



# TALKABOUT

A PUBLICATION  
OF THE STUDENTS OF  
WAGGA TEACHERS' COLLEGE.

Vol. 2, No. 5.

MAY 3, 1948

PRICE: ONE PENNY

## Forum

### STUDES ON DECENTRALISATION

Last week "Talkabout" featured an article stating the objections raised by the Teachers' Federation to decentralisation. This week we have asked students for their opinions on this vital matter. At this juncture it would seem pertinent to chide most students for their apathy towards this issue. If you feel that the matter is of no interest to you personally now, you may learn to your cost in future that a little interest taken now would have saved you quite a lot of inconvenience when you eventually begin teaching. After all, if decentralisation is the ogre represented by the Federation, surely it is our duty as students of a College which will furnish recruits for this area to protest against it. Or will we, like most other Australians, regard the machinations of Government as being entirely beyond our control.

Should we, on the other hand, consider decentralisation as the panacea for the educational ills of the Riverina, it is a matter of some importance that we formulate some ideas on the subject rather than dismiss it as one where "a good time will be had by all"—this being the ultimate of our aspirations in educational fields.

**Col. Squires:** We, as College students, run the race of life (from about 20 onwards), on the not so assuring "two-year"-old mounts that are little experienced for such a hard track; we strive to overcome the hurdles that the Department seems to delight in placing before us in order to prevent our securing a free run and we have striven hard (at least, the majority have) to secure acceptance on the course where we hope to strike our true form, but when we are asked to limit our track to the confines of the Paddock and St. Leger (as decentralisation and regional controls would limit our conditions, etc.) then I fear that the scratchings will be many, and acceptances—not any!

**Mary Debnam:** At present it is not clear whether the Area Director will have absolute power over all teachers within his area, but if this is the case there would appear to be no opportunity of transfer from one area to another. This, in turn, would have a deleterious

effect upon recruitment. If these modifications were effected I should support the scheme.

**Edna Baker:** I believe that an interaction of ideas and methods produces, in the final analysis, the best educational system. I assume that the majority of students of this College will be placed in schools in this district, and therefore they will not have an opportunity to contrast their methods with those of teachers trained in Sydney or Armidale. As individuals, our teaching will improve if we have an opportunity of moving about the State and thus seeing first-hand the different industries and agricultural pursuits which make up the entity of the State.

**June Ferguson:** Will promotion be so restricted as to be valid within one area only? Nominally, the teacher may be free to move from one area to another, but this freedom may, in reality, be limited by prospects of advancement. Local interference, whether it be political or vocational, will produce only individuals capable of living in the environment which they currently find themselves. ("Why should I learn about the Bill of Rights or the Factory Acts?") Our policy should be to make education a national enterprise rather than a parochial wrangle.

**Ron. Jones:** I consider that the Education Department is at present attempting to cover too wide an area, and is too centralised. Bureaucratic methods prevent expeditious handling of official correspondence; but by dividing the State educational system into smaller parts, matters relevant to individual teachers will be handled by an officer known to each personally. On the other hand, under a democratic system, it would appear that the powers vested in the Area Director would place him in an autocratic position. If the Area Supervisor's powers could be modified by an advisory board, as in the case with the Department in Sydney, I should be in favour of the scheme.

**Gerry Cullen:** Decentralisation savours of the creation of a State within a State. It is deplorable that the Department can so bestir itself as to appropriate public finance to implement the Utopian dream of theorists whilst ignoring the clamorous appeals of P. and C. bodies throughout the State for the construction of new schools. Decentralisation leaves me cold.

A.R.F.

## Aftermath!

A post mortem is usually a painful matter but, from our eavesdropping we conclude not on such a pleasant topic as "The Gondoliers." During the intervals we wandered among the crowds in search of opinions. Here is what came our way.

**Sgt. Kelly (of Forest Hill):** Excellent performance, particularly on the part of the chorus. I've enjoyed it very much.

**Mrs. Smith:** The nicest and prettiest show I've seen since I left England.

**Mr. Young:** I enjoyed it as much as the Balmain show. This chorus was more sparkling.

**Mr. Irvin:** Excellently done. Chorus was fresh. (Really, Mr. Irvin!) The cast obviously enjoyed it as much as the audience. Congratulations to Miss Moore and Mr. Pople. Miss Moore is a wizard to have done what she did on such a small stage. There's only one complaint I have to make—I could only see the chorus from the knees up. (I repeat, really Mr. Irvin!)

**Mr. Couch:** I saw "The Gondoliers" done professionally in Sydney earlier this year. This compares very favourably.

**Lorrie:** The show far surpassed my expectations. The success is a fine reward for the enthusiasm of Miss Moore, Mr. Pople and cast.

**Miss Moore:** The cast might like to know that I sat in the audience on the second night, and even after having heard the show a thousand times, laughed as heartily as the rest.

Incidentally, it seemed unlikely at one stage that Miss Moore was going to see her own show. At the beginning of the performance she seated herself in a spare seat in the front row which she presumed was her own, and was thoroughly enjoying the first bracket of songs, when a voice boomed out, "You have my seat, Madame." Miss Moore fled.

Miss Moore also had a private message for the chorus. She said she had not realized how little space the chorus had in the wings and thinks the entries were expert.

We regret that Mr. Pople was not available. This, of course, had to be rushed to the printer, so . . .



## "Of Many Things"

First, let me get a sour taste out of my mouth—a taste which has been there since I read an article by an anonymous person—by pseudonym of "Mens Quam Corpore," whate'er that may mean—in the 5/4/'48 copy of "Talkabout." I have a funny feeling this letter was just written to urge some fool to make caustic reply—I can think of no other reason for anybody giving oneself up for public ridicule which the article must have aroused. . . . "I must condemn the compulsory subscription as undemocratic."

If memory serves me right it wasn't absolutely necessary to subscribe—no roll check was made and Mr. Hawcroft didn't bring his butcher's knife along.

The part which really got under my skin was, "If any item of gymnasium equipment is to be used by the student body as a whole, then and only then must the student body be asked to pay for it." The article in point—a punching ball. Only the men of the College were asked to subscribe. I trust that most of the 75 are men and as such will use the gymnasium and logically if they use the gymnasium they will at some time of their College career use the punch-ball a little. I can think of perhaps five "men" who would never use the ball—but yet they are the poor downtrodden "majority" who have been nobbed of a shilling. If the writer of the article comes to me I will readily refund him his precious money immediately—if he comes in the next week or so.

As conclusion let us put it to the test he or she suggests—does the end justify the means? Once the cupboard was bare, now we have a punching bag. It's up to you, ladies and gentlemen.

The House Competition is in a very interesting stage—any of three houses could take of the coveted award—the pioneer winner of the House Competition. Perhaps by the time this comes to you it will be finalised and possibly Mari (I hope) will have won.

The House system is beginning to prove its worth. N.B.: The tennis courts. Although much has been done by Bill and Dave the House roll ups were good and few signified their desire never to put foot on the courts by not turning up.

I think most people have realised now the advantages of Soccer over League for our Tuesday sport and are now looking forward to their chasing of the round ball. I do think the standard of play could be greatly improved by a few blackboard lectures to the Houses by someone who really knows something about the game.

The Collège I team have entered the semi-finals and last Sunday decided whether they would enter the finals, I suppose. This is to be hoped because it would be something for the Collège if we could win our first competition. Last year the League greatly impressed

and will probably be accepted into group football next season. Thus we can make people in Wagga aware that we exist. "The Gondoliers" should do much in this line. Sport will also play its part.

The League team will on Saturday don its white sweaters for the first time. When you read this you will know whether or no we can do them justice. One thing is certain—we'll look nice. 'Incidentally these jumpers will be bought by subscription by the team at the end of the year—I hope the "majority" doesn't object.)

The Inter-Collegiate has already started to excite those likely to be making the trip. Much training will have to be done and it's to be hoped we can make a successful entry into what for us must be termed "big sport." Our debating team will also have something into which to dig their teeth.

The welcome received by the "freshers" should be most interesting. At High Schools—at mine, any way—there was always an "initiation service" for first years. Are we too old for such things? I wonder.

It's good to see the arrival of cane chairs for the common rooms. I will be interested to see just how this equipment will be treated. General irresponsibility is prevalent in College and window panes and cane-ite seem to mean nothing to the average student—a few accidental breakages are to be expected, but most of us seem to break for the sake of breaking.

This article is, I realise, near perfect and the subject matter is exceptional. Therefore, we cannot expect to get many such articles in the paper, but even if your article may not be on a par with this one, why not write it and see your name in print.

H.T.H.

## The Upside-Down Room

We've just heard (perhaps you've known about it for years) about the rich and wicked Englishman with the appalling sense of humour and the upside-down room.

It seems that, like many of the world's drolls, the breath of life to him was the grief and dismay of his friends, so he had built in his house the upside-down room. Chairs, tables, a carpet and the customary floor furnishings of a drawing room were fixed, bottom up, to the ceiling.

Paintings and electrolers and false windows were arranged, top down, along the walls, and the doors, instead of joining the baseboard, ran up to the moulding. From the centre of the floor a crystal chandelier of outsize proportions stood directly up into the air.

The whole effect was calculated to give a sober man the screams and give one in wine the Zionchecks. The favourite trick of the wretch was to ply the house guests with liquor.

When after they had set fire to the footmen and tossed the ormolu clock down the stair well and had relapsed into what Milt Gross calls a "dip slip," he caused them to be transported to the upside-down room and gently laid upon the floor beside the chandelier. Then he would arise half an hour early in the morning and watch them regain consciousness from a cunningly hidden peep-hole.

After their first shrill screams of terror most of the victims clung in hideous postures to the chandelier. Others flattened themselves out on the floor, hoping by some physic process as yet unknown to overcome gravity. Still others attempted to stalk the walls and climb down through the mirrors and electric fixtures.

We never heard what happened to the inventor of this catastrophic joke, but there is a rumour that he died from apoplexy while laughing at one of his own unbelievably wicked jests.



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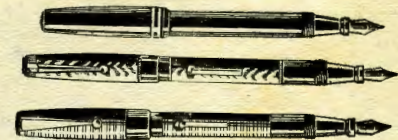
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What a pity John was indisposed on Monday night; or is it that Joyce is allergic to fruit?

With the conclusion of "The Gondollers," Tessa has forsaken Guiseppe for a lesser light, and complaints have come from several sources about the amount of unannounced rehearsals of late.

Will the snow stop fishing at Kosciuszko, Jim and Arthur? Perhaps someone will jack up on you first. To continue in the same vein—a certain erstwhile ardent lover has found that his passions have cooled; however, nil desperandum, Shirley, we're told that solace can be gained from the westley breezes. Well, woodn't that!

It's about time attention was once more focussed on the Old Firm, Hodges and Brown. It's the old tale of where do the flies go in the winter time—behind the new maid's quarters, presumably. Incidentally, can anyone explain how the lipstick got on Graeme's shirt? He can't.

And a little dedication to finish off—  
Out through the window,  
Back through the door,  
You've never seen the like of it  
—It fills us all with awe.

R.B.

"My wife ran away with my best friend."

"Was he good looking?"

"I don't know. Never met the fellow!"

"And if I refuse you, Cecil, will you commit suicide?"

"Well, that has been my usual custom."

## Letters to the Editor

Dear Sir,—In reference to your issue of "Talkabout," dated April 12, and in particular an article titled "At Last Revealed," I would like to comment upon the ridicule of Art and Crafts assignments.

Art and Crafts is a subject, unlike many others, which is to be learnt by practise and not by note-taking. Can you imagine teaching the class to make a magazine cover when your only knowledge comes from a demonstration and perhaps a duplicated sheet?

The curriculum of Art and Crafts is so comprehensive that the more practise we have the better it would be for us as teachers. How many of us have discovered that in giving Craft in practice teaching, we have found the children making the same mistakes as we ourselves made. Therefore, surely you can perceive that it is for our own decided advantage that the assignments are given.

Are there too many assignments, then? Consider the amount of Art and Craft work done at College and the amount that is listed in the syllabus together with all its possible variations. How many of us could say that we could teach a class all these methods and their applications? How many of us knew anything of Art and Crafts when we first came here? Surely one of the most neglected of school subjects in the past should receive our greatest attention.

Therefore, I suggest that the fault lies not with the subject or its treatment but with the short duration of this course—namely, two years.

M.K. and K.A.

Dear Sir,—The observation "New—Revised?" ("Talkabout" 26/4/'48) which concerned out-of-date facts published in our "modern" recommended Geography text, written I understand "to meet the requirements of the New Syllabus" (1941) should stimulate some thought in every student who is concerned with what he intends to teach when he has completed his training.

The time has come for a thorough overhaul of education in Australia. We speak of our "progress" during the hundred years education has been with

us, but I challenge the word "progress." Admittedly, we have moved towards better education, but genuine progress will occur only when something is done to keep our curriculum in line with modern demand.

To-day we should be educating the child to take his place as a good citizen in his community. Are we?

If you really think that we are, and you have sufficient knowledge of the curriculum and have given the matter sufficient thought so that your opinion is a genuine one, then perhaps this information in "New—Revised" will cause you to revise your view. It should.

The fact is, that there is an urgent demand for curriculum revision. "This process of curriculum revision means simply the better adaption of the work of the school to bring into it harmony with the accepted major objectives of education." All countries in Europe have completely revised their curriculum and reorganised their education systems since the 1914-18 war. In the U.S.A. curriculum revision began 25 years ago, and is still being continued. Was it ever begun in Australia or in any State of Australia?

In curriculum revision what is to be taught has first to be decided. Then plans for newer and better school buildings, modern equipment, adequately trained teachers and activity methods of teaching, can be made. But the education will not be adequate until a judicious selection of what is to be taught is made.

Perhaps this is being done in Australia in this vague scheme afoot for New Deal in Education. In that case, my remarks would be unwarranted.

But as Gilbert Mant would say, "It seems to me—" Yours etc.,

L.K.C.

The bridegroom, who was in a horribly nervous condition, appealed to the clergyman in a loud whisper at the close of the ceremony:

"Is it kisstomary to cuss the bride?"  
The clergyman might have replied:  
"Not yet, but soon."

God help the rich; the poor can sleep on the fire-escape.

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## S.R.C.

On recommendation of the Principal the S.R.C. considered whether the Council was in a financial position to grant £15 to the Sports Union. After a review of the situation, the Treasurer, having been passed the buck, advised that it would be able to make the grant, leaving the S.R.C. with about 30/-, but money would be coming in from sale of paper, the pictures and "The Gondoliers."

It was suggested that all clubs make provision for first year students on their committees in their Constitutions. Only four clubs hadn't done this.

Moved by Mr. Thomas, and as is the case with all motions, it was seconded by Mr. Quinn, that the Secretary of the Maths Club be asked to elucidate Clause 10 of their Constitution which states:—

"All questions which are not covered by this Constitution are governed by the Standing Orders of the N.S.W. Parliament." Carried unanimously. Mr. Rascall explained that this clause was put in by the President of the Maths Club as a means of getting round things.

A discussion ensued on the demerits of the E.U.'s Constitution. It was decided that a clause which states, "membership is open to all students who declare in writing their faith in Jesus Christ as their Saviour, their Lord and their God," should be revised. There was also discussion on the legality of Clause II, Point 9, in respect to executive members accepting it. It states: "The expectations of the personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ." This point is not acceptable to the beliefs of certain denominations. However, these denominations have no desire to join the E.U. To me it appears that the cart has been put before the horse because there was dissension in the S.R.C. about the acceptance of these clauses on the ground that those who did not have these beliefs did not wish to join the E.U. anyway.

At present the E.U. is affiliated with the S.R.C. and thus its Constitution is being reviewed. However, were it an approved club its Constitution would not be subjected to the third degree which it is now getting. As an affiliated club every member of the College should be a member of the E.U. This is not the case. Under the new Constitution the E.U. will only be an approved club, the status they really want, but even as such it is doubtful if their Constitution is acceptable to the S.R.C. in accordance with the same's own Constitution which states that membership must be open to all. There are many clauses in the E.U.'s Constitution that may not be accepted by the S.R.C. Then should the E.U. alter its Constitution to suit the S.R.C. and also alter many of its beliefs or should it be debarred from holding meetings in College buildings? Or should they be allowed to follow their own beliefs without being interfered with by others whose beliefs differ?

It seems to me, after a ten-month trial, that the E.U. could function in

the College as it has in the past without being the cause of any strife. If the S.R.C. delayed judgment until the new Constitution is passed then the E.U. could continue as an approved club until some situation arises which necessitates constitutional changes on behalf of the E.U.

## Sport

I had the misfortune to witness the first day of the semi-final in the Wagga C.A. competition. The contestants were the College and the Mill. After much persuasion Allan Nilon left the sanctuary of a dry car and tossed the coin. Like all good captains, he lost the toss and Mill decided to bat. This was a good decision, as with a wet field, wet run-ups and wet mats, everything was in favour of the batting side except the weather which decided to be nasty, so after two overs I drifted over to watch the hockey which was just commencing, the cricket having just ended.

For the first few minutes I watch the muddy figures running round in the rain carrying sticks and trying to hit the ball. In this time the College team managed to hit the ball through the goal a couple of times, then after the first ten minutes the score being 4-0 in favour of the College and me wet and the game wet I blew through and missed the most entertaining show when they called the game off, after the College had established its superiority to the tune of 6-0 in about 20 minutes. Being terrors for the wet (they were playing the Lifesavers) they swapped backs and started again, but this didn't prove very satisfactory, so the College gave the Lifesavers a goalie and a forward and a 5-1 hiding and called it a day at that.

It was very pleasing to note the keenness of Bill Elliot and the way that Ian Thomas has his wife trained already. These two were the only true supporters of the hockey team, unlike myself who having acquired the utmost degree of wetness crawled back to College to thaw out. Summing up, it was a wet show.

## Week-end Tennis

The College has entered three tennis teams in the week-end "B" grade city competition.

The Saturday afternoon mixed team, consisting of J. Erskine, J. Noble, B. Lonnergan, J. Hale, M. Cox, M. Whittaker and K. Lyons, has played two matches. In their first match against Railway they were defeated, and the second match was lost by eight games against Half Holiday Club. I may add that in the latter match three sets had to be forfeited, as one of our players neglected to inform us that he could not play.

The Sunday teams have been more successful. The men's team (K. Willard, P. Rees, J. Hartnett, J. Hale, C.

Taylor, M. Whittaker) played a good match against Railway but were defeated.

The only team which has been victorious is the ladies, who defeated St. Michael's 42 games to 14 in their first match. Members of the team are M. Fisher, C. Smith, B. Johnston, R. Reen, B. Dominish and, M. O'Neil.

There was no play last Sunday morning because of Anzac Day celebrations, but matches will resume next week-end.

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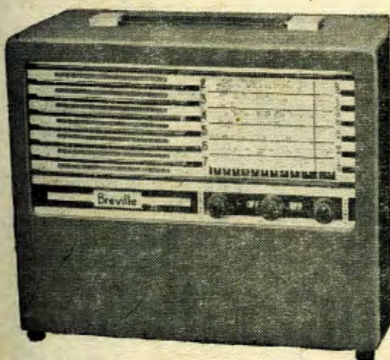
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## A Historical Background to the Savoy Operas

The association of Sir Arthur Sullivan and William Schwenck Gilbert (brought about in 1875) provided the world with one of the most precious combinations in the history of the theatre. The series of comic operas composed and written by them provided the nineteenth century English stage with one of its distinguishing points. This distinction existed in the form of wit and melody. In the Savoy Operas, as they are called, it is still a disputed matter as to which is the more important, the words or the music. However, one thing is certain and that is that both factors combine to give us the comedy. Take away the words of Gilbert and the music soon loses its sparkle. Take the music away from many of the songs and they soon become dry and uninteresting. Gilbert's words need Sullivan's music and vice versa. This is shown by the fact that of Sullivan's operas, only those with libretti by Gilbert now keep the stage. Of the most popular are "The Pirates of Penzance," "The Gondoliers" and "The Mikado."

From where Gilbert learnt his art of writing parodies it is not quite known, but we do know where Sullivan acquired his art, that of writing melodies. Sullivan was an Englishman and the English folk songs are famed for their charming melody and variety of rhythm. This, then, together with the works of Purcell and Arne, was Sullivan's chief source of material. However, he was also indebted to the French light opera, Mozart, Schubert, especially Offenbach, whose operettas delighted the Second Empire.

In Gilbert we see a satirist who was a master of his art? I shall use two examples, this being the most effective means of illustration. In 1878 Gilbert wrote:

"He'll hear no tone  
Of the maiden he loves so well!  
No telephone  
Communicates with his cell!"

This is an example of a satire on a contemporary topic. The telephone had been invented but recently, and was still in the stages of dubious development. It is reported that the audience roared laughing at this quip in which we can see no humour. To take another example. In "The Gondoliers" Marco asks the Grand Inquisitor if he and Giuseppe can give their friends positions in the court. To this the grave and solemn gentleman replies:

"Undoubtedly. That's always done."

The satire here needs no explanation. We see the gentry satirised in the Duke of Plaza-Toro who marries his daughter into a royal family because of the pecuniary advantages, who tries to impress everyone with his own importance and whose wife married him because of a bet and his title.

One of the principal reasons behind the popularity of the Savoy Operas is

that they require no elaborate stage or properties and, so, they can be put on in small country halls. This has been realised and all over the State Gilbert and Sullivan in some form or other is being produced. It would be an excellent idea if a Savoy Opera could be put on by First Year students at the College, and judging from the results of "The Gondoliers" future efforts will be well repaid.

RALPH J. C. HUTTON.

## "The Gondoliers"

We have heard much talk about our Gilbert and Sullivan comedy lately. In fact, Miss Smythe was heard to remark this morning, "I'm quite lost without "The Gondoliers." Yet, so far, very little mention has been made of Miss Miriam Bowers as the Duchess or of Miss Marcia Evans as Miss Bowers's daughter, Casilda. Both these young ladies performed excellently. Miss Bowers entered into the spirit of the comedy with great gusto, heaving her cushions with the agility of a pet panther and slapping her lord, the daaaaar-yuke, so heartily that he, poor gentleman, must needs retrieve his wig.

All this time Miss Bowers's daughter, Casilda, remained calmly undismayed and elegantly composed. But, when the occasion arose, she sang like a lark let loose from a cage. She wasn't, however! Those hooped skirts!

Both maidens sang superbly, reaching those very, very high notes with ease. I assure you, ladies and gentlemen, the roof came down.

No more charming a personage could have been chosen to escort these damsels all the way from Spain to Venice than our charming Mr. Rummery (the better half of our dear Editor) and, astounding as it may seem, he acquired the part. Ever ready to escort the fair sex—that's Dave! Well, I have only to say that he performed up to his usual standard and you will see what I mean. Proud as a peacock, he looked at one dainty lady and then shivered at the other. You did a good job, Miriam. I've never seen him so subdued while demanding an audience.

Dave added a very original note with versus by Fryer and Co. Miriam supported him splendidly, while the blushing bride, Casilda, awaited the arrival of her two husbands. Well, Miss Evans, where is your usual reserve?

WYN WALSHAW.

## "TALKABOUT"

Editor: Alan Fryer.

Sub-Editors:

June Scott, Dave Rummery

Business Manager: Jim O'Ryan.





Gianetta (Marje Abraham) and Marco (Kev. Quinn).



The Duke of Plaza-Toro (Dave Rummery) and the Duchess (Miriam Bowers).

## "THE GONDOLIERS"

Students of the Wagga Teachers' College presented the Gilbert and Sullivan light opera, "The Gondoliers," during Education Centenary Week.



The Principals: Tessa (Barbara Bosler), Giuseppe (Bruce Logan), Inez (Veronica Reen), Don Alhambra (Mark McLaughlin), Luiz (Keith Willard), Casilda (Marcia Evans), Duke of Plaza-Toro (Dave Rummery), the Duchess of Plaza-Toro (Miriam Bowers), Francesco (Morton Rawlin), Marco (Kev Quinn), Gianetta (Marje Abraham), Fransetta (Norma Nielsen), Gorgio (Don Davis), Guilla (Bette Lonergan), Victoria (Margot McInerney).



The Chorus.



The Complete Cast. Extreme right: Mr. R. Pople (musical director), Miss E. Cornell (pianist), Miss J. Moore (production and ballet).