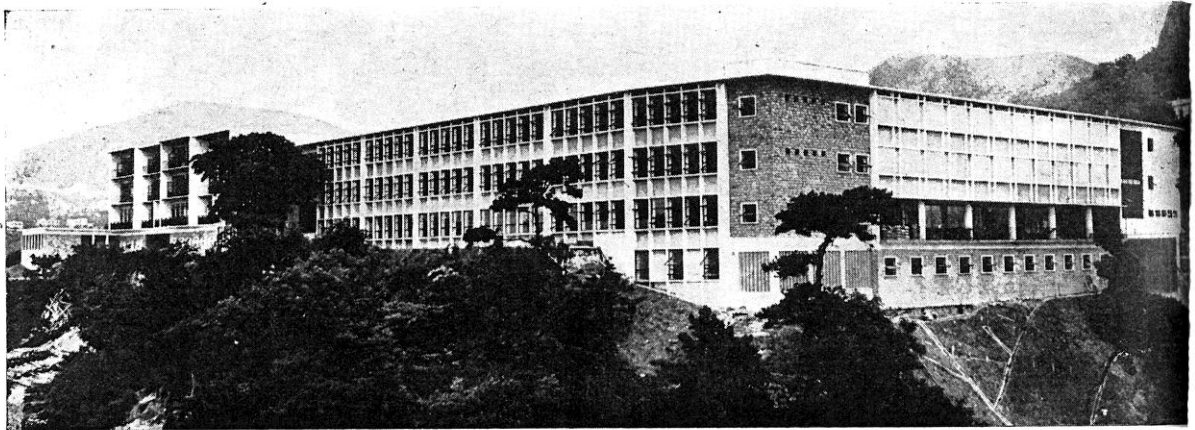


Wah Yan College Hong Kong Formally Opened

Governor at Opening Ceremony Compact Modern School Building



His Excellency the Governor accompanied by Lady Grantham formally opened the new Wah Yan College in Wanchai last Tuesday, September 27. His Lordship Bishop Bianchi and a large gathering attended the opening ceremony. Among those present was Professor G. E. Gordon Brown, Professor of Architecture at the University of Hong Kong, who prepared the plans for the new college.

Father Richard Harris, S.J., Superior of the Jesuits in Hong Kong, addressed the gathering and said in part:—

It is now more than seven years since we informed H.E. the Governor of our intention to build two modern, thoroughly up-to-date schools in the Colony, one in Kowloon and the other in Hong Kong, — and if to-day that programme has been completed, it is due in no small part to the warm personal encouragement we received from His Excellency.

He has shown great interest in education. This is surely wise and right, for if we consider the word in its broadest sense, it is true to say that a man is what his education has made him, and the quality of any community depends on the quality of the individuals who constitute it. It is being realized more than ever in these days, that the deepest cause of war and strife, lies less in political and economic factors, than in some conflict and confusion in the hearts and minds of men. It is the task of the educator to remove these defects — a task of such importance that it must not be undertaken lightly, nor pursued for mere gain, or any less worthy motive.

It is with a view to turning out men of principle and character that this beautiful building has been constructed. Everything that an efficient school should have, has been provided, except a gymnasium, and that we intend to build when funds are available.

You will soon visit the bright well-ventilated class-rooms, the laboratories, demonstration rooms, library, covered playground, auditorium, administration wing, chapel, etc., and we leave it to yourselves to pass judgment on them.

We intend to use this school to

who will attend the day school, we are making the premises available as a night school for poor boys, and for those unable to attend day schools. There will also be a Boys' Club run by a voluntary group of past students under the general direction of a Father with special training in welfare work, which will bring some education and happiness into the drab lives of many of the underprivileged from the district around us. Debating societies will use the auditorium, the musical society will meet for gramophone concerts, plays will be staged frequently in the theatre, past pupils will gather here for their meetings, and of course there will be a flourishing Scout Group. In short, very varied groups will make use of this building at all hours of the day, and well into the night. We believe that a building of this kind should be utilized to the utmost, and it is certainly our intention to do so.

His Excellency the Governor said in part:—

Hong Kong is a joint effort. We have learnt to work together for the common good. In the competitive world of to-day it would be too much to expect the average person to be willing to do much to help others unless this had been inculcated in him. He has to learn it, and the sooner he starts learning it the better, which in effect means when he is at school, — though of course the home is also of immense importance. The school is important not only as the place where the boy or the girl acquires book knowledge, but where he learns, until it becomes second nature to him, how to live in harmony with his fellow human beings. This is the "formation of mind and heart" of which Father Harris spoke a moment ago. Educators are essential for this work and the educators in Hong Kong are doing a grand job, and none better than those of Wah Yan.

It is desirable that the buildings in which instruction is given should be adequate and proper for their purpose and have good equipment. The old Wah Yan College in Robinson Road was quite inadequate for its purpose, bearing in mind that it was a secondary and not a primary school, the former requiring more elaborate equipment, — for example, in the laboratories. Hence this school. I have myself never been a teacher, but I am assured by those who know, that this school has everything that a teacher could reasonably want. No doubt elaborate and expensive frills could be added, but here you will find nothing extravagant. Those who will benefit by receiving instruction in such surroundings are the generations of students who will attend Wah Yan. I shouldn't be surprised, though, if the present boys are not a trifle overawed by the brand new buildings, but they will soon appreciate them to the full. Aesthetically the building is most pleasing and I might here remark that I have had the advantage of a preview which some of you haven't had. I am sure that this aesthetic satisfaction, which is enhanced by the magnificent views, will too have a good effect on the minds of the boys. I know from my own experience, going right back to the days when I was at school, that not only could I work much better but also my mind was more composed if the place, where I was, was beautiful and not ugly. Professor Gordon Brown and his associates have really done an excellent job.

Father Harris, I congratulate and thank you, and with you the Jesuit Fathers, for what you have done and are doing for the people of Hong Kong. I am proud to be associated with you and with this particular project by performing the opening ceremony. Might I also say to you "Happy Birthday", for it was exactly four hundred years ago to-day that Pope Paul III signed a Decree