Fifty Years of Recommitment

Saint Peter's College
From 1930 to 1980

The Saint Peter's Magazine
Commemorative Issue

New Jersey's Jesuit College
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Fifty Years of Recommitment

Saint Peter’s College was born in 1872, died in 1918, a casualty of World War I, and was reborn in 1930. In this commemorative magazine we attempt to give a few highlights of the College’s second life.

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A Twice-born Love Affair

There are actually two Saint Peter’s Colleges, the one that existed until World War I, and the new one that reopened in 1930. The link between the two are the few surviving alumni of the old College. Among them is the world-famous philosopher, historian, and author Will Durant.

In 1978, Rev. Edward Glynn, S.J., president of Saint Peter’s, travelled to California and conferred on Dr. Durant, and his colleague, collaborator and wife, Ariel, honorary degrees.

In the following remarks made on that occasion Dr. Durant recalls the Saint Peter’s College of the early 20th Century.

Thank you so much. If I start, I won’t end. I’m falling in love with all these marvelous priests that I came upon today. They have forgiven me so many sins and they just take me in the width and the breadth of their human fellowship and I appreciate it very, very, deeply. Indeed, I’ve loved Jesuits for the last 90 years, almost. In 1900, when hardly any of you had yet seen life, I entered Saint Peter’s College, Jersey City. I think it had about 200 students and in the graduating class there were 3 students. I was almost the leader of the class because I was second. I had only one ahead of me, a dear friend who later died in the pursuit of the medical profession. But when I look back upon those years, I feel deeply the sacrifice of life that my teachers made, not only to give me some education, but hundreds and thousands of others. Everyone of those teachers, when I look back upon them, seems to me to have been a great scholar, a genius. I think of Father Ziegler, for example, who taught us Greek, and he just loved it. He made us love Greek too, and he made us do the most awful things, for example, translate Greek poetry into a Latin poem. Can you imagine that? How I ever survived that I don’t know, but we loved him.

It was for him that I wrote a small translation of a part of Book 8 of the Iliad, which I had the nerve to quote in the book called The Life of Greece. I had a request from Harvard University, “Won’t you tell us where we can get the complete translation, we loved this part so much.”

I didn’t have the nerve to tell them that was my own translation. It was the only thing that I’ve ever done in that line. Somebody else would have to complete it.

But that was only one side of Father Ziegler, he loved Greece. He made us study that language for six years, until we knew the Greek philosophers and the Greek poets more completely, I think, than most college students today.

And then I remember Father Collins. I don’t think any of you will remember him because he was President of Saint Peter’s in Jersey City for a time, I think, around 1905 and he taught us physics. You would smile today if you saw his physics laboratory. It was about as big as this little room here, and there was a table with a few instruments. The poor man had no funds with which to buy instruments, but he made us understand physics. I remember he suspended a ball from the ceiling of the highest hall in Saint Peter’s College and then he said, “You watch this - just come
"They were tremendous teachers, those Jesuits. And when I think of it, they've been tremendous teachers through hundreds of years."

around two weeks from now and it will be circling from an entirely different point." Later on, he said that was due to the revolution of the earth or perhaps its operations in its wandering around the sun. He had gone to so much trouble to put that thing up. Everybody wondered what was it all about, this thing hanging in the air. But it meant physics to him, it meant astronomy, and it gave us an idea of what the science was about. And it gave me an idea of how long his heart was both for that and for us.

I remember some of my sins that he forgave. I had my first wild spirits and wild affairs while I was a sophomore, I think about 1905, when somebody came to Jersey City and made a strong and brilliant attack upon the Socialist Party. Well, I wrote a letter to the Jersey City Evening Journal saying that that was unfair, that these Socialists weren't such terrible fellows. Well, Father Collins, who was President of the College at that time, was shocked that one of his boys should be a Socialist and he brought me in and said, "I have serious doubts as to whether Saint Peter's can graduate you. We don't want to be associated with the Socialist Party in any way."

But the poor man forgot about it, and there I was in the great big graduating class of 1907, three of us.

Well, those were two men that I remember so well, Father Ziegler, Father Collins, and there was Father McLaughlin, who taught us Latin — seven years of Latin — every word of the Aeneid, for example: "Arma virumque cano, Trojae qui primus ab oris" and so on, that's the only line I remember, but he made us think in Latin. He made us translate English poems, not into Latin, but into Latin verse.

They were tremendous teachers, those Jesuits. And when I think of it, they've been tremendous teachers through hundreds of years. They are without doubt the greatest teaching organization this world has ever seen and probably the greatest teachers that I've ever known.
So, I can go on talking like this and loving like this for hours and hours, as I remember those teachers. I remember how we hurt them, how we made fun sometimes of their little ways. And then one day Father McLaughlin gave me a scolding, came down and pinched my ear, and then he went off kindly to the balcony to read his, what do you call it now, his day's prayers, up and down for half an hour quietly. He never earned a penny, never had a cent to his name. Sometimes he'd have a day off and he went to see the Jersey City ball team which didn't really deserve that honor.

But now as I look back upon the Jesuits, I could talk about them for hours and hours. I suspect that this college here has the same type of men that taught us then. Men absolutely devoted, taking nothing, giving their everything, and it's inspiring. It makes us feel that we can bear the morning newspaper if we remember that there are men like that.

So, I am very grateful that you have forgiven me some of my sins. You don't know all of them. I've concealed a great many of them, but you've been very nice to me. I shall go back to Ariel and tell her that I gave Father Glynn a big hug and I'll give her a big hug, but it's really him hugging her. Although, he wouldn't like that to be publicized very much. So, I could go on forever talking about my experiences with the Jesuits, but I'll let you alone. It's been a deep pleasure here for me to meet these new friends and to see my old friends still faithful to me, still coming, and to see my sweet daughter, Ethel, and my sweet sister, Ethel, coming many miles to assist at this coronation of the wild member of the family. So, thank you so much.
As part of the 50th anniversary celebration, a special photography exhibit, “Saint Peter’s Returns: The 1930s” was held in the O'Toole Library Art Gallery. On these pages are some of the scenes from that exhibit.

An architect's rendering of what the "new" College was to look like, circa 1933.

This is Tise's Tavern built in 1829 at Bergen and Glenwood Avenues. The Tise fireplace is now on the second floor of the Cushing Alumni House.

Journal Square, facing north along Hudson (now Kennedy) Boulevard, circa 1930.
Another Day

Would you believe this is Kennedy Boulevard facing north from Montgomery Street? SPC was to occupy the land at left.

Many years ago, it was “home” for the College. Now it is Shalloe Hall of Saint Peter’s Preparatory School.

The original Saint Peter’s Church, Grand Street, circa 1836.
Half a Century of Peacock Sports

Collins Gymnasium, named for a Jesuit who reportedly had little use for athletics, was the first building on the Saint Peter's uptown campus. Although the building could have been seen as a symbol of the fledgling College's ambitions in varsity athletics, it was nothing of the sort. Collins Gym, in the 1930s, had a far more practical purpose.

It was built first because the College had to have a place to hold bingos, card parties, raffles and other events where funds could be raised to build the rest of the campus. And it served well that purpose, but as an athletic center it left much to be desired.

Despite the poor facilities, Peacock varsity and intramural activities grew and by the 1960s it was obvious that a new athletic center was needed. That need resulted in the campus showplace, the Victor R. Yanitelli, S. J., Recreational Life Center, opened in 1975 and built on the site of the former bingo hall.

On these pages are a few glimpses of Peacock sports then and now.

From Collins Gym ...

... to the Yanitelli RLC

The Hudson College Basketball Team of the 1930s, organized even before Collins Gym was built.
In the mid-1960s club football made its debut at Saint Peter's. It's now a varsity sport.

Long before the current soccer craze, the sport was popular and successful at SPC, sparked by the interest of the College's numerous foreign-born students.

Although there are no mountains in Jersey City, and during most winters very little snow, there is a Saint Peter's College Ski Team that competes and practices in Sussex County.

Women came to the Saint Peter's Day School in 1966 and so did a variety of women's athletics, most notably Women's Varsity basketball, which of late has been of championship calibre.
The pool in the Yanitelli Center of course led to the formation of the swimming and diving teams.

Fencing, tennis, the dance, and sharpshooting are all part of the campus sports scene.
...And the Glories of Basketball

Those Championship Seasons

In Hudson County, basketball always has been king, and through the years the Peacock varsity has captured the heart of Hudson and all of New Jersey with its Cinderella teams and their exciting and dramatic brand of play.

Peacock Hall of Famer Hank Morano during a game at the old Jersey City Armory.

The late Pete O'Dea goes up for a shot in the romp against Duke in the 1968 NIT. The final score -- SPC 100, Duke 71.

Another scene from the old armory with Pepper Dooley showing the way.

Typical action in Alumni Gym at the Yanitelli Center.
After sixty semesters at Saint Peter's College, teaching is still exciting and thrilling. Students today, more casually dressed than their gowned and suited peers of thirty years ago, have not changed radically. Somewhat scarred and damaged by television, they still have ideals and high hopes, they still challenge and listen and share. They are confused frequently, groping always, dead honest and very courteous. The life of the intellect still appeals to them; they have not lost all contact with the past. I am proud to be with them and — they will make it.

Aidan C. McMullen, S.J.

Over the past quarter of a century, Saint Peter's College always has responded to the needs of the times. Growth and change have been reflected in its constant review and monitoring of academic programs, expansion of facilities, student and personnel development, athletic activities, and off-campus operations. Truly, its success has been marked by dedicated people of keen vision who anticipated the role of the College in the 1980s. Today, we benefit from and share in the tangible effects of sound, long-range planning. The future bids that the College again recommit itself to act in consonance with the needs of society, which always has been its benchmarks of success.

William A. Huebner, M.B.A.

I came to Saint Peter's in September 1950 from Fordham in the Bronx. The Jersey City College and campus struck me as almost rural with the 19th Century frame houses where the Jesuits lived and the old Arts Building surrounded by lawns.

But from the very beginning, it was the friendly spirit of the students that first impressed me. The conviviality and cordiality of the faculty toward one another, was warm and sincere. I decided to stay.

Thanks to the leadership of Fathers Ed Clark and Shanahan, Saint Peter's really moved forward in the early fifties and sixties. At the same time we got the greatest uplift we ever had — we went coed. Then we ran into the troubles of the late sixties and, about the same time Parkinson's Law hit the Administration and balkanization the Departments. Some say that it was then that our standards began to ebb and our good feelings wane.

Whatever the case, the character of the College had remained intact in at least one great respect. I have known of few colleges where academic freedom in the highest sense is so scrupulously respected. Personally, this all pervasive note of freedom has brought me great happiness in the past thirty-one years. For in freedom is there not the touch of friendship? Friendship says: Bring into the light of day your strengths and your weaknesses for I respect you as you are. And no greater personal growth can be experienced than that which makes such acceptance possible. This Saint Peter's College has truly done for me. For such a gift I shall ever be profoundly thankful.

John F. Dunn, Ph.D.

the College apply in the fast changing communities, sections. Our mission has to be first-generation college although the ethnic composition is now much more diverse. Saint Peter's College must continue to be a teaching institution and be enough for its dedicated faculty and students to be thankful for their efforts.

John O
Tradition of SPC

After II and the Korean Conflict, there came to Saint Peter's still carrying out the highest standards of outside the classroom. They have touched and it is Saint Peter's College. On these pages, some third of a century they have labored here and look

A circumstance of my long tenure at Saint Peter's that stands out above all else is the condition of teaching in an atmosphere of freedom, responsive only to the imperatives of sound scholarships and decency. Faculty and administrators of the fact of this deserve it.ence Pontrelli, Ph.D.

The Saint Peter's College I have known acquired its reputation as a Catholic, liberal arts institution, in the Jesuit tradition. To survive, the College must not lose its uniqueness. The challenge we face is to find ways of making the distinctive commitments of changing times, and changing populations, traditionaly been with students. It still is, position of our student more diversified. Saint Peter's has always demanded. I think of the alumni and how well they have done. I think of my own personal alumni, some of whom are daily within my sight, and I am encouraged. Sometimes, however, effort now seems to be individual; the team spirit, missing. Perhaps my nostalgia makes me a curmudgeon as I write of the present. Perhaps fragmentation is a national phenomenon which no college can escape. At all events, Saint Peter's College is still vigorous. With the help of its eponymous saint, it will prosper.

Charles Kirby, M.A.

I am in my twenty-seventh year at Saint Peter's College. By and large, I have been very happy here. Having survived my first years by learning to deal with the folkways of the Hudson County student, I settled into one of the sunniest periods of my life. Having harnessed the vibrant energies of the existing College, Father Edward Clark, S.J., formed a first-class professional institution. I taught with pleasure. I learned from older colleagues. I felt that there was a sense of common purpose in the College, shared by students, staff, administrators, and faculty.

Saint Peter's was a congenial and exciting place to be. Then came the unpleasantness of the late 1960s and early 1970s. The wounds that the College suffered in those years seem to have healed. And yet, I am not sure that the sense of common purpose has returned. There are still many very good students here. Even those of more modest abilities — by the way, they too were always here — are educable.

Many of my colleagues, old and young, are still the dedicated teachers that the College has always demanded. I think of the alumni and how well they have done. I think of my own personal alumni, some of whom are daily within my sight, and I am encouraged. Sometimes, however, effort now seems to be individual; the team spirit, missing. Perhaps my nostalgia makes me a curmudgeon as I write of the present. Perhaps fragmentation is a national phenomenon which no college can escape. At all events, Saint Peter's College is still vigorous. With the help of its eponymous saint, it will prosper.

Charles Kirby, M.A.

It was only yesterday . . . and though "shades of the prison-house" may close about us, we have at least the memory of that yesterday. I believe in yesterday.

Richard Brown, Ph.D.

My memories of Saint Peter's span three-fifths of the life of the "resurrected College". Looking back, I see many changes and developments — new buildings -Dinneen Hall, Saint Peter Hall, Pope Library, Yanitelli Recreational Life Center, and buildings acquired in the vicinity of the College — Loyola Hall, Rankin Hall, 47, 51 and 104 Glenwood, Cushing Alumni House, Pennick Building, Englewood Cliffs campus. There was the institution of Rank and Tenure, the first Faculty Handbook, women joined the Faculty and Administration, the Premedical and Pre­ dental Advisory Committee, the Graduate Scholarship Committee, Junior Year Abroad, the Faculty Senate, and the advent of women in the day College. Oh, how the memories flood back — basketball teams in the NIT, the renovation of Gannon Hall; the beautification of the quadrangle; commencement moved to Giants Stadium; five Presidents — James Shanahan, S.J., Edward Clark, S.J., Leo McLaughlin, S.J., Victor Yanitelli, S.J., Edward Glynn, S.J.

With such a past to look back on, reflect on and build on how can the future be anything but hopeful and bright?

Joseph E. Schuh, S.J.
50 Years of VIPs

During the past half-century a host of luminaries from the worlds of religion, education, the arts, politics, and sports visited Saint Peter's to teach, entertain, be honored, and honor us. On these pages are glimpses of some of those memorable visits.

FDR never really visited the campus, but in 1936 he was but a few blocks away helping Frank Hague put the cornerstone into a new addition of the Jersey City Medical Center. The College, in the person of Rev. Joseph S. Dinneen, S.J., sent official greetings, noting the fact that the president's kinsmen, Bishop J. Roosevelt Bayley, had invited the Jesuits to found Saint Peter's.

But Richard Nixon did on what some who were present might recall as a day of infamy. In 1968 the College allowed the local Republicans to use Dinneen Auditorium for a campaign appearance assuming it would be for SPC students. But came the day and 5,000 Nixon faithful and Nixon opponents tried to jam into the 500 seat auditorium while demonstration and counter-demonstration went on outside the door. The Nixons came and went within 30 minutes leaving the campus in shambles and College personnel in the same condition.
Boston's Richard Cardinal Cushing spent a day with us in the early 1960s, received an honorary degree, and left behind a gift which was used to renovate the alumni house that bears his name.

The Superior General of the Society of Jesus, Pedro Arrupe visited the campus in 1972 to help celebrate 100 years of Jesuit presence in New Jersey.

The 1960s were the years of the Kennedys and two members of the family made their way to the campus for honorary degrees, Sargent Shriver, the former Peace Corps director and vice presidential candidate, in June of 1967, and Sen. Edward Kennedy, three months later.
The governors of New Jersey often came to call. Robert B. Meyner talked with a student during a stop in his unsuccessful campaign for a third term; both Richard J. Hughes and William Cahill, received honorary degrees and the present incumbent, Brendan T. Byrne, represented the state at the opening of the Victor R. Yanitelli, S.J., Recreational Life Center. Also attending that day were the late Bishop Joseph Costello and former Mayor Paul Jordan.

In 1965, Saint Peter's became the first Catholic college in the United States to confer an honorary degree on Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. A few years later, his widow Coretta, lectured on campus.
The arts gave us Alan Alda, Helen Hayes, Frank Capra, Licia Albanese, Judy Collins, Joseph Papp.
From the world of sports came football immortal Vince Lombardi and Bill Bradley, before he became a politician.

Through the years speakers have represented every political philosophy, from Norman Thomas who spoke in 1962 to William F. Buckley, Jr., pictured here, in 1968.
In 1930 the young Rev. Robert I. Gannon, S.J., fresh from studies in the hallowed learning centers of England, was assigned to the deanship of a college that did not exist in a city that was worlds away from the Cambridge he had just left.

Father Gannon recalled those early days of the reborn Saint Peter's College in his book, "The Poor Old Liberal Arts". Sections of the chapter, "In Hudson County" are reprinted here.

The late Rev. Robert I. Gannon, S.J., the dean who reopened Saint Peter's College, received a Centennial Medallion from Rev. Victor R. Yanitelli, S.J., then president, on New Year's Day, 1972, at the beginning of the College's 100th anniversary celebration.

AFTER THE MEDIEVAL CEREMONY in the Senate House at Cambridge, the "homo" who had done his homage not only to the University but to the liberal arts, was now brimming over with enthusiasm at the prospect of having some small part in restoring their ancient dignity in America. He had convinced himself that his superiors would not have invested so many pounds, shillings and pence in his special studies if they had no intention of letting him follow his bent for teaching, and this conviction was confirmed by an appointment to give a graduate summer course at Fordham on 17th century English. Everything was progressing according to schedule and he was getting around to the very British Lord Herbert of Cherbury, when the President of the University informed him that while preparing his lectures on Massinger and Donne and Dorothy Osborne, he might also be quietly preparing himself for an educational nightmare. He told him that instead of teaching he was to be assigned in the fall to the Deanship of Fordham's Downtown Division. There were at that time five schools, graduate and undergraduate, a part-time faculty, limited facilities, thousands of students and one dean, all on a few floors of the Woolworth Building overlooking City Hall. It was the direct antithesis of everything that he had been dreaming about during the years of study in Europe which had just come to a close, but he resigned himself to a difficult situation, looked over the real estate, and met the faculty.

Suddenly, on August the fourteenth, word came that the signals had been changed. He was to report in Jersey City and take all steps necessary to bring Saint Peter's College back to life on September the twentieth. The old College had been a casualty of the First World War and the four little classrooms that it had occupied on Grand Street had long since been overrun by a large and vigorous high school.

So on August the sixteenth he arrived for his new assignment, a stranger in a very strange land and as he walked past the secondhand clothing stores on lower Newark Avenue and threaded his way through the side streets over to the rectory, he could not but meditate grimly on the inscrutable ways of Divine Providence.

The local Father Rector had persuaded the local Bishop to petition the Father General of the Society of Jesus for the reopening of the College without anybody having too definite an idea of what was involved. Everyone seemed to think that he was doing someone else a favor. Father General thought that the Bishop was anxious to have Saint Peter's back on its feet and would probably make the necessary funds available through an organized appeal. His Excellency, on the other hand, thought that the Jesuits were anxious to reopen the College and would probably draw on their own "inexhaustible reserves." In any case, the rector assured the new dean that at the end of the year he would have a million dollars on hand for at least one new college building. His optimism was refreshing, but unfortunately groundless. Meanwhile they walked back to Newark Avenue, under a great pair of pants swinging over the sidewalk, and up to the fourth floor of the Chamber of Commerce Building. When they got off the elevator, Father Rector said with enthusiasm and a touch of pride, "Here is your new College." "Where?" asked the dean. "Anywhere you want to put it." This was certainly an educator's ideal of a flexible unit! It was so flexible that there was not one book, one chair, or one piece of chalk to suggest its limits. The challenge was positively exhilarating, so they promptly picked out three offices for classrooms, with a fourth for administration, and then found a nice kitchen that would do admirably for a chemistry laboratory.

Late that afternoon, all by himself, the dean sat up on the roof of the rectory taking in the whole panorama from Boyle's Thirty Acres, still haunted by the spirit of Jack Dempsey, past the linoleum factory, down to Colgate's by the river. From the faint odor of hot fat that pervaded the neighborhood, he surmised that the perfume must be added to the soap in some other and more fortunate city. All in all it was worse than Downtown Fordham. How could anyone ever blueprint a college in conditions like these?

To make matters worse it was 1930. The deepest depression of modern times was in full swing, so that even if permission were to be granted to run a drive for a million dollars, no one had any money to give. What could the new college offer the public anyway? It had no campus, it had no buildings, it had no athletic reputation nor even facilities for acquiring one, it had no student union nor anything that promised the most ordinary social advantages. Suddenly the new dean realized that he was in full charge of an idea exemplaris divina. He was the dean of a college that was still in the Mind of God. And he laughed out loud all by himself on the roof.
But then he balanced this with the other side of the picture. He was not completely destitute. He had one intangible and two tangibles to work with. The intangible was the good-will which still existed everywhere toward the old Saint Peter's College buried in the tomb for 12 long years. That proved to be far beyond anything he had realized and in the six years to come, six of the most stimulating and delightful years of his life, he was to grow in esteem for the great teachers of the past who had created an atmosphere of such profound respect all over northern New Jersey. The graduates of the old College, which had offered nothing but the humanities, were in positions of honor and trust, known for their integrity, their reasoning power, and particularly for their eloquence. Such was the intangible. The first of the tangibles strangely enough was the location in lower Jersey City. Aesthetically it may have left something to be desired. It looked less like Cambridge than any place in the world, but it was at least a transportation center for students living in all parts of the metropolitan area. So for his first catalogue, the dean had a map drawn which showed One Newark Avenue as the center of the universe, and put Fordham University on a distant periphery near Bangor, Maine.

The location then was a valuable asset, but it was on the basis of the second tangible that the blueprint of the new college was drawn up. This asset consisted of a staff of six Jesuits which came to be known in the local press, after a suggestion from the dean’s office, as Saint Peter’s “Million-Dollar Faculty.” One was a first-class chemist, who was a splendid teacher with very high scholastic ideals. One was a first-class mathematician, with an enthusiasm for debate which was to capitalize on the reputation of the ancient orators who had gone before and develop some of the best speakers in the State. One was a first-class humanist, a man of culture and intellect and divine impatience. He would have given Albert Einstein eighty-five for science and the thirty-five he deserved for philosophy and theology. The scholastics were two of the most talented in their year, unspoiled by contact with ordinary classes and ready to take on the best students we could get for them. The sixth was the dean, young and inexperienced and not too intelligent; the sort of man with a strong back and a head full of convictions who enjoyed coming down every morning in a brand new school and saying, “The tradition around here has always been ...”

There were no bad habits to overcome, no entrenched interests, no tired, disillusioned teachers, no students organized to passive resistance. So then and there it was determined, sitting on the roof looking at the linoleum factory, and in full smell of Colgate’s down the street, that the new Saint Peter’s College would be a novelty in American education. It would offer a first-class liberal arts course and teach only intelligent and ambitious students. In other words, it would give what it ought to give only to those who ought to get it - an almost unheard-of procedure. That meant that the dean would announce on the very opening day that Saint Peter’s was not interested in numbers or in display. It had no interest in athletic or social prestige. When the question was asked on every hand: “When will you field a football team?” the answer was, “Never.” When asked how many thousand students he hoped to have eventually, the answer was, “A maximum of six hundred.” Thus, thirty years ago, the little College in the slums acted on a question which is still making headlines in the papers of today: “Who should go to college?”

Once the new dean had accepted the location in the abstract, it was not long before he realized that the crowded city was just the place for a shrine to the liberal arts. He could not deny that remote cloisters in the green hills have a certain charm and our nostalgia for them in after years can be
tender. If he had had his undergraduate days to live again he would probably have weakened and looked for a cloister away from it all. But no matter what his own weakness might be, he would henceforth encourage a young man about to enter college to choose a small conservative institution in the metropolitan area of a great city, where he could keep a good grip on the past, live in the present and plan for the future. His favorite sales talk was beginning to take form.

"Such colleges," he convinced himself, "are strong because they never have to worry about registration, and unless they plunge recklessly and get into heavy debt, never have to lower their standards. Like all the rest they are begging for bequests and endowments, but most of them have all the tuition they can handle, and tuition goes a whole lot further than presidents with their tear-drenched faces are ever ready to admit in public. Another source of strength is their close and constant contact with today."

As he worked it out, it sounded very up to date and yet it was just what what his father would have said in 1540. A couple of old Latin hexameters used to describe the difference between Ignatius Loyola, and the other founders of great religious orders:

"Valles Bernardus, Benedictus colles amavit, Oppida Franciscus, magnas, Ignatius, urbes."

The others loved the valleys, the hills and the little towns, but Ignatius loved the great big cities! And so did the young dean in time. From his windows in the Chambers of Commerce it was hard to spot the Groves of Academe beyond the chimneys and the masts of ships. No breath came to him of the wild thyme on Mt. Hymettus. He could not quite glimpse the depths of Homer's wine-colored sea. He could not hear the thousand laughing waves of Aeschylus above the roar of traffic. In short, the Cyclades were very far from Newark Avenue, but the liberal arts were right at home.

Only two baccalaureate degrees were to be conferred by the new college. The B.S.I. was to be the reward of a stiff science course with plenty of literature, history and philosophy along the way. It provided for pre-meds and majors in physics, chemistry and biology. The A.B. was to be granted only to those who could translate their own diplomas. For the first six years, the proportion remained constant. Half the student body was in science, half in arts, and of the latter all took advanced Latin and about half of them, advanced Greek.

Those who preferred the B.S.II with a major in educational measurements or business administration had a half dozen other colleges in the Metropolitan area to choose from. Saint Peter's did not despise such courses but it was thinking of what Saint Augustine says in the DeOrdine: "A young person who neglects the liberal arts may be pious and pure, but so long as he is to live as a man among men, I do not see how anyone can call him happy." He was mindful too of the guiding principle of Ignatius; there are many goods but time is short, concentrate on the greater good. Admitting that the liberal arts can be studied without reading the classics in the original, the new college was confident that it would be most successful in following its own 400-year-old tradition, a tradition and philosophy in the old language in which they were composed, as a most reliable approach to culture.

As it happened, this determination to sacrifice numbers in the pursuit of an ideal proved to be just the bait that was needed for the right sort of student. The reputation acquired almost immediately for consistent elimination of the unwilling and the unfit made screening a simple process because the wrong type went elsewhere automatically. The little faculty had been counselled by some to "get the College first and the standards later," but they were convinced that if they started that way it would take too many years to live down their past. They knew that in a great metropolis there are many publics. If the aim of a college is size, and its public relations are identified with big-time athletics, a certain class of candidates will be attracted. But there are other classes to be considered too, and where the policy is selective and the emphasis intellectual, a surprisingly large minority group will respond notwithstanding the sacrifice of a few collegiate flourishes.

Even if the picture had not been so bright from this particular angle, it seemed to the dean (an incurable idealist) that from the point of view of an apostle the Church needed, in addition to competent middle-class institutions with something for everybody, a few top-flight intellectual centers just to prove that revelation and tradition can thrive in an atmosphere of real learning. The good old Protestant impression in America that the Catholic hierarchy can crowd the churches and hold on to the faithful only as long as they keep them in
ignorance is still too widespread to be overlooked. There is of course even today an enormous amount of ignorance in the Church (a fair proportion of the enormous amount of ignorance in the United States) and the Church has to handle the simple with simplicity. Then there is a second group rapidly increasing in size and influence which includes many lay and ecclesiastical leaders, priests and religious, businessmen and professional men and women, who need to know the reason for the Faith that is in them, through adequate and adult courses. Intelligent and energetic but not of a scholarly bent, they have a recognized capacity which is scaled to the average American college and are to a great extent already provided for.

In addition to this solid and dependable body, however, we need superior and enquiring minds which can keep on exploring truth for a lifetime and, like the great Pasteur, come closer every day to the Faith of a Breton peasant's wife. We have a complement of such minds now, but unless they are clerics or candidates for a high political office it is rare that outsiders are conscious of their religious convictions, so that the impression persists that American Catholics still specialize in hewing wood and drawing water. What the neighbors can more readily appraise is the standing of our educational institutions and that is an added reason for cultivating the Apostolate of Excellence. One strictly first-class college is enough to refute a sweeping generalization and why could not Saint Peter's, with its fresh start, be that sort of college? For a wonder the faculty was given a free hand and, although there was very little money in sight, no crippling compromises were ever demanded by Superiors.

Only once did the subject of income cloud the sky. It was during the second year when standards of admission and dismissal were so well maintained that the treasurer's office complained, and the young dean was cautioned by a gifted young rector recently appointed not to overplay his hand. Since the financial aspect of excellence was the only difficulty stressed, he offered to get money elsewhere if the plans for Saint Peter's were left undisturbed. The rector was agreeable, and the following September the Hudson College of Commerce and Finance enrolled its first students. They found in it a good utility institution on a level with the downtown schools of surrounding universities, where satisfactory courses were available to practically anyone with the ordinary high school pre-

tquisites and the price of admission. It was to be an evening program, for an unlimited number of part-time and full-time students, arranged on a credit basis, and leading to the degree of B.S. in Bus. Adm. Provision was made for the development of extension courses in other centers, where eventually a curriculum in education and perhaps other fields could be established. Hudson College would have its own seal, its school colors, teams and student organizations, but the superfluous profits would enable Saint Peter’s to develop into a small high-class liberal arts college where a traditional Jesuit education could always be found.

Beginning work on the sixteenth of August, it was possible to open the doors a month later with 70 freshmen. At the end of the first quarter, 14 of them were dropped. It was not as cold-blooded as it sounds because the dean was planning a February class where the promising ones who had misjudged the situation could have a second chance, but the news spread fast and the students who survived learned what was expected of them.

What the dean himself learned over the next six years was that educators in general do not realize the potentiality for work that exists in every pleasure-loving American boy with brains enough to deserve a college education. He may groan and weep and exercise ingenuity worthy of a better cause to avoid exerting himself. But if from the start he knows that the faculty means business and if the pressure is turned on a little at a time without ever being relaxed again, he ends up by taking twice as much education (nobody can give him an education!) as one would expect in the average institution. Or he transfers to more congenial surroundings which is a splendid idea.

And so it happened at Saint Peter’s. Real students came eventually from a radius of 50 miles precisely because they heard that there was a premium on hard work and brains, or because they wanted to study under a particular professor, or because it was said that top-flight medical schools
would welcome any pre-med recommended by the little college on Newark Avenue.

At the earliest possible moment and before the first graduation, application was made for recognition by the regional accrediting body, though some thought it a hopeless gesture. The examiner sent was old Dr. Wilson Farrand, the scholarly son of a scholarly father, who had lived a long life in the glow of the liberal arts. Arriving from Princeton early in the morning and picking his way through the destitute neighborhood of Mayor Hague's grim City Hall, he began by assuring the dean that he could not hold out the faintest hope of recognition but that he had made the trip because he liked the tone of the letter which had been written to the Middle States Association. He had evidently absorbed the same impression at Princeton which the dean had absorbed on the banks of the

"It was not only keeping up with the developments in the world of education ... but gathering up and preserving the treasures ... from our fathers."

Cam. He thought that the liberal arts could flourish only where the student could live a liberal arts way of life, in an atmosphere friendly to culture. He underestimated the old adage that the right college is a matter of the right student and the right teacher. Even a log in a forest is not necessary; sometimes a curbstone will do. Instead of leaving before lunch, as he had planned, Dr. Farrand remained until five in the afternoon. In parting with the little faculty, he let them know that his recommendation to the committee would be enthusiastic.

What impressed him most was not the new equipment, or the correctness of office procedure, or the degree to which the catalogue conformed to American standards, but the fact that Saint Peter's was conservative in the old sense of the word conservare. It was not only keeping up with the developments in the world of education as far as they were worth keeping up with, but gathering up and preserving the treasures that we had inherited from our fathers. It was making more sure than ever of the great essentials. It was watching each move made by the leaders of thought to see if it would lead them up or down...

For all its idealism however, St. Peter's had to acknowledge in a whisper that the liberal arts were at an unfair disadvantage in an office building situated in the slums. So within a year the search began for a campus that could be bought for a few obols and a couple of denarii. Dollars were out of the question. After a few false starts (the incorrigible dean with all his talk about how Ignatius loved the cities, was trying to get out into the green hills of Bergen County!) a small estate on the Hudson Boulevard was purchased where the first commencement was held under the open sky. Eighty Universities and Colleges were big enough to send their representatives that day with heartwarming messages of fellowship. The little college had arrived. The dean had a lump in his throat.

Some thought that a sour note had been struck on the Acropolis when the first building erected was not a Parthenon but a gymnasium. There were a few snide remarks about still another "stadium with a few classrooms attached." But the decision had been a wise one. The perfect teacher may be able to charm a class in the marketplace but the best coach in the world cannot get far with a basketball program unless he has a suitable floor to play on, and with all its devotion to learning the new college had never minimized the importance of physical training. Besides, the gymnasi um was also a theatre, a ballroom, and a chapel.

Before long, just by putting one card party on top of another, two more buildings were added to the gymnasium and preparations set on foot to take possession during the summer months. At this juncture, when the tired dean felt like Moses in sight of the Promised Land, he was ordered to a new post. Six years of promoting this small college had convinced even himself that the boys in Saint Peter's were fortunate in not being smothered by a huge student body, 75 acres of elaborate architecture, and a football team of national proportions. Now that he was to return to Fordham as President and rediscover the advantages of size, he recalled with some uneasiness the old story of the chameleon who turned red on red and green on green but finally exploded trying to make good on Scotch plaid.