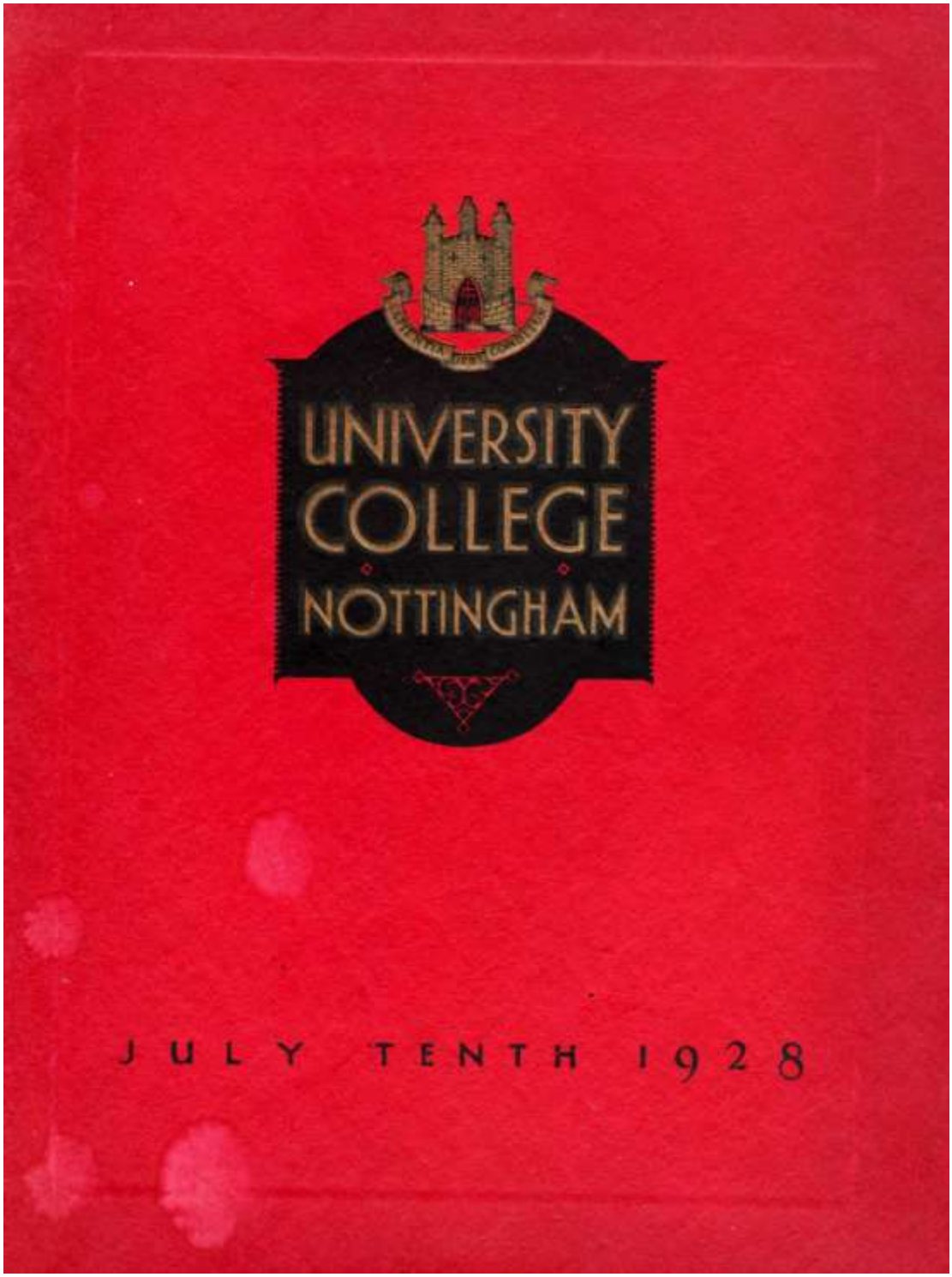
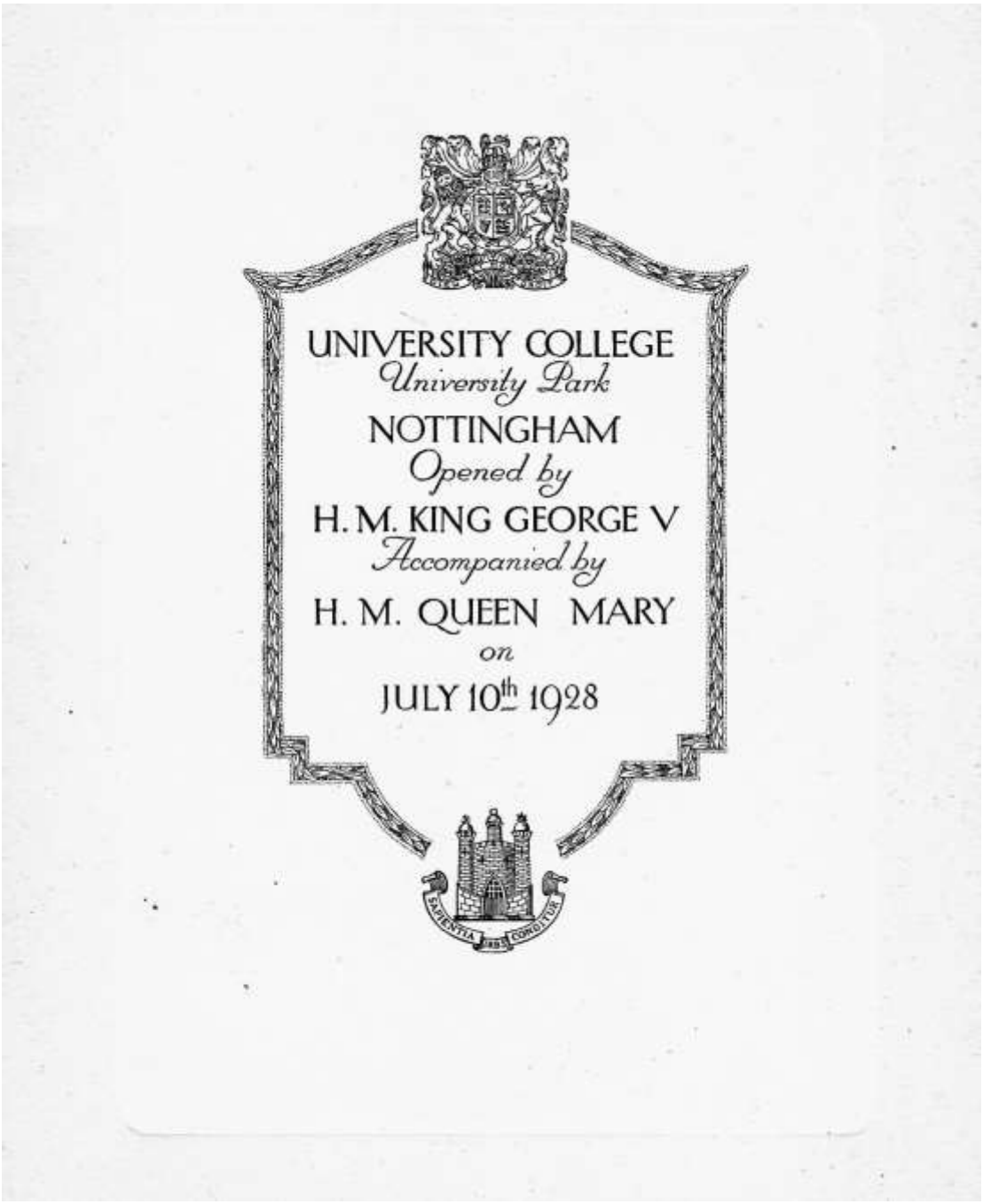

UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE
NOTTINGHAM
JULY TENTH 1928

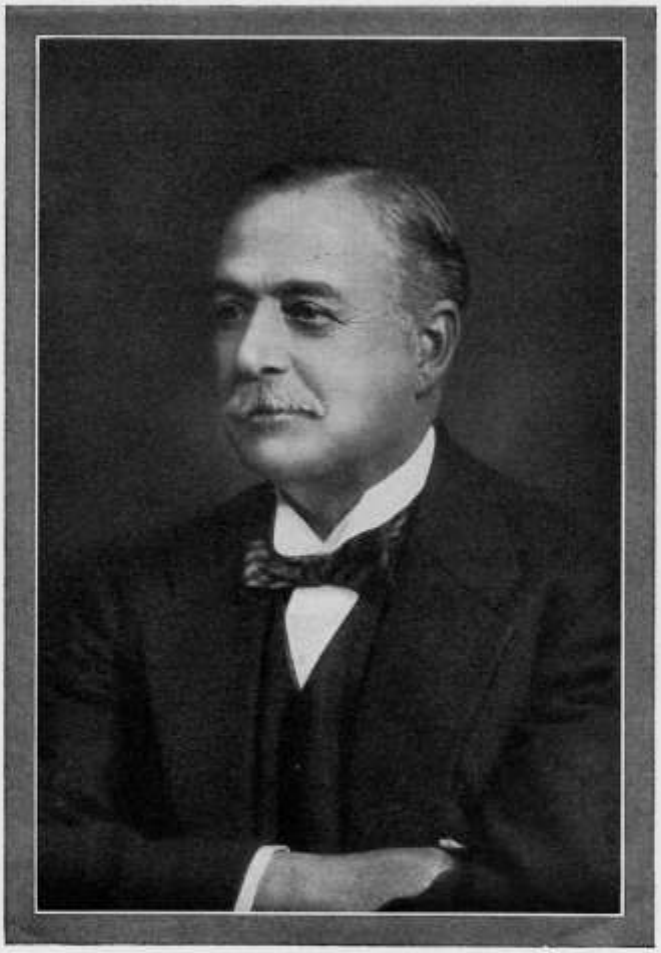

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
University Park
NOTTINGHAM
Opened by
H. M. KING GEORGE V
Accompanied by
H. M. QUEEN MARY
on
JULY 10th 1928
SAPIENTIA AEDES CONDITUR

His Majesty King George V.

Photograph by Lafayette.

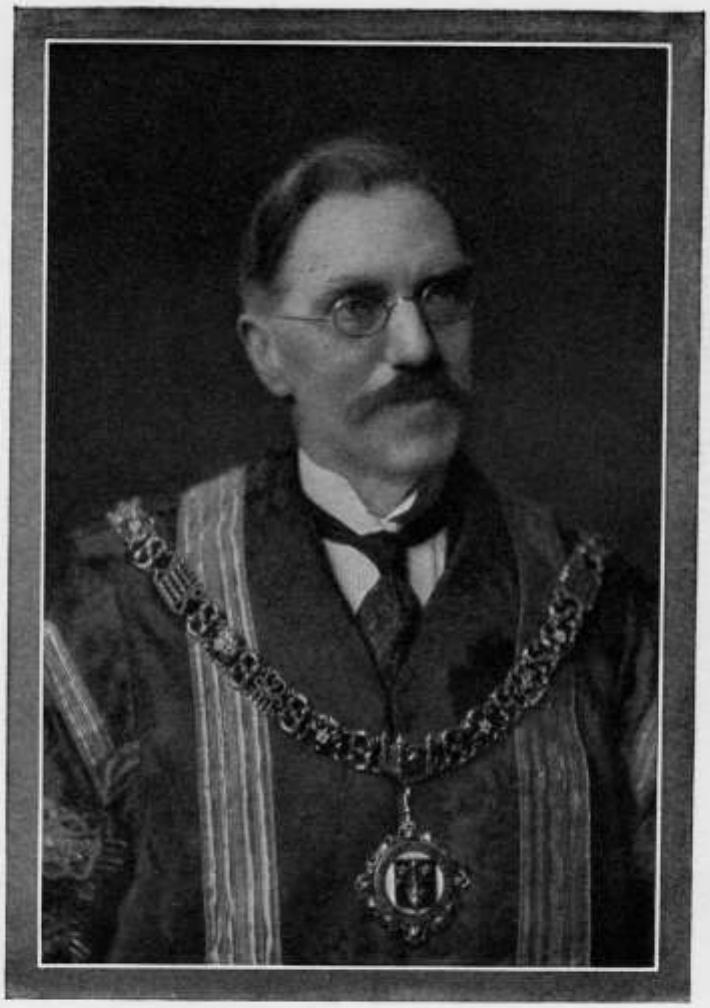
Her Majesty Queen Mary.

Photograph by Lafayette.



His Grace The Duke of Portland, K.G.
President of University College.

Photograph by Lafayette

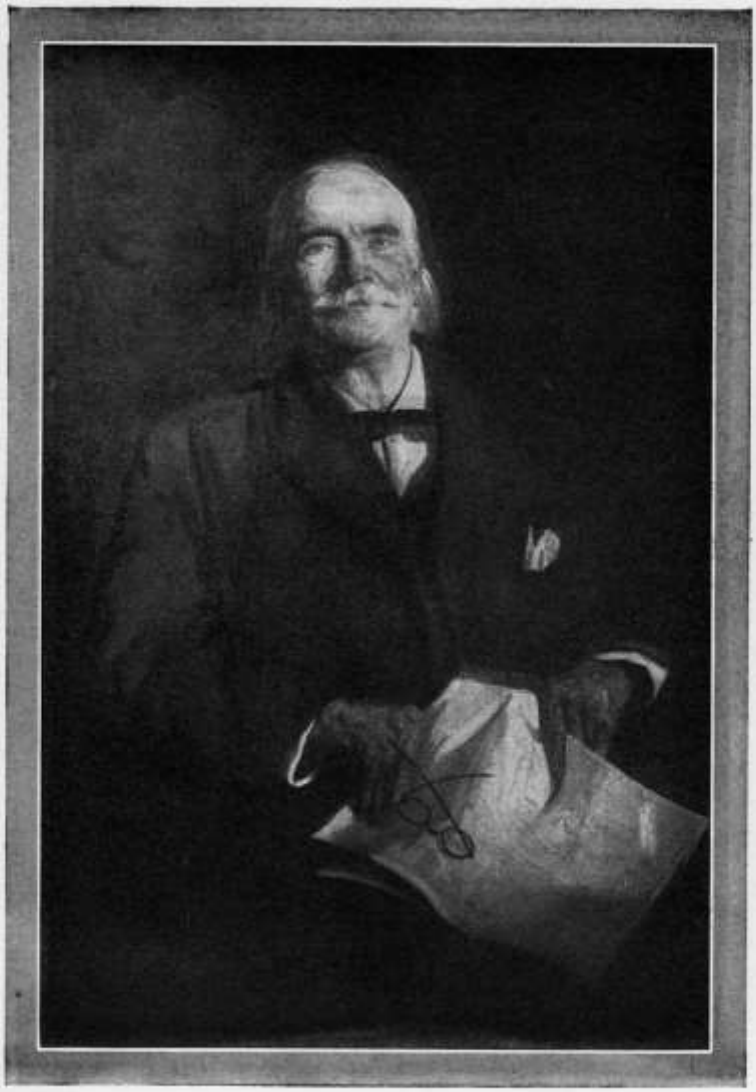


Alderman E. Huntsman.

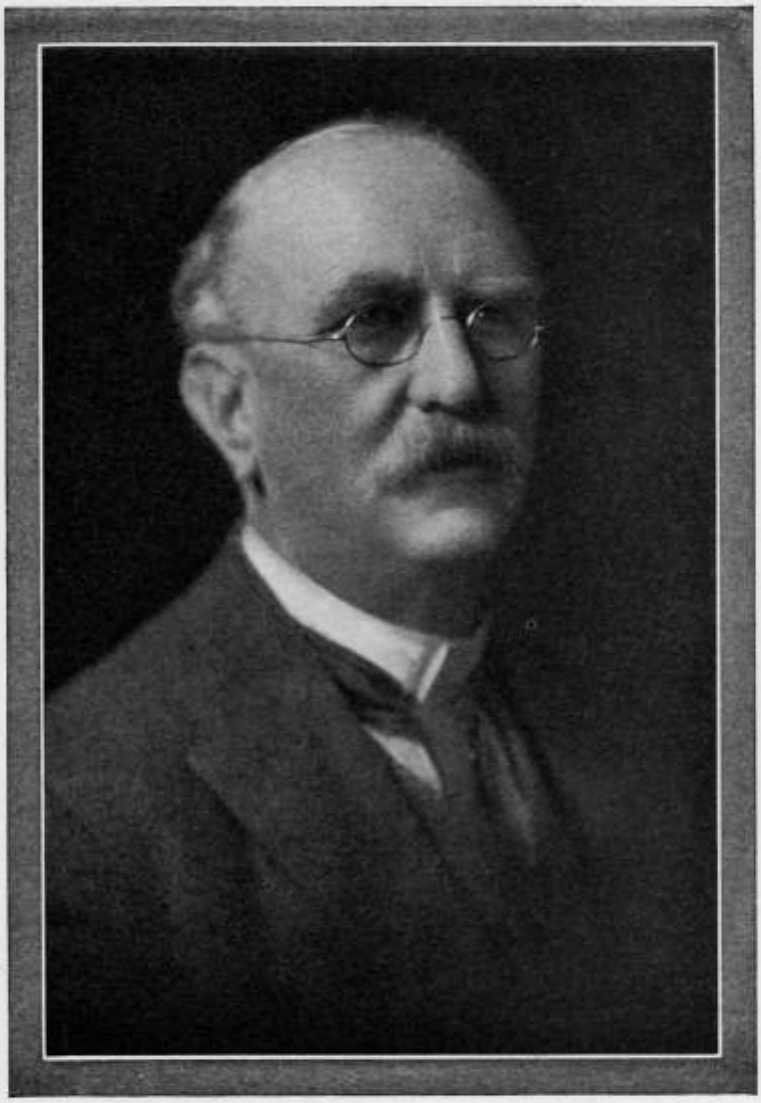
Mayor of Nottingham

Chairman of University College Council.

Photograph by Millis



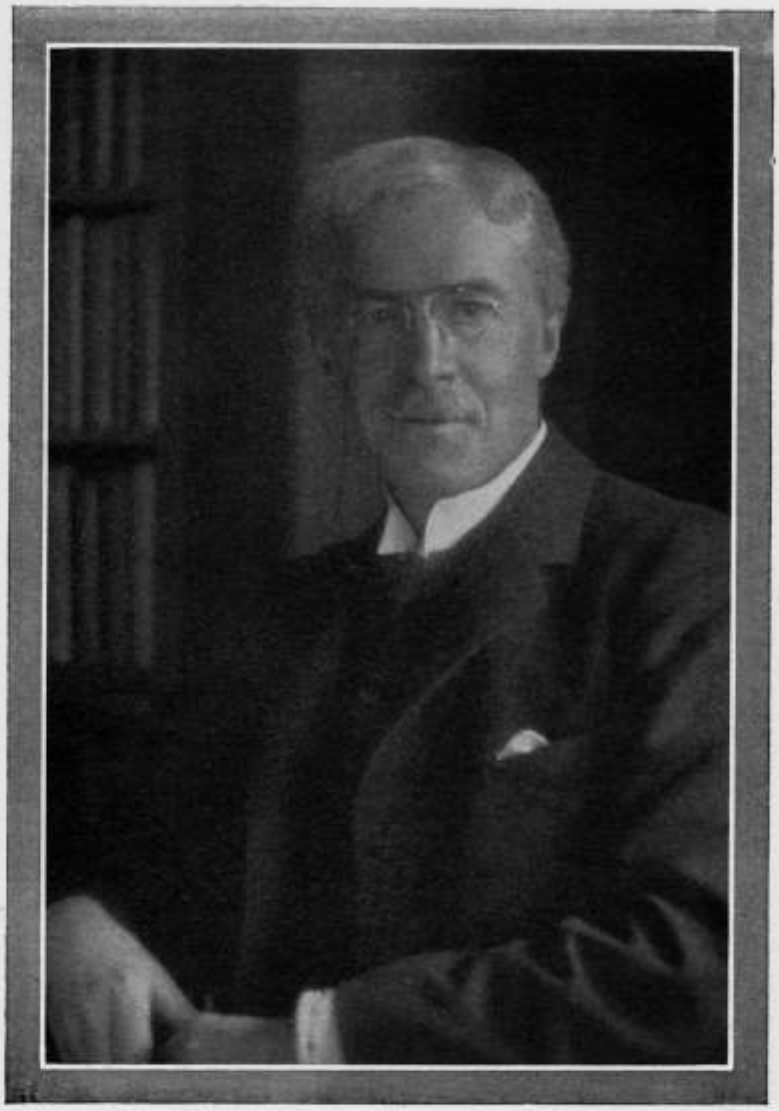
Sir Jesse Boot, Bart.



Professor W. H. Heaton, M.A.

Principal of University College, Nottingham.

Photograph by Millis



Professor F. S. Granger, M.A., D. Lit.
Vice Principal of University College, Nottingham.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
NOTTINGHAM

— BY —

FRANK GRANGER
M.A., D.Lit., A.R.I.B.A.
(*Vice-Principal*).

1928
NOTTINGHAM.
Printed & Published by
JENKINS, JAMES & LOW

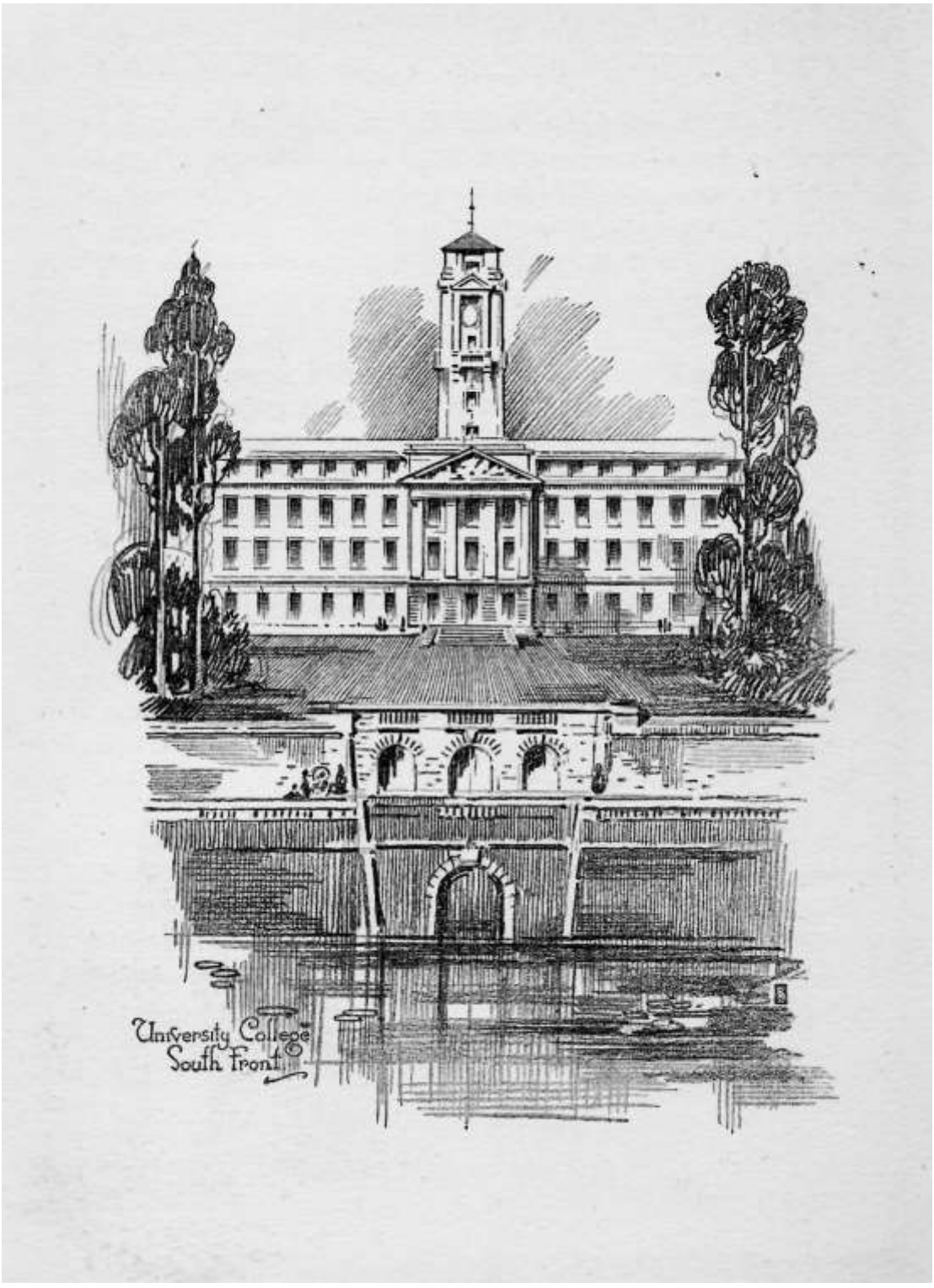

University College
Shakespeare Street

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, NOTTINGHAM.

Nottingham shares with Oxford and Cambridge the combination of academic buildings with landscape. Even in Shakespeare Street the fine effect of good building is enhanced by the green turf and the trees amid which it is placed. Unconsciously the passer-by projects away from himself the scene of studies in themselves remote from the immediate interests of daily life.

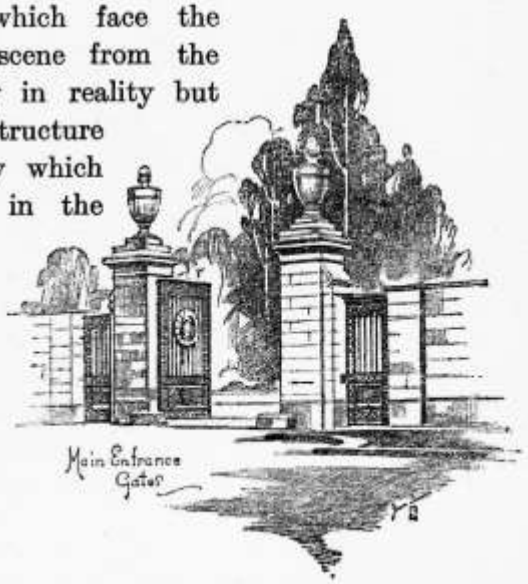
The main front is two hundred and sixty feet long and sixty feet high. There are three prominent gables which are the leading features of an effective composition. The style is French Gothic which with its regularity is nearer than our English Gothic to the Romanesque architecture from which both of them sprang. The Ancaster stone of the front has kept its colour very well and has weathered successfully for the most part. Unfortunately the use of this stone for the boundary wall was less satisfactory. It began to perish almost at once. Restoration was necessary; yet it added to the dissatisfaction which was caused by the large amount of extras incurred beyond the contract. Hence justice was not done to the beauty of the design by Lockwood and Mawson.

The sculpture on the centre gable represents in a broad band the school of the arts and sciences. The circular groups represent sculpture, painting and music. Along the front, beautiful statues of Shakespeare, Milton, Bacon, Newton, Watts and Cuvier, personify the disciplines, literature, science engineering and biology, which are the business of a University.


University College
South Front

Seen at night from the University Park, the lighting of the new Great Hall will suggest an ecclesiastical building. The unbroken wall of the ground storey and the lighting from above is in the manner of Wren's Churches, and Vignola's Church of the Gesu at Rome, which influenced Wren. The architect of the Nottingham building has conceived a model which might well be followed for English churches and chapels, rather than the late English Gothic style which is the less suitable, the more closely it is imitated. The blended suggestion of beautiful architecture and beautiful service reminds us that to Sir Jesse Boot's achievements in the one field, there corresponds the unselfish devotion of Alderman Huntsman in the other; with the wise and faithful friendship of the Duke of Portland.

The main front of the New College as seen from the Boulevard, is over four hundred feet long, not counting the kitchens at the east end. The undoubtedly fine architectural effect is due to many causes. The building appears rising tall upon a high slope, amidst and against a spreading group of trees. It faces nearly south and meets the light. The water of the lake (through which the tiny river Tuttle Brook flows) contributes beautifully as a foreground like the lakes at Welbeck. The terraces which face the the spectator who views the scene from the University Boulevard, not only in reality but in appearance hold up the huge structure pressing down the Keuper clay which here comes lower down than in the eastern parts of the city.



The uniformity of the windows is broken by the projecting centre tetrastyle and by the pilastered library and great hall at the two ends.

The tower was a later addition to the scheme. Sir Jesse wished that the floating music of bells should be heard amid and above the hum of machinery and voices. (We may look forward to combining in a pleasant harmony the tone of the hour bell at Highfields with the distantly heard boom of the great bell of the Exchange). The tower would have been more obviously led up to, if the centre of the front had been of eight or even six columns, and the pediment had been thus extended. Yet the tower will please when it gains familiarity. But suppose the average critic taken at his word. Suppose that there was no tower. The whole building would seem to sink towards the ground.

But the academic meaning of this great site is far from being the whole meaning. Certainly there is the University in prospect, but there is much more; there is the landscape into which it enters. The title University Park expresses this fact. England is largely an artificial production. Its beauty to a very large extent consists of landscape designedly

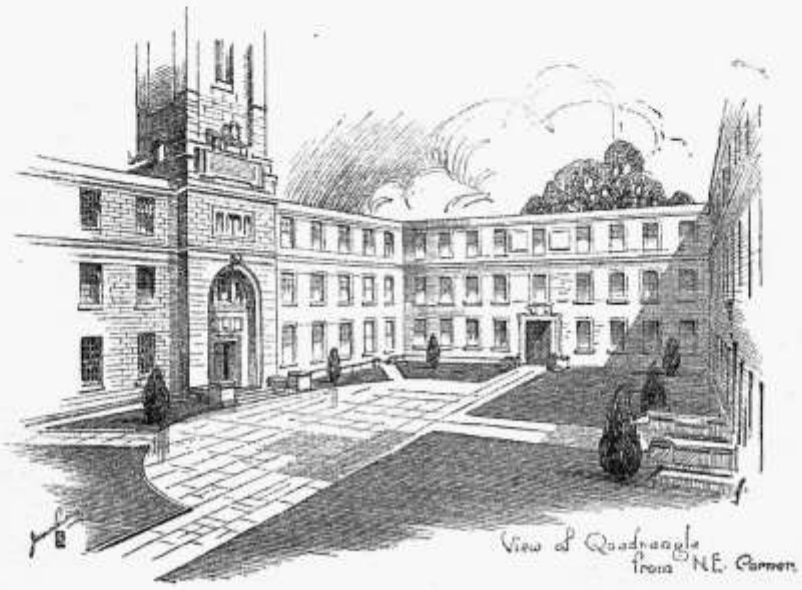
grouped around buildings. The general grouping of Chatsworth and Blenheim are samples on a large scale of what has taken place all over the country on a smaller scale. The village church, the manor house, the farmhouses, the labourers' cottages, the village green, form in thousands of landscapes a skilful composition. The grouping of the University Park is more conspicuous but it is not more intentional than that of Clifton village, as it is seen from the terraces, which look across the lake, and right away to the Trent, and the far side of the river.

Sir Jesse Boot originated the whole scheme and is therefore the landscape architect; a conception more familar to the eighteenth century than to the present. The lake itself, the boulevard, the sports fields, the swimming baths, the bridges and the tea room, are all constituent features of one design along with the University. We pass from architecture to geography of which regional planning is a part, and of which our present case is a brilliant and monumental example. But the new architecture combines landscape with itself. Mr. Morley Horder has carried out Sir Jesse Boot's landscape scheme with fidelity and effectiveness.

The artist's pencil has brought us through the entrance gates which at once announce to the newcomer the sobriety of the general style. Wherever he has travelled in England he has seen similar stone lodges, marking the approach to a stately mansion. The building which we now approach is not so near the Greek tradition as the graceful front of the Exchange.

The general style here is several removes away. First the Romans took over the Greek columnar manner and employed the arch and the vault. A Roman architectural treatise, that of Vitruvius, was transcribed for Charlemagne under the direction of pupils of the great school of York. Copies made from this original, inspired the architects of the Italian renaissance. And from them the architects of Paris learned their lesson,to transmit it in turn to Wren and our English masters. The amateur may recognise the style of the University by the columns or pilasters taken up through more than one storey as in the front of the library. To this style the name Palladian is given from the famous architect of Vicenza, Palladio; Nuthall Temple which is being destroyed was imitated from Palladio's Villa Capra near Vicenza.

With these architectural commonplaces in our mind, we have passed along the road which leads through the grassed slope to the West Court. On the right the solid masses of the Great Hall; on the left the west end of the science block with geology and geography on the ground floor and the chemical laboratories above. Before us the entrance to the



Quadrangle offers a perspective which reaches as far as the distant church on the Derby Road. Going through, we pass into an enclosed area of quiet, where the distant hum of industry is muffled. The casual holly or other shrub, stands out against the paved court. We move past the entrance to the science block on our left, and from the north east corner turn back to view the chief doorway crowned with a great arch. That the entrance should be so strictly limited in height and breadth, is in the academic tradition. The small height symbolises the humility of man's science in the face of its tasks; the narrow way, the difficulties which beset the search for truth, and the perils which beset the communication of scientific truth to the general world. Our foreign students will find in the Latin of the inscription, a language with which most of them are already acquainted; a tribute to the international character of the highest knowledge; and a common possession of all humanism. Students from nineteen nationalities, are included in the three hundred foreigners, men and women, to whom the old College has already opened its doors. In the future the French student may find in the style of the new building an echo of the great French architectural tradition.

The tower rises high to mark this focus of the whole munificence of Sir Jesse Boot. The clock which records the continuous lapse of the hours to the sound of the chimes of Westminster, suggests the long years which open out into the unknown future.

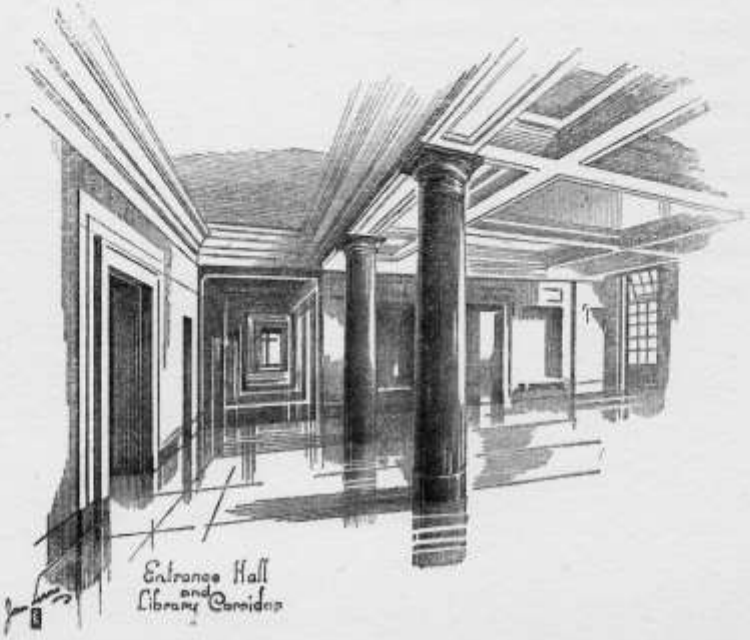

Main Entrance

As we enter the building, we pass the scrutiny of the College Porter and if it is our first visit, we take note of his instructions. The interior splendor is the culmination of the interesting crescendo which began so simply with the external severity of design. The walls are lined in the corridors with a skirting of black Belgian marble, a material which furnishes the four monolith columns of the Loggia. The walls of the Loggia are covered with Hopton Wood marble of a yellowish grey; elsewhere with a similar Belgian material. But the materials cannot keep our eyes from a beautiful prospect which opens out in front of the windows; there is a curious reason for the small panes; they break up the prospect into parts beyond which the eye cannot wander. At least this was the reason given by a Roman architect to his client, who protested against the smallness of the windows overlooking *his* garden.

On the left of the Loggia opens the Council Chamber panelled with oak; the panels to be filled some day perhaps with fine paintings, or with names of honour in the history of the government of the College; with this change however, that in the university the academic representatives will take a direct part in the government, as at Oxford and Cambridge. It must never be forgotten however that it was a committee of the City Council that laid the foundations for the new governing body. The College, like the English Church, has been under the final control of laymen; the advantage of a layman as distinguished from an expert, is that knowing rather less, he cannot get into so much mischief, if he goes wrong.

On the right is the Principal's room, and beyond, the rooms of the Registrar and the Professor of Education. On the left beyond the Council Chamber down the corridor there is the staircase leading *down* to the Refectory and *up* to the class rooms devoted to humane letters; English, Latin, Greek, French, German, Spanish and Italian; History, Ancient Mediaeval, Modern; New Testament Greek, Hebrew and Divinity; Logic, Psychology and Philosophy; Architecture and Applied Art. An Italian student, said to his guide who was taking him round the building "where are your amphitheatres.?" The arts professors would find it difficult to answer that question. As a matter of fact, the bank of seats customary in our science departments is rarely diverged from in England. Hence by slightly raising the seats at the back of one of the larger classrooms, the need for an arts lecture theatre is satisfied in the English manner.

There never was a great building which when completed exactly corresponded to the intentions with which it was begun. This however may be said. There have been few



buildings in which the modifications which may suggest themselves after the completion of the buildings can be carried out with less interference with the structure. Light partitions separate one bay from another. By a casual removal of a partition here, a larger room is made. By the insertion of a partition there, a room is divided into smaller rooms. The whole edifice to this extent is like a flexible garment for the life which is to go on within it.

The student on his first entrance will have to pass the Cerberus of the office (if one may use so forbidding a name of the courteous officials whom he will meet on entering the door in the West Entrance of the Quadrangle). Only then will he be able to range among the marble halls which spread out to the east and west of the main entrance. The visible and audible circumstance of his introduction to academic life will sustain him amid the initiations which every freshman has to undergo. The creative imagination of youth will invest (I am writing of the hidden mind of the newcomer) the chemical elements of the stones and marbles—calcium, magnesium, silicon, iron, sulphur—with qualities that no chemical analysis can detect. Against this material background thus transfigured, the drama of a thousand academic careers will be played. As the student becomes conscious of the enigma which each of us presents to himself, he will seek a solution in various ways. He may lose himself in sport or among the mazes of speculation opened out by the sciences or humane letters. He will find out that the best wine of the spirit may come, like material wine, from the past, or like fresh water, from the present.


The Library.

But for the humanities, classrooms yield in value to the Library. That is the laboratory of the humanist. It will be the privilege of the writer to hand over for the use of future students the implements of his calling. The precedent has already been set by Col. Mellish whose meteorological collection will find a fitting resting place in one of the alcoves. On the first floor will be collected the many series of journals in which are recorded the researches pursued by savants in a thousand fields. There will also be there the special libraries of the several sciences including mathematics and economics. The applied sciences will have a separate library at the building in Shakespeare Street.

As we enter the Library from the corridor beyond the staircase, we find ourselves on the ground floor. Around us are alcoves devoted to English, History, Modern Languages, Latin, Greek and Hebrew, Philosophy with Education; one compartment contains the new books of the passing hour. In the centre perhaps is an enclosure containing the catalogues, from which books are issued on loan. For it is a characteristic of the working library, that not only have the students free access to the shelves, but they can take books away for study. Rather from the carelessness inherent in human nature than from any propensity to theft, there is a fixed annual per centum of disappearances. But freedom is cheaply purchased at this price. As we leave the Library to return along the the corridor we take a last glance at the beautiful yellow marble which rises in the piers from ground to roof. It is hard to distinguish this most beautiful artificial material, scagliola,

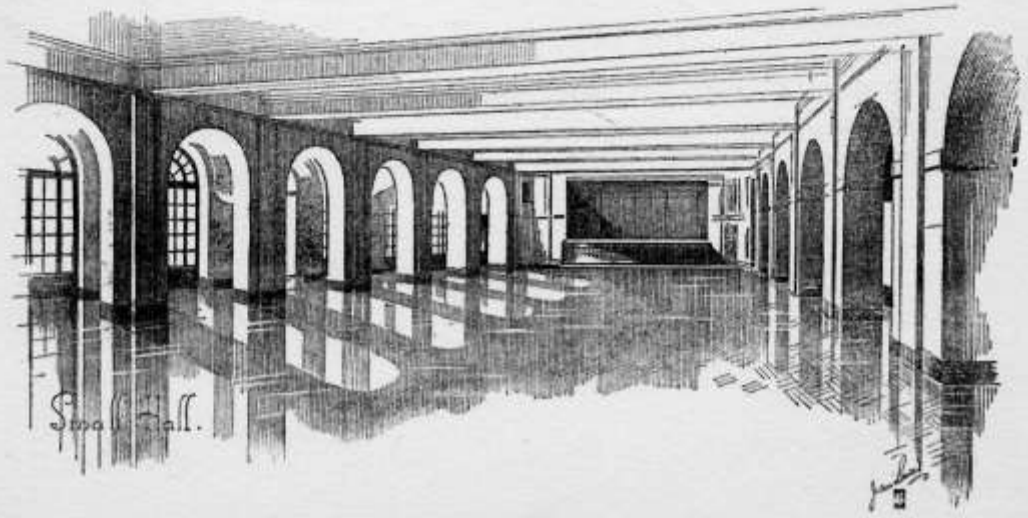

The Great Hall.

which we owe to the Italian craftsmen, from the fine marble of the living rock. Alabaster busts of the human stars which shine upon us from the night of the past, enforce the one inescapable distinction of genius from its imitators and counterfeits. Lesser luminaries are portrayed in raised plaster medallions of a charming and revived technique.

The interior of the Great Hall strikes an individual note which perplexes us until we refer the columnar piers which are ranged along each side to their Egyptian analogies. The platform is not arranged so much for public meetings and the array of important personages as to evoke the drama, and the wordless soul of music. The light comes high from the gallery windows, and especially from an unseen origin above the stage; the complete effect assorting rather with the huge issues raised by the post-war tragedy of life, than with the complacent trifles of the popular stage. I can imagine the work of our younger school of dramatists, of Strindberg or of Pirandello, played in these surroundings where the simple grouping and rich illumination of the stage scenery unites the actors with the not unlike setting in the auditorium.

The beautiful function to be constituted by Their Majesties' presence will inaugurate, we hope, the tradition of academic ceremonial, which, however limited, is yet an intrinsic part of the future history of the College. This happy coincidence of a royal visit with a great foundation was enjoyed in 1525 just four centuries ago, by Christ Church Oxford, when Henry VIII visited it; an occasion celebrated in magnificent verse by an unknown poet to the music of Thomas Ford.

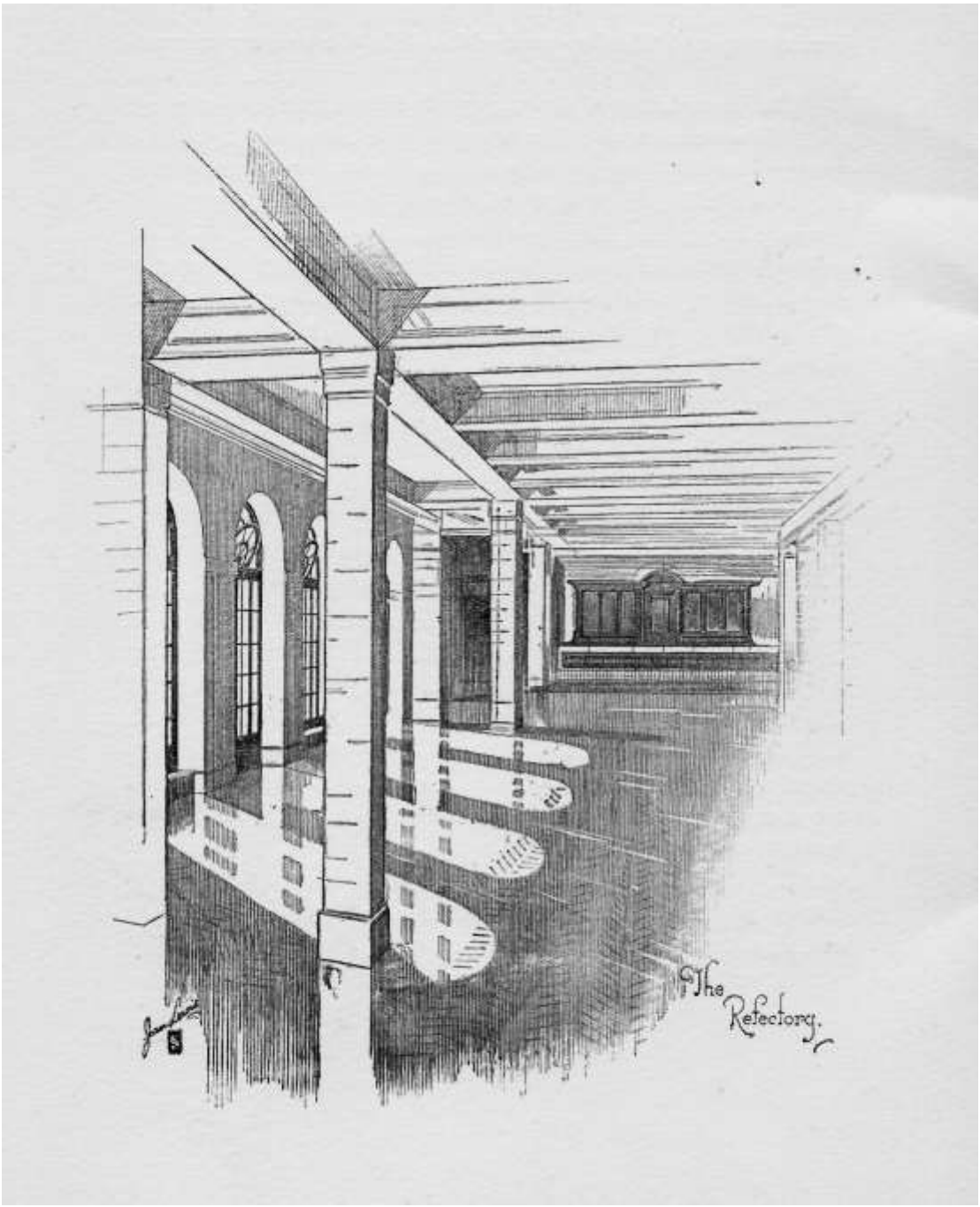
The Lower Hall is one of the architect's most successful schemes. The repetition of the plain thick arches, produces a charming perspective on either side. There is a spring floor. We may imagine the changing fashion of the dance interpreted by Terpsichore "muse of the many twinkling feet;" the intelligence, according to the most recent authorities, being no longer confined to the head. Music herself was and is the handmaid of the dance, and even when she escapes into the celestial atmosphere of Chopin and Brahms, retains traces of her former servitude. The more varied rhythms of the present day, prophesied by the lovely syncopated strain in Schubert's Unfinished Symphony, have even gained something from the negro tradition. Coleridge-Taylor, a British subject, had negro blood in his veins, and with it the ambition to justify the claim of the non-European races to contribute to the spiritual history of mankind. He found in Longfellow's Hiawatha (an apologia for the Red Indian) the libretto he required. "Hiawatha" was performed by the College Students in the Albert Hall under the fine conductorship of Professor Henderson at their annual concert some years ago. The strange rhythms and harmonies of Taylor's masterpiece spiritualised for many a hearer, that susceptibility to negro achievement which has since uttered itself so generally in



jazz music and the dances of which it is the accompaniment.

The hospitality of the College is thus intellectual first of all. The contact of other races with Western civilisation is rendered easier by our going out to meet them even in the dance on the fine floor of the Lower Hall. They are prepared, the subjects of His Majesty who come from India and Africa, to sit on the same benches and to enter into a peaceful rivalry with their Anglo-Celtic fellow subjects, in the diverse curricula of the College where none are handicapped except in themselves. The only imposed condition is that all students shall obey the written and unwritten laws of academic life, now approved by nearly half a century's experience. To be sure Indian students perplex us by their venerable literatures and the oriental faiths which they bring with them.

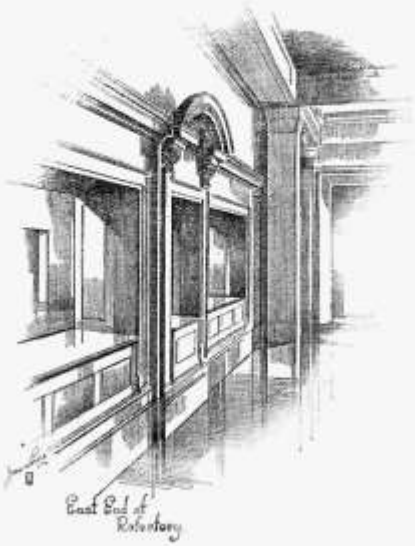
The material hospitality of the College has attended the numerous visitors whether individuals or grouped in conferences, who have come to Shakespeare Street; it has been enhanced of recent years by being offered in the Sports Pavilion at Highfields. The College Council along with the staff of the College, have thus met the men of the business world, employers and employed; the men and women of the educational world; the men and women of the professional world; the men and women of the official world; and with the appropriate approaches, the men and women of the political world. But all these labels have disappeared in the entirely human relation of hosts and guests, breaking bread together and sharing for the occasion a common life.


The Refectory.

The sureness of the general style is appropriately nowhere better seen than in the Refectory. The marbles which line the walls and clothe the piers, give a faint touch of elusive splendor that will perhaps show when the electric light glimmers from the bracketed shades on the piers. In the day the terrace seen through the arched windows to the south, invites to the formal garden outside. Perhaps the common meal taken amid such circumstance, is the best expression of the collegiate life. Again the panelled oak of the high table suggests the recorded names. But the unrecorded names defeat advertisement. Who were those two craftsmen who breathed their last upon this site, and first celebrated here the sacrament of our mortality?

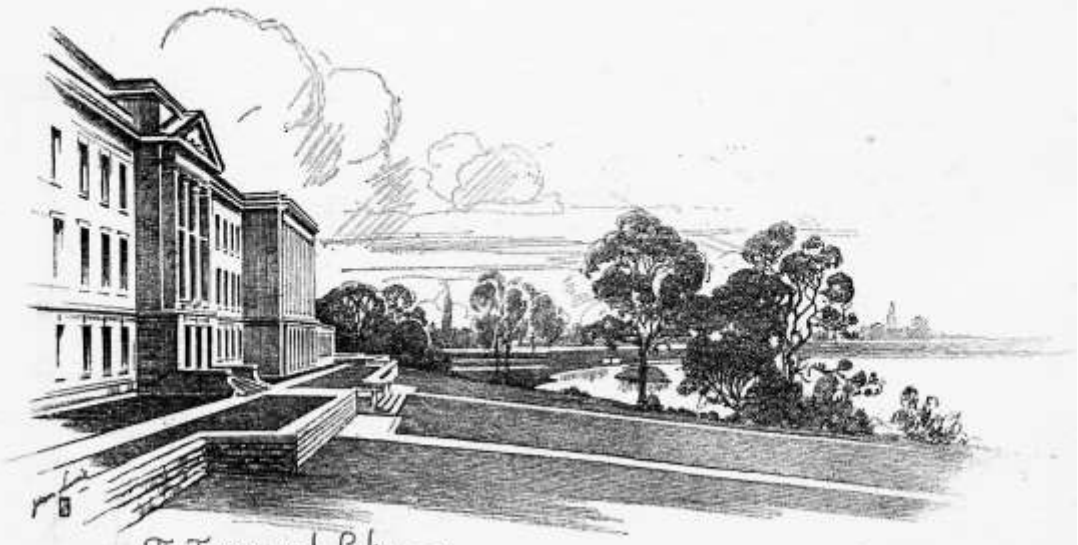
The southern lighting of the Refectory is by way of doors which admit us to the terrace and garden, after a glance towards the servery and the kitchens. Serious thinkers never speak lightly of the cuisine, and its mysteries. The ample boilers for making soup, the ranges for fish and roasts, are only the more prominent features among the adequate appliances to be administered by artists who will delicately adjust their cooking to the physiology and psychology of human taste.

As we pass out, we spend one thought upon the guild of workers, navvies, bricklayers, masons, joiners and so forth who, under the expert control of Sir Jesse Boot's resident engineer, have summoned forth from dead material the living purposes to which this great building will be devoted.



As we go forth, a cheerful note is struck by the inscription in the pediment; Haec otia studia fovent; which means "these plaisaunces comfort students." Unfortunately the inscription was written to order. The architect said that he did not very much mind what the inscription was (because of course, being in Latin, nobody would understand it) but it must not be more than twenty letters long. And the Latinist workman, employed upon the building, unintentionally stole it from Liverpool where the inscription contemplates the workhouse. Such are the tricks of memory.

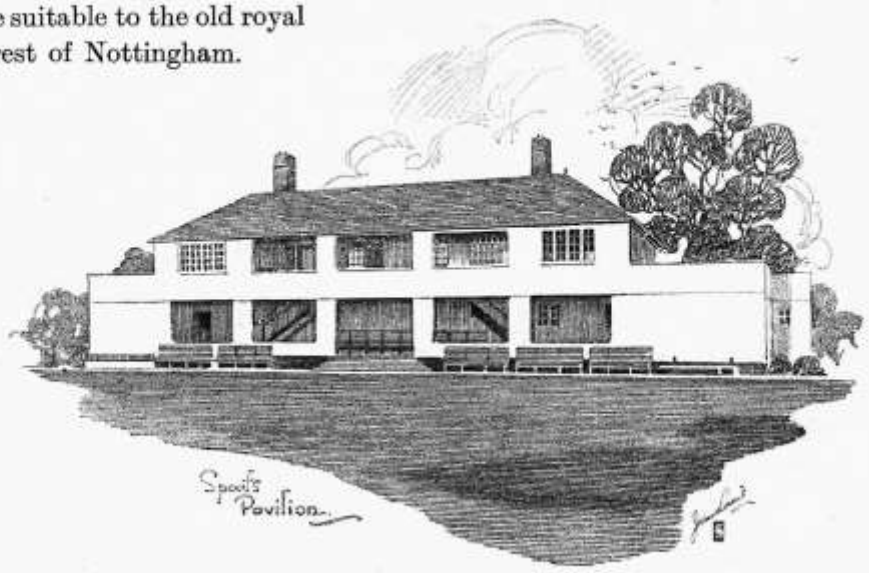
The next plaisaunce to the Refectory is the Women's Common Room, Then there is the Combination Room, which is a suitable name because the staff will meet there in the leisure moments they spend amid their work. There they will discuss the points of contact of their several disciplines. It is expected that the meetings will sometimes be in secret, and continue the College tradition of secret societies. But Sir Jesse has provided something more for the staff. When he received the writer at Cannes, he expressed the wish that the staff and their friends should sometimes take tea on the beautiful terrace which overlooks the lake. A professor of philosophy from a distance, not so long ago, went upon this terrace in accordance with Sir



The Terrace and Lake

Jesse's instructions and looking up at this most imposing prospect of the building said that he had not seen anything more Roman in Rome itself (from which he had just returned).

The Sports Fields and the Pavilion form part of the landscape background against which rises the main building. They are the admiration and the kindly envy of the students of the other Universities and Colleges against which Nottingham has measured itself. Already an athletic tradition has been created. Even before the opening of the Sports Fields in 1922, Nottingham had taken high places in the Inter-Varsity competitions for the championship. This good tradition has been carried still further in the new home; 1927 recorded for us a second place; 1928, a third place. The women students have yet to repeat their first place of 1922 in the Women's championship when Miss Elliott was first in more than one event. The opening of the Pavilion in 1924 disclosed the full meaning of a Sports Plaisaunce, and turned the minds of all students to the beneficent wisdom which devoted itself so lavishly to their complete well-being. Cricket, Football, Tennis, Hockey, enjoy not only their excellent grounds but the luxury of a completely equipped Sports Pavilion for both men and women. The College colours with their Lincoln green and the gold, are suitable to the old royal forest of Nottingham.



The Junior Academic Members of University College, in other words the students, were, I suspect more in Sir Jesse's mind than the "vast and ponderous intelligences" which will, if such a thing were possible, add dignity to the terrace by drinking tea there. The students as they stream forth from Highfields and their Common Room to the Sports Fields will not cross the lake in boats, but make a circuit, taking on the way the harmonious contours of the bridges. (These remind of the Old Bridge of St. John's College, Cambridge). Passing onward still, they will reach the Sports Fields and the Pavilion, the last of the wisely chosen beneficences of Sir Jesse Boot, which the writer has attempted, all inadequately, to record And there we leave the future hope of the College; some of them in distant years to celebrate its centenary and the memory of those who loved them.