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The Union Building Should Have An Adequate Auditorium!

A member of the board of trustees of Indiana University stated recently that the Union Building will have only a small auditorium, if any. The reason given was that an architect had declared it difficult to combine the auditorium with the other features proposed, particularly the hotel rooms for visiting alumni.

The plans of the building have not yet been drawn up, nor has the exact nature of its contents been decided upon. Consequently it lies in the power of the students and alumni who have contributed to the fund to determine the kind of a structure that would be of the most benefit to the University.

A large part of the appeal of the Memorial Campaign was made on the basis of the need for an adequate auditorium. All the resident students who have been questioned on the subject declared that they made their contributions with this understanding, and the gaunt specter of Assembly Hall was conjured up before the eyes of Indianapolis alumni, to induce them to sign the pledge card. To omit the auditorium now would be rank duplicity.

Aside from the ethics of the matter, there can be no doubt that a proper auditorium is needed most urgently of all the features proposed for the Union Building. Assembly Hall has long been the target of local wits, and has been pointed out to visitors as the eyesore of the campus. Its seating arrangement is uncomfortable, the stage is not modern, and the hall was built with no regard for acoustics. Nor is the Men's Gymnasium a fit place to have such entertainments as musical recitals.

According to estimates made by Professor W. E. Jenkins, an auditorium to seat three thousand people can be constructed and equipped to cost from \$200,000 to \$250,000. The total cost of the Union Building will be from \$800,000 to \$1,000,000. Even if \$300,000 were spent for an unusually fine assembly hall, there would still be from \$500,000 to \$700,000 left for the other features. This sum, over twice as much as the cost of the Commerce Building, should add a cafeteria and all the club rooms and

recreation parlors that could be desired. There might even be enough left over to endow an annual fund for entertainments—plays, operas, concerts and good lectures, to be presented in the auditorium.

The chief obstruction to the building of the auditorium is the proposal to include a large campus hotel for visiting alumni in the Union Building. A hundred rooms would not begin to care for the visitors to football games, while at other times of the year the rooms would be occupied but rarely. To maintain such a hotel would cost, counting interest on the investment, at least two dollars a day for each room. If each room were occupied twenty-five times a year—a high estimate—the cost of keeping a visitor here one night would be \$28. Critics of the University are constantly on the watch for extravagances, and this waste would give them an excellent opening. Furthermore, any alumnus who has the good of his alma mater at heart would be willing to suffer the inconveniences of a downtown hotel on his occasional visits here, in order to supply the University with its greater need.

A favorite dream of many faculty members and students is an auditorium with a good pipe organ, which would be played at a stated hour every day. In the strenuous press of our activities, we should benefit from occasional opportunity for relaxing in quiet meditation. The soft music of an organ would be conducive to this. A large hall, such as the one proposed, could easily be screened off when it is desired to make it smaller for plays. With such facilities, it should be possible to bring many excellent entertainments here.

The trustees have been in the past, and will continue to be, solicitous of the best interests of the University and the desires of the students. If we want an auditorium in the Union Building, all we need do is to ask for it.
