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A STUDENT AID DEPARTMENT.

AS the great majority of Queen's students attempt each year to pay the expenses of their college course, in whole or in part, and as a Student Aid Department has already been established in connection with the University it has been thought that the following account of the work at Columbia might prove interesting.

Much has been written recently in periodicals and college publications about the student "working his way through," and many spectacular stories teeming with "human interest" are recounted as to how certain students earn money. Many estimates, too, are made of the money that students earn during the academic year and the summer vacation. The striking feature of all these accounts is their vagueness and indefiniteness as to what the students do, how much they receive as aid, and how much they really earn. To the prospective but impecunious student the situation that he must confront is of necessity indefinite, because of the institution's total ignorance of his qualifications, and because of the general precariousness of student employment. But this uncertainty on the part of the student presents no valid excuse for the vagueness of most of the official reports on this subject.

In the midst of the hazy generalities as to what the students are doing and getting, the work of the employment committee at Columbia stands out in bold relief, because it presents statistics that are based, not upon enthusiastic estimates of college officials, but upon the reports of the students themselves who are striving to earn part of their academic expenses.

It was not so long ago that Columbia itself was publishing somewhat visionary accounts of what Columbia students were doing and how much they were earning. It was only in 1901, that a new system was adopted, and that the old sporadic impulses to aid the students were developed into regular, systematic efforts to secure employment. At the same time the practice was begun of having the students report at regular intervals the amount of money they had earned through the assistance of the committee and through their individual exertion, and also the kind of work they were doing. In this way it became possible to obtain a fairly accurate idea of how much the students were earning, and of the work at which they were employed. The information thus obtained furnished a reliable basis for replies to the host of inquiries as to the opportunities of earning money at Columbia.