard or impossible to pray today. Life is pretty hard and it is not surprising that they are therefore rebellious. Nevertheless I was comforted recently when a post-graduate student, who after taking his first degree at good honours level had served two years in the army and come into College, was asked by my wife what he thought of College after the army. He replied thoughtfully, “In College the jokes are funnier!” I think there is depth in that remark.

Yes, I still believe in the old Colleges. I have spent over a third of my life in one of them, and I know few of our graduates who have not gone out into the world to be better professional men and better servants of humanity, because they have been in College.