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(FOUNDED BY LOUIS BAMBERGER AND MRS. FELIX FULD, 1930)

OFFICE

20 NASSAU STREET

PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

CABLE ADDRESS: VANSTITUTE PRINCETON NEW JERSEY

December 6, 1937

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OSWALD VEBLEN
LEWIS H. WEED

LIFE TRUSTEES
LOUIS BAMBERGER
MRS. FELIX FULD

Dear Professor Veblen:

Mrs. Bailey has handed me Mr. Bauhan's bill. She asks me just what the procedure was, whether the Board or the Executive Committee authorized the preparation of the plans. I myself know nothing of it beyond the fact that the blueprints are here in the office. Mrs. Bailey will have to certify to Mr. Leidesdorf the auspices under which Mr. Bauhan was engaged. You will see what I mean from the impression of the stamp below, which is used on every requisition sent to Mr. Leidesdorf. Will you please let me know precisely what she and I can and should do?

I am returning herewith Mr. Wilson's letter to you.

Thank you very much for letting me see it.

Ever sincerely,

u. f.

Professor Oswald Veblen
Fine Hall
Princeton, New Jersey

AF/MCE

APPROVED FOR PAYMENT
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DATE:
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AMOUNT:
EXTENSIONS CHECKED:

THE INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY
SCHOOL OF MATHEMATICS

FINE HALL
PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

December 2, 1937

Dear Doctor Flexner:

I enclose the bill from Mr. Bauhan which you suggested I ask him to send in. I inquired how he computed his charge, and he said that it is $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the estimated cost of the improvement, which he said is the usual charge for preliminary plans.

I also enclose herewith a letter which I have received from E. B. Wilson in response to a request for advice about the publication plans of the American Philosophical Society. Without much relevance Wilson volunteers an account of the discussion he had with Mr. Fosdick, which I thought might interest you. I presume that the letter was intended only for me and the other members of the Philosophical Society Committee, but I thought it could do no harm to show it to you if it goes no further. I have arranged the letter so that you will come without delay to the part which is of interest. Please return it when you have looked at it.

Yours sincerely,



Oswald Veblen

Dr. Abraham Flexner
P.O. Box 631
Princeton, N.J.
OV:GB

September 29, 1937

Dear Professor Veblen:

I have your letter of the 28th
and I am writing Dr. Becker today that she will
be admitted to the Institute for the current
year.

Ever sincerely,

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

Professor Oswald Veblen
Fine Hall
Princeton, New Jersey

AF/MCE

THE INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY
SCHOOL OF MATHEMATICS, FINE HALL
PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

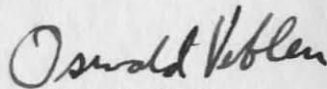
September 24, 1937

Dear Doctor Flexner:

I am returning herewith the letters from Professor Bohr and President Sieg. I shall be glad to discuss the situation at the University of Washington with you whenever you have time.

With thanks for letting me see these letters,

Yours sincerely,


Oswald Veblen

Dr. Abraham Flexner
P.O. Box 631
Princeton, N.J.
OV:GB

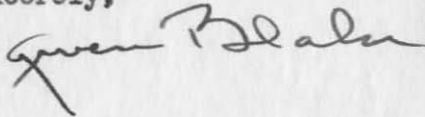
THE INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY
SCHOOL OF MATHEMATICS, FINE HALL
PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

September 27, 1937

Dear Mrs. Bailey:

Professor Veblen asks me to let you know
that he will attend the meeting of the Trustees of
the Institute for Advanced Study in New York City
on October 11, 1937.

Sincerely,



Mrs. Esther S. Bailey
P.O. Box 631
Princeton, N.J.

Dear Dr. Flemer:-

Perhaps I should have called it a "garden" rather than a "factory". This would have been appropriate to the locality, for Seattle has a climate very like that of southern England and gardens are beautifully. Indeed the climate seems to be producing many of the same results in the way of habits and culture that one observes in England.

One feature of my lectures pleased me very much. No one signed up to take them and as no one got "credits". (The attendance was steadily 22 or 23) This worried the director of the Summer Quarter but seems to have pleased the president. The latter, who I used to know at Iowa City, seems very desirous of developing scholarship as much as possible in his university and asked me a great deal about our Institute.

The last time I saw him he said that he had written you to ask in some vague way for cooperation in building up advanced work in the sciences. I think that he would like to get some of the other Institute professors to come to Seattle from time to time. I promised to tell about the climatic and other advantages of the place.

I also seized the opportunity to tell him something about W. Meyer, especially about M's success in eliciting the interest of graduate students in Princeton. He I was

careful not to misrepresent me in any way i.e. I made it clear that M. is a good mathematician, but not another Alexander or von Neumann. Siey seemed very much interested and I believe that, if you approve, it might be possible to work out a plan by which Mayer would spend a year in Seattle as a visiting professor with the expectation that, if he fitted in, there might well be a permanent place open to him. There are various difficulties, such as the fact that M. already gets as much salary as a professor in Seattle and ^{that} the latter has no ~~living~~ pension assured.

I don't believe that there is any use of corresponding about these questions. So please don't bother to answer this letter. But I should like to talk the Mayer idea over with you when I get back to Princeton.

After my lectures were over, nearly a month ago, we took a number of trips with Seattle as center, returning each time to give Tamb & the stenographer something further to do. Now we have reached the Selkirk at the point where we have to use the C.P.R. for 90 miles or so in order to get further east. We have given up the idea of spending part of the summer in Maine and shall probably stay in Canada until it is time to head rather directly for Princeton.

Thanks for the account of Riefers interview with the higher powers. It was more interesting as well as more accurate than the "Washington Merry-go-round". Elizabeth joins me in best regards to the Fluxus & yourself.

As my
Oswald Veblen

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF MATHEMATICS
SEATTLE

July 3, 1937

Dr. Abraham Flexner
Institute for Advanced Study
20 Nassau Street
Princeton, N. J.

Dear Dr. Flexner,

I was very glad to hear that you have sent on the invitation to Neils Bohr, and I have just written to him a letter in which, among other things, I expressed the hope that he would not find American so hectic as he did last spring. I think there is every reason to expect that his visit will be a very profitable one for us.

Has anything further been done about Dirac? I am reminded of this because we had a postcard from Mrs. Dirac this morning. They are in Budapest, and he has been wanting to go to Russia but they feel doubtful whether that is wise under the present circumstances. Dirac and Bohr are great friends, and it would be fine if we had them both in Princeton at the same time.

Last night I saw in the paper that Morgenthau has asked Riefler to take charge of the gold buying of the government. Does that mean that Riefler would have to be in Washington or will it be merely incidental to his other activities?

My factory here is still working at full pressure.

As ever,

Oswald Veblen

O. Veblen

OV:HJ

*Have just written V.
to that effect.*

June 23, 1937

Dear Professor Veblen:

I am terribly sorry that before writing you as I did in reference to Bohr I did not carefully examine the correspondence. I do remember most of the details which you recall in your letter of June 14, but I evidently forgot the main thing or at least one of the main things, namely, the salary proposed. Of course, under the circumstances I shall abide by our agreement, and I am writing Bohr by this mail to that effect. I quite agree with you that in view of the size of the honorarium Bohr should practically confine himself to Princeton during the term. I wonder if you can make that clear to him by explaining that is the practice of the regular members of the staff.

Anne had a delightful letter from Mrs. Veblen which she has shared with me. I am very happy indeed to know that you both had a leisurely trip through the country to Washington and that Mrs. Veblen is impressed by the fact that after all the United States is a more extensive domain than England, even though it is manifestly inferior in a good many other respects.

We have had a perfectly lovely spring in Princeton, and the summer is just beginning. The oldest inhabitants tell us that there has never been such a spring for twenty-five or thirty years, and I should say that I do not recall a summer which has made so gentle a beginning.

Professor Veblen

June 23, 1937

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Our only worry is Europe. What is happening in Spain is heart-rending. I shall not be happy until Hitler and Mussolini are dangling at the end of a hangman's rope, for without them the Loyalist Government would have easily maintained its own.

We have had a lot of politics here since you left. I suspect that the Supreme Court bill is dead and that Roosevelt has all but split his party. He is giving the members of Congress a picnic at the end of the week in the hope of healing the breach, but he and his man, Farley, have counted too heavily on patronage, relief, and last November's big majority. It is too bad when he had it in his power to continue to do great things, but the thing has obviously gone to his head, and there are many indications that he is paying the penalty of a "swelled" head. Farley is lying very low.

We are getting ready to go to camp, presumably at the end of this week. Wasn't it understood that you and your wife were going to drive by on your way to Maine?

Remember me very warmly to Mrs. Veblen, and believe me

Ever sincerely,

OSWALD VEBLLEN

P.S.

I am enclosing a copy of my letter to Professor Bohr. I can't tell you how sorry I am for causing you any dismay such as you must naturally have felt when you got the letter that was waiting for you at Seattle.

A.F.

Professor Oswald Veblen
Department of Mathematics
University of Washington
Seattle, Washington

AF:ESB

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF MATHEMATICS
SEATTLE

June 14, 1937

Professor Abraham Flexner
The Institute for Advanced Study
20 Nassau Street
Princeton, N. J.

Dear Dr. Flexner,

I found your letter of May 31 here on my arrival the day before yesterday. I was very glad to have the news from Princeton and particularly glad that you have really enjoyed the spring there.

My letter to Bohr did specify \$6,000 as the salary for one term. This was, however, not at my suggestion because the whole matter was initiated and the terms laid down by yourself. You will probably recall that after an interview with one of the temporary members, you came to feel that our work in theoretical physics ought to be strengthened and transmitted through von Neumann a request that I should write to Bohr. I composed a letter embodying your suggestions and brought it to a meeting of the Buildings and Grounds Committee which was held in New York on March 26. You read it over carefully and made one or two changes. I then went to Mr. Maas' office and had it typed and sent it off in the hope of reaching Bohr before he sailed from San Francisco. I asked Miss Blake to send a copy of the letter to Mrs. Bailey.

I am recalling these matters in detail because I should never have thought of mentioning a stipend to Bohr without very explicit authorization. Nevertheless, I am convinced that your original suggestion was the right one. If Bohr does come, I hope very much that his visit will be definitely to Princeton and that during the time he is there he will not be traveling around and giving lectures elsewhere to any considerable extent. We really want him to take a part in the everyday life of the place. Giving him a generous salary will, I think, have the same influence in this direction that it has upon our regular professors. As far as I have observed, the latter feel a very deep obligation to give all their best efforts to the welfare of the Institute.

May I venture one other suggestion: namely, that, if you decide to extend the invitation to Bohr, you write to him yourself in your capacity as the director. If you let me know that you have done so, I can then write him an informal letter on a personal and scientific basis.

Dr. Flexner

-2-

June 14, 1937

I am already well established here and have been provided with an office and stenographic assistance. I have also reestablished relations with Dr. Taub and hope to push on rapidly with the writing which we have in view. The trip out by automobile, although a long and circuitous one, has been a real vacation and I am feeling quite fresh once more.

Elizabeth joins me in wishing you and Mrs. Flexner a very pleasant summer.

Yours sincerely,

Oswald Veblen

O. Veblen

OV:HJ

May 31, 1937

Dear Professor Veblen:

I have your interesting letter of May 19 with the enclosure from Bohr. I should have answered you more promptly, but I have had to be out of town a number of times, and there has been a great deal to do here. However, I do not believe that anything of importance has been lost, inasmuch as Bohr can make no arrangement at this time.

I assume that you have not mentioned a definite salary to Bohr. It seems to me that your suggestion of \$6,000 for a three months' term is excessive, for it amounts to \$12,000 per annum when we have never given a visiting professor above \$10,000, and my impression is - though as to this I may be mistaken - that in conversation with you or von Neumann or both, I made the suggestion that visiting professors should be invited on the basis of \$1,000 per month. If Bohr spends three months in America, it seems to me that he would be reasonably recompensed with a salary of \$3,000 plus perhaps his transportation from Stockholm to Princeton and return, the latter being an addition to anything that we have paid heretofore, but I think it not unreasonable to add this in the case of a person who comes for a brief period.

I think we should bear in mind that the other schools are all going in course of time to wish to be able to extend similar invitations, and we cannot lose sight of the fact that at the moment our expenditures are pretty close to the

Professor Veblen

May 31, 1937

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end of our income.

I have no objection to our listing distinguished visitors as members. Whether the other schools, as they continue, will care to carry on the same precedent I do not know. We have rather proceeded upon the theory of autonomy so that there is no reason that I can see why each school should not do what it pleases.

It is a pity that you and Mrs. Veblen lost this spring in Princeton, for of the four springs which we have spent here this has been by all odds the most beautiful. It has been cool and sufficiently wet to keep the blossoms on the trees an unusually long time. Anne and I have lingered on and will probably stay till the twelfth of June, after which we will go to New York to remain there until about the first of July - then to Magnetawan.

Our numbers are melting. Johnnie and Marietta sail Wednesday. Weyl has gone. Lowe and Mitranj have left, and Herzfeld goes in the near future. Panofsky is thinking of remaining here in order to complete a set of lectures which he is to give at Bryn Mawr next session.

All of us join in all good wishes to you and Mrs. Veblen.

Ever sincerely,

Professor Oswald Veblen
c/o Miss Gwen Blake
Fine Hall
Princeton, New Jersey

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

AF:ESB

Athenaeum
551 South Hill Avenue
Pasadena, California

19 May 1937

Dear Dr. Flexner:-

We are staying here for a few days to visit my sisters in Los Angeles and some of our scientific friends in Pasadena. The arrangements ^{rightly} ~~are~~ ^{being} ~~are~~ so suitable that we prefer to stay here rather than in L.A. in spite ~~of the fact that~~ of a two hour trip every time we go over to see my sisters. From the point of view of a visitor an Athenaeum is certainly most desirable and its location not terribly important, but this one would be more attractive to me if it were not so showy.

von Neumann writes that you approve of my now making the offer to Niels Bohr definite. But since there is no immediate hurry - Bohr will not be in Copenhagen till the end of June - I should prefer to wait till I hear directly from you. The offer was \$6000 for one term and, in the enclosed letter, Bohr accepts in principle for the ~~first term~~

1938. I think that a visit from Bohm would be very helpful to our whole enterprise and I should be glad to write him that you have authorized a formal invitation, or if you decide to write to him directly, I will write him informally. ~~Also,~~ I have to write to him anyway, because in consequence of a conversation with your brother Simon, I want to suggest that N.B. should find an occasion for a meeting with you & S.F. during the latter's year in Oxford, at which they could talk over international fellowships and such matters.

The plan of listing distinguished visitors like as "members" rather than as "visiting professors" worked so well with Hardy and Levi-Civita that I hope it will be continued in Bohm's case.

Will you please return Bohm's letter to Miss Blake when you have finished with it. My address is still of Miss Blake as we leave here shortly and are not sure of our next postal stop.

Our trip has been most interesting so far. Perhaps the new and really beautiful lake formed by Boulder Dam was the most memorable spot.

Best greetings to you & Mrs Fletcher from Elizabeth and myself. As ever, Oswald Veblen

April 12, 1937

Dear Professor Veblen:

In reference to our telephone conversation this morning I should like to suggest that, if I were in the place of the mathematical group, I should not allow myself before the end of the year to be caught, as the group is caught, by reason of the fact that Professor Weyl has recently discovered a promising candidate for a stipend in the person of a Japanese mathematician. I should set aside a sum of \$4,000 or \$5,000 which I would not touch until, let us say, May 1 or some other arbitrary date, and thus be enabled to take advantage of a surprise candidate like the Japanese mathematician in question.

I do not believe that the Bergmann case is the real obstacle since in the matter of Bergmann we are doing precisely what we did for Alexander in a similar manner concerning Zippin a few years ago.

The budget of the Institute is in a different position. It is made up by Mrs. Bailey, Mr. Leidesdorf, and myself a good many weeks in advance of the annual meeting held about the middle of April. It would seem to me a pity to make any one select an assistant, if he has not found the person, prior to that date. I see no reason why, if one of the mathematicians finds among those receiving stipends someone whom he would like as his assistant, he should not be allowed to have him, no matter if this decision is postponed as late as October 1

Professor Veblen

April 12, 1937

2

or later. We have had irregularities of this kind to manage previously, and there has never been any difficulty about it, but, if I were in your place, I should do in the fund for stipends precisely what I do in the general income of the Institute. I simply will not spend it all on the theory (first) that it will do no harm if a certain amount of money is returned to the treasury unspent and (second) I am in position to take care of a genuine surprise if anything of the first magnitude presents itself in the course of the following year. In other words, don't allocate money to the last dollar just because you have it.

Very sincerely yours,

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

Professor Oswald Veblen
Fine Hall
Princeton, New Jersey

AF:ESB

April 7, 1937

Dear Professor Veblen:

I have yours of the 6th regarding Mr. Calkin and I will send him a notice to the effect that you have asked that he be named as your assistant for the year 1937-1938, and that his salary will be \$1800.00.

Ever sincerely,

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

Professor Oswald Veblen
Fine Hall
Princeton, New Jersey

AF/MCE

THE INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY
PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

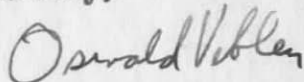
Fine Hall, April 6, 1937

Dear Doctor Flexner:

I should like to have Mr. John W. Calkin of 20 Ware Street, Cambridge, Mass., appointed as my assistant for the year 1937-38. Mr. Calkin is taking his doctorate at Harvard this June, and has done his work chiefly under the direction of Professor Stone.

As Mr. Calkin is married I should like to suggest that his salary be \$1800.

Yours sincerely,



Oswald Veblen

Dr. Abraham Flexner
P.O. Box 631
Princeton, N.J.
OV:GB

April 3, 1937

Dear Dr. Flexner:

Thank for letting
me see this. I think it could
be improved by widening the
driveway - 50 feet is awfully
narrow - and by giving ~~depth~~
depth to the lots on Mercer St. But
I am glad to leave such details
to them.

As ever,

O. U.

April 3, 1937

Dear Professor Veblen:

I really owe you an apology. I went to town Thursday afternoon and did not return until last night. Hence the delay in sending you the blue print, which I may have to ask you to return to me as Mr. Black sent me only a few, but I don't like polling votes by mail or any other irregular procedure, but in this instance putting on all the steam I can progress is slow - so slow that it is now almost certain that the men will be disappointed in their hopes of getting into their houses by October 1. They ^{have to} may/make some temporary and, I fear, inconvenient arrangements for several months longer. I really hate to bother you about any of these minute real estate details. They aren't worth your time and attention. Things that are worthy of your cerebrations are the School of Mathematics in general, your own work in particular, and the Institute in its educational aspects. In the long run, nothing else really matters.

I am returning Haldane's letter. There is, I think, nothing we can do except to await a possible further communication from him. If and when it arrives, we shall of course live up to our engagements.

Thank you for getting Miss Blake to send a note regarding the seminar which you are giving in the University of Washington during the first term of the summer quarter.

With all good wishes,

Sincerely yours,

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

Professor Oswald Veblen

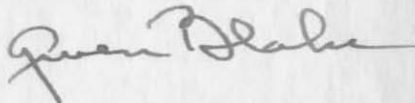
THE INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY
PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

Fine Hall, March 31, 1937

Dear Mrs. Bailey:

Professor Veblen asks me to tell you that it is the Walker Ames Professorship of Mathematics under which he will conduct a seminar on the Theory of Spinors at the University of Washington in the first term of the summer quarter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Owen Blaker". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name "Sincerely,".

March 31, 1937

Dear Professor Veblen:

You will remember at the meeting of the Committee on Buildings and Grounds some dissatisfaction was expressed with certain details of Mr. Black's rough drawing, and I was authorized to see Mr. Black and present them for his consideration. I asked Mr. Black and Mr. Woodbridge to meet me in Princeton Saturday afternoon, and we had an hour or more together. The upshot was that Mr. Black saw the force of drawing the dividing lines between properties in such wise that the number of square feet would be approximately the same and that the more or less triangular shape of some of the lots should be modified. It was also suggested that instead of two lots fronting Mercer Street the property should be so divided that there would be three of approximately equal area.

Yesterday Mr. Black lunched with Mr. Leidesdorf and me in New York (Mr. Maass at the last moment being unable to attend, saying that he would abide by any decision which we three reached). The outcome was that there was a decision in favor of leaving the circle approximately where it was but reserving the middle of the three lots fronting Mercer Street as a future entrance if it was at any time deemed desirable to make use of it. The sixty feet easement between our property and Mr. Maxwell's is to be retained. On this proposition Mr. Leidesdorf and Mr. Maass and I voted in the affirmative. I am sending this report to you and President Aydelotte. Will you please let me know your position?

Professor Veblen

March 31, 1937

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It is impossible, I think, to continue the discussion of the subject longer, for Mr. Riefler must sail within two weeks, and the building costs are rising. Of those who are to purchase the property, all are satisfied with the arrangement which I have described.

Sincerely yours,

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

Professor Oswald Veblen
Fine Hall
Princeton, New Jersey

AF:RSB

P.S.

Since dictating the above letter this morning I have communicated with President Aydelotte by telephone, and he has authorized me to cast his vote in the affirmative.

I am sorry that the time left for action is so short that it is impossible to get another meeting of the committee. I am going to communicate with the members of the Executive Committee by mail or telephone today and get their authorizations informally regarding the expenditure for street and sewer. Matters of this kind are of such slight general importance that none of us - certainly neither I nor Aydelotte nor you - has the time to take practically a day off to go to New York for further discussion regarding them.

P.S. #2

Thank you for letting me see Professor Wheeler's letter which is very gratifying. I return it herewith.

P.S.#3

I have just shown the blue print - of which I will send you a copy - to Mr. Sincerbeaux. He regards Black's scheme as "excellent" & "modern". The line between Johnnie's line & the central lot can be still further moved so as to equalize the areas; ditto between the central lot & Weyl's.

THE INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY
PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

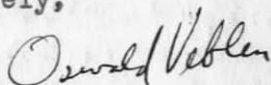
Fine Hall, March 29, 1937

Dear Doctor Flexner:

Mr. Maass kindly had the letter to Bohr re-copied in his office, minus the last sentence. I am sending you the copy which you corrected, for your record.

I enclose also a polite note from Wheeler which you might like to glance at as bearing on the situation in theoretical physics.

Yours sincerely,



Oswald Veblen

Dr. Abraham Flexner
P.O.Box 631
Princeton, N.J.
OV:GB

THE INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY

SCHOOL OF MATHEMATICS

FINE HALL

PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

27?
March 25, 1937

Dear Bohr:

We, that is to say our group of mathematicians and theoretical physicists, would like very much to invite you to spend a term at our Institute next year, and Dr. Flexner is favorable to this idea but is not yet sure whether the necessary funds will be available. I am therefore taking the liberty to write to you informally about the question to find out whether you would be able to accept in case the funds are available. I am sending this letter by air mail in the hope that it may reach you before you leave for Japan. If it does, I should appreciate a reply in which you would also give me your next address.

The proposed invitation would be for one of our two terms, with a stipend of \$6000. The first term is from October 1 to Christmas, and the second term is from January 23 to May 1. Either term would be satisfactory to us.

We should of course be glad if you would give a few lectures or conduct a seminar, but the main desire would be that your colleagues, especially the younger ones, should have a chance to discuss scientific questions with you.

We have some hope that you will consider this proposal seriously because we feel that you might welcome an opportunity to influence and to keep in touch with the development of physics on this side of the Atlantic. If it would make the invitation more attractive, we should be glad to suggest, and believe that Dr. Flexner would agree, that your engagement with the Institute should be an annual one, over a period of, say, five years.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Niels Bohr
Care Department of Physics
University of California
Berkeley, California
OV:GB

Oswald Veblen

THE INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY

SCHOOL OF MATHEMATICS

FINE HALL

PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

March 24, 1937

Dear Doctor Flexner:

I enclose herewith a copy of the letter to Haldane which I sent off last night after making the verbal corrections which you suggested. I feel that I was very much at fault in not having written you a note to embody my understanding of the matter after our first discussion. My recollection agrees with yours that I explained that Haldane was interested in the applications of mathematics to biological phenomena. The exact field to which he proposed to make the applications is genetics. The project is an experiment to determine whether mathematics (I don't mean here our School of Mathematics in particular) can profitably extend its activities into the field of genetics as it has already done into theoretical physics and chemistry. I thought that the support for this would appropriately come from general funds rather than from those already allocated to other purposes. In this I was doubtless influenced by my earlier experience on the committee administering research funds for the University.

My understanding of the outcome of our conversation this morning is that the Haldane stipend, if it materializes, should be put under some other heading than the \$30,000 stipend fund; but that on the other hand, salary for Bergmann, who is in fact acting as Einstein's assistant, should appear in the list of stipends chargeable to this fund. In order to make the present situ-

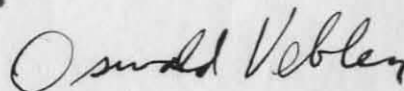
Dr. Abraham Flexner - 2

March 24, 1937

ation quite clear, I am appending on another sheet a statement which shows the commitments against the \$30,000.

You will be interested to hear that there are three or four extremely strong and young candidates for the remaining \$1200 in this fund.

Yours sincerely,



Oswald Veblen

Dr. Abraham Flexner
P.O.Box 631
Princeton, N.J.
OV:GB

P.S. Perhaps I should explain that the stipend for Bergmann has not been acted on at a formal meeting of the mathematical professors, but since I saw you I have consulted each of them individually, and they authorize me to recommend to you that the stipend should be granted. It is therefore now in order for you to notify Bergmann of the stipend in case you approve it.

O.V.

March 23, 1937

Dear Professor Veblen:

I have yours of the twenty-second this morning. My memory may of course be at fault, but I cannot recall that, when we spoke of the Haldane matter, any mention was made as to where the funds were to come from, and I merely assumed that he was being invited here without increasing the general budget of the School of Mathematics, which I have felt for some time was as large as we can afford with our present resources and with the present condition of the budgets of the other schools.

I enclose your letter with two minor alterations. I see no objection to your writing Haldane in practically the terms you suggest, provided it is understood that the appropriation will come from the remainder of the stipend allowance. In future it might be best if after speaking of matters of this kind you sent me a note embodying your understanding, for in this way we should avoid the sort of misunderstanding that appears to have arisen in this instance.

Mrs. Bailey gave me her outline of her conversations with you over the telephone on Saturday morning. If she understood you correctly, your objection to using the stipend money for Haldane was that his field was biology. My recollection is that, when you spoke to me, you explained that Haldane was interested in ascertaining whether mathematical processes could not be applied to biological phenomena. Had you said biology in simple terms, I should, I think, have replied, as I have often replied to similar requests in other fields, that unfortunately our work is limited by our funds to the three schools now in operation, and this would automatically have excluded an appropriation for a worker in biology. Not a day passes that I do not get attractive applications from thoroughly competent persons who wish to work in other fields, and I invariably decline them on the ground

Professor Veblen

March 23, 1937

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that we must hew to the lines set by the three schools which we are now
trying to develop.

Very sincerely yours,

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

Professor Oswald Veblen
Fine Hall
Princeton, New Jersey

AF:ESB

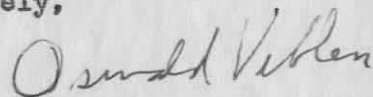
THE INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY
SCHOOL OF MATHEMATICS
FINE HALL
PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

March 22, 1937

Dear Doctor Flexner:

My recollection is that I made the suggestion that Haldane should not be on the mathematical budget when I first raised the question with you. When you authorized me to go ahead and negotiate with the University, I thought that it was on this basis. In point of fact it is not very likely that Haldane will feel himself in a position this spring to agree to come, so that the whole question is likely to remain an academic one. If you approve, I will send him the letter of which I enclose a copy, in the hope that we may hear something definite on the subject before the Institute year closes.

Yours sincerely,



Oswald Veblen

Dr. Abraham Flexner
P.O. Box 631
Princeton, N.J.
OV:GB

March 18, 1937

Dear Professor Veblen:

The dentist gave me a respite yesterday morning until Saturday, so I came to Princeton yesterday afternoon to remain until late tomorrow afternoon in order to catch up with my mail. I do not know how long he will want me next week. I am suffering no discomfort, but there is a lot of repair work to be done and he is not certain how long it will take.

I find on my desk a letter from von Neumann suggesting stipends to Carlson, Feenberg, Ketchum and Richardson, to each of whom I shall send the usual official notice, as von Neumann suggests.

There is also a letter from you asking me to write Professor Hlavaty informing him that a stipend of \$1000 has been appropriated for him for the first term of next year. This I shall also attend to.

I shall write Dr. Tildsley with reference to the rumor that a new college is to be started in Queens and let you see his answer when I receive it.

While I was in New York I worked over the budget for next year. We can count, barring absolutely unforeseen contingencies, on an income of approximately \$300,000, and perhaps a little more. The budget of the School of Mathematics, omitting entirely Dirac and Bohr, is \$143,020; that is, we are spending on mathematics ^{practically} one-half of the total income of the Institute. I do not

March 18, 1937

Dear Professor Veblen:

The dentist gave me a respite yesterday morning until Saturday, so I came to Princeton yesterday afternoon to remain until late tomorrow afternoon in order to catch up with my mail. I do not know how long he will want me next week. I am suffering no discomfort, but there is a lot of repair work to be done and he is not certain how long it will take.

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While I was in New York I worked over the budget for next year. We can count, barring absolutely unforeseen contingencies, on an income of approximately \$300,000, and perhaps a little more. The budget of the School of Mathematics, omitting entirely Dirac and Bohr, is \$143,020; that is, we are ^{practically} spending on mathematics/one-half of the total income of the Institute. I do not

Professor Veblen

March 18, 1937

object to this disproportion - quite the contrary - because mathematics is the spearhead with which we have made our way, but I am sure it will be obvious to you that until our endowment has been substantially increased so that something can be done to develop the other two schools, the amount set aside for mathematics cannot be increased.

This bears on the invitation to Haldane. I have a copy of your letter to Compton under date of November 30, 1936, in which you suggest to Compton "that Professor Haldane should be invited for two terms at a salary of \$2500 a term, Princeton University and the Institute each to pay half of the salary". In your letter of March 17 you propose a commitment on the part of the Institute of \$2500, and also that it shall be charged against the general budget, the latter being a point which, as far as I can remember, was not previously raised. It would seem to me that the sum in question should either be charged to the \$30,000 set aside for stipends, or, if this amount has been allocated, should come out of the amount which has been provisionally reserved for Dirac. I may say that I am endeavoring to get from another source money for both Dirac and Bohr, and I shall let you know as soon as I know the result of my efforts.

With these considerations in mind, I should wish the mathematicians to arrange the Haldane matter in the way that seems to them best, but there ought to be an understanding that for the present and until our income has substantially increased the regular mathematical budget cannot be increased beyond the sum above mentioned, namely \$143,020.00.

Ever sincerely,

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

Professor Oswald Veblen
Fine Hall
Princeton, New Jersey
AF/LCE

P.S. I assume from your note that it is not necessary for me to write Professor McCoy. Let me know if you wish me to do so.

THE INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY
SCHOOL OF MATHEMATICS
FINE HALL
PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

March 17, 1937

Dear Doctor Flexner:

You will recall that we have often discussed the fact that there are a great many mathematical teachers in the colleges of the New York metropolitan area, and very few mathematicians. It is now being rumored that a new college is to be started in Queens. Would it be possible to get in touch with some of the people in authority who might be accessible to good advice in the choice of a head for the Mathematics Department in this college?

If a sufficiently intelligent person were chosen for this post he could very rapidly build up a strong department by merely giving opportunities to the excellent young men who are coming on the market at the present time.

I have no doubt that if physics, Greek or any other subject were substituted for mathematics, the above remark would still apply.

Please do not bother to reply to this letter unless by some chance something should occur to you which I might do about this question.

Yours sincerely,



Oswald Veblen

Dr. Abraham Flexner
P.O. Box 631
Princeton, N.J.
OV:GB

January 6, 1937

Dear Professor Veblen:

Since we parted this morning I have had interviews with both Riefler and Meritt on the subject of buildings and grounds, and a telephone talk with Mr. Sincerbeaux, who told me that with his other work he simply could not do in the next few days what you requested him to do this morning.

I find myself drawn into a vortex which I have been preaching against all my life, namely, that universities devote an inordinate amount of time to just such operations. It is perfectly plain to me that Riefler and Meritt are tired of it, and I am sure that if I did as much speculating and walking in connection with the problem as they have done I should give up building and simply rent additional space at 20 Nassau Street.

I am quite clear that at this moment we have neither the time nor the money to bother about the Olden Manor and the Olden Farm, for there is actually a question as to whether, with falling interest rates, we will have money next year for Dirac or a Greek scholar whom Meritt would like to bring over for his Agora work. Such being the case, the Olden Farm, the Olden Manor and landscaping are out of the question. If we embark upon them we will find ourselves on the same sort of incline plane that has landed the Johns Hopkins University in the mire.

Professor Veblen

January 6, 1937

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I told Mr. Sincerbeaux to limit his report to the Battle Road and Mercer Street lots, and he assured me that he could take care of this in such a way that if ever we wished to do anything with the Olden Farm he would not have prejudiced that piece of property from any point of view.

It is my conviction that we will never have any academic buildings on the farm, and I have such grave doubts as to the use of the Manor for social purposes that if I had to vote on the matter now I should vote in the negative. Fortunately, it does not have to be decided now and I can take time to think.

The problems which we need to settle at this time are (1) housing for the faculty and (2) closing up of the golf course transaction. Let's concentrate upon these and get them finished so that Riefler and his associates may at once be enabled to get homes for themselves and quit thinking and speculating on the subject, for it really does not interest them. The golf course matter may drag along a little longer, but it will be settled in the way we desire.

I feel no inclination whatsoever to take up the question of a building, for I am not clear enough in my own mind as to what we want. I would far rather rent additional floor space in 20 Nassau Street and get our minds so full of the purposes for which we exist that we will all become relatively indifferent to buildings and grounds. Mr. Gilman had a great university in two old boarding houses, and the present Johns Hopkins, with a beautiful campus, is on the rocks. I am all for the boarding houses and opposed to the rocks, as I know you are at heart. It is, I think, quite clear that these things bulk much less largely in your mind than they do in mine or Riefler's or Meritt's, for we are strangers to them; but I fear them, as I fear the plague, for these young men bursting with ideas and alive to opportunities, who find themselves distracted by things in which they are not interested, though so far as the housing is

Professor Veblen

January 6, 1937

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concerned they have got to take a minimum amount of their time to settle their problems in a brief period once and for all, as you settled yours many years ago.

With all good wishes,

Ever sincerely,

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

Professor Oswald Veblen
Fine Hall
Princeton, New Jersey

AF/MCE

P. S. I am sending copies of this letter to Riefler and Meritt.

A. F.

P. S. #2. Since I dictated the above, Meritt and I have driven the whole length of Battle Road. I am more than ever puzzled as to why there should be any difficulty at all. Battle Road is not a highway or traffic-way. It is a residence street and a side street. It corresponds to the horizontal line in the letter "H". There is a highway at one end, and there is nothing that we can do, it seems to me, with the blocks on which your house and our lots are situated beyond accepting the present layout.

As far as landscaping is concerned, it seems to me out of the question to think of it in connection with Battle Road, as now laid out, and there is no occasion for even raising the question at this time in connection with the Olden Farm, the future of which is absolutely dark. There will, of course, be a street as wide as we choose to make it from Mercer Street to the Olden Farm, past the end of Battle Road. No unusual width is required and hence we need not sacrifice all the space we own on the far block of Battle Road.

It is my opinion that we should recommend the completion of Battle Road as now laid out, leaving for the future all other questions. On the lines I propose we can get a decision at the next Board Meeting; on any other basis a final decision will be postponed "till the cows come home".

Once more I recur to the unforeseen expense the moment we get into the real estate business. We have spent on 69 Alexander Street three times the amount anyone expected. If we start on Battle Road and the Olden Farm, the only way to meet the expense - foreseen and unforeseen - is to cut the mathematics budget seriously, for that school is the only one which spends so large a sum that a reduction of any size can possibly be made.

A. F.

THE INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY
PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

Fine Hall, December 4, 1936

Dear Doctor Flexner:

Here is the little screed which I promised to send you. It, of course, contains nothing which you have not thought of long ago, but I hand it on for the little that it is worth.

Sincerely yours,



Oswald Veblen

Dr. Abraham Flexner
P.O. Box 631
Princeton, N.J.
OV:GB

December 4, 1936

The program of the Institute is to give its permanent members an opportunity to pursue scholarship unhampered by any of the handicaps which such an organization can reasonably be expected to eliminate. It is also its policy to give a similar opportunity for limited periods (usually a single academic year) to temporary members. Some of these are men or women who have recently attained the Ph.D. and who need not only the freedom of opportunity implied by their residence at the Institute but also inspiration and help from the professors. Some are mature scholars whose primary need is temporary release from routine academic obligations. In the second class of cases it is often possible to induce the university to which the scholar is attached to give him leave of absence and pay half his salary. Men of this sort derive a great deal of stimulus and help from their association with the younger group as well as from the Institute professors. The latter derive a great deal of stimulus in their work from both groups of temporary members. Indeed, many if not all of our professors will testify that they receive more from the visitors than they give.

The significance of this establishment, consisting of a permanent group of scholars year by year in contact with a steady stream of colleagues from all parts of the world, is already well understood throughout the academic world. It is increasingly thought of as something which could not be diminished without serious loss to this world.

It would be hard to exaggerate the importance of the stream flowing through it to the Institute itself. If this stream should dry up, there would be danger that the "academic heaven" would

approach the state of Nirvana.

The funds which the Institute devotes to the stipends for temporary members are matched and probably exceeded in amount by the contributions from outside sources. Every university which grants a member of its faculty leave of absence to come to the Institute is making a contribution to scholarship of a definite pecuniary value. This is by no means always a routine matter.

A recent letter from a professor at the University of Wisconsin begins:

"President Frank has given me permission to accept your offer of a year at the Institute, which I am very glad to do. He says he won't know exactly where the money will come from until the budget is adopted, perhaps not until next summer, but that he will get it somewhere."

The various universities and foundations (e.g. Trinity College, Cambridge, and the Rockefeller Foundation) which send young men here on fellowships are all making financial contributions to the same cause.

The founders and trustees of the Institute therefore have a right to feel that their generous support of scholarship is receiving recognition not merely in the form of words of praise and gratitude, but also in the more concrete form of pecuniary support and ready cooperation.

IV-20

December 4, 1936

Dear Professor Veblen:

I have been scratching my head before replying to your note of the 30th. The difference between "rights" and "privileges", under the circumstances existing here, seems to me almost metaphysical, and I should be very sorry indeed if the time ever came when it had to be raised and settled in contract or other definite form. Why cannot we go on as we have begun, on the basis of jointly affording each other courtesies, opportunities, and good will? No legal agreement can furnish a firmer basis for coöperation. Take, for example, the relationship between the Johns Hopkins Hospital and the Johns Hopkins Medical School. The Hospital is absolutely controlled by the Medical School - on what basis? Good will and mutual interest. They have different Boards of Trustees, different funds, overlapping expenditures, and yet there is not a single line in print or in writing defining anything. Nevertheless, there is no equally sound coöperative relationship between any other hospital and any other medical school, despite the fact that in all or most other instances legal contracts defining the relationships exist.

If the question which you raise is taken up in reference to Fine Hall, it will inevitably spread to the Library and to McCormick Hall, and might finally influence both institutions in their entirety, with the result that the Institute

Professor Veblen

December 4, 1936

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with its small endowment would move out, start an independent career somewhere else, and spend a large part of its substance on buildings, upkeep, etc., rather than on professorial salaries. Princeton has generously recognized the contribution which the Institute makes to our joint interests. I am not aware of any serious point at which we have been hampered. Quite the contrary, I am inclined to think, as I have already told you, that we have hampered Princeton by overcrowding Fine Hall. My whole instinct, therefore, is to "let sleeping dogs lie" and not to mention "rights" and "privileges" or anything else, but quietly go about our business of developing science and training a small hand-picked group annually.

With very great reluctance I spoke to Professor Smyth on the subject of parking. My reluctance was due to the fact that parking seems to me a superfluous detail, just as automobiles themselves do. I should not consider it in the least a hardship if those connected with the Institute should all have to park on Washington Road. They would then have about three minutes walk to the entrance of Palmer, through which they could reach Fine Hall. I have a longer walk four times a day, and take it by using rubbers and umbrella, as a rule, even in bad weather. In my student days I could not as much as afford a street car, though I had over a mile to walk, and I cannot see that I suffered as a result. Mrs. Bailey, in good weather and bad, has to get her breakfast outside and come to the office, and Miss Eichelser has a twenty-minute walk to her breakfast and to office, and they are both in hale, good health. The same is true of scores of persons associated in different capacities with the University.

Professor Smyth was generous and cooperative. He said at once that every permanent member of the Institute group in Fine Hall would have space for

Professor Veblen

December 4, 1936

- 3 -

My present number of cars will have space for two

his car and, in addition, persons who come on the basis of visiting professorships.

I don't see how we can possibly ask more or expect more. He said that there still remained a small margin, but I told him that he should do what he pleased with it, for it would be a source of embarrassment to us if we had additional space for a few cars and then had to decide whether we should extend the privilege to Professor A and Doctor B and Assistant C and then stop when we reached Doctor D.

The whole thing looks to me extremely trifling and may contain the germ of an explanation of a phenomenon that I have never understood, namely, why university presidents are sometimes dictatorial over trifles. Perhaps it is because these pin pricks contain elements of danger and it is best, in the long run, for somebody to say "yes" or "no" without making the question at issue a matter of discussion between different departments.

I write this in all kindness. I do not believe that I myself should have the slightest difficulty in living on the happiest possible terms with any person who is now in Fine Hall, though I know perfectly well that the persons there are temperamentally different. I should simply subordinate myself to them, in view of the fact that the use of Fine Hall has given us the use of the library, the librarian, janitor service, telephone service, and luxurious quarters, and what is more important than all these put together, the easy opportunity for conference, coöperation and contact with other men interested in mathematics and mathematical physics. We must make a choice - to continue our coöperation with Princeton, ignoring everything that is not of prime importance, or to set up shop alone. In the former case we can hope to develop a great institution; in the latter event we shall have a small one, and the first subject to suffer would be mathematics.

Always sincerely,
ABRAHAM FLEXNER

AF/MCE

December 4, 1936

Dear Professor Veblen:

Thank you for the two letters in
reference to Professor Bohr. I am delighted that
this has been satisfactorily arranged.

Ever sincerely,

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

Professor Oswald Veblen
Fine Hall
Princeton, New Jersey

AF/MCE

COPY FOR THE INFORMATION OF DR. FLEXNER

December 1, 1936

Dear Professor Bohr:

We are sorry that you will not be able to stay more than a week in Princeton, but we are of course delighted to have you here at all.

In order to be quite definite, I repeat that the understanding now is that you will spend the week of February 7-14 in Princeton, and will receive an honorarium of \$250. The subjects announced for your lectures will be two lectures on "The general problem of measurements in atomic theory", and one on your "Recent work on transmutations of atomic nuclei". Of course if you should decide to change the subjects of the lectures for any reason this would be quite acceptable. But everyone would be interested in the subjects which you have proposed.

Yours sincerely,

Oswald Veblen

Professor Niels Bohr
Universitetets Institut for
Teoretisk Fysik,
Elegdamsvej 15,
Copenhagen Ø, Denmark
OV:GB

THE INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY
SCHOOL OF MATHEMATICS
FINE HALL
PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

November 30, 1936

Dear Doctor Flexner:

I wonder whether this is an opportune time for reminding you of the question of our status in Fine Hall. I should like to have it established on the basis of rights rather than of privileges. To take one example among several:

At present I ^{would} have to appeal to Professors Harry Smyth and/or Tracy Thomas in order to secure the parking privilege for a member of the Institute. In my opinion a certain number of parking permits should be available for members of the Institute without further discussion. This is, of course, rather a minor question, but it illustrates the general principle. A number of weeks have elapsed since any special case has been discussed by me with these gentlemen and it should now be possible by looking over a list of the permits issued for the Palmer-Fine area to see how the present arrangement works out in practice.

Yours sincerely,

Oswald Veblen

Oswald Veblen

Dr. Abraham Flexner
P.O. Box 631
Princeton, N.J.
OV:GB

THE INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY
SCHOOL OF MATHEMATICS
FINE HALL
PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

November 25, 1936

Dear Doctor Flexner:

Thanks for the copy of your letter to MacDuffee which I have just received. It occurs to me that you might be interested in the following extract from a letter which MacDuffee wrote me:

"President Frank has given me permission to accept your offer of a year at the Institute, which I am very glad to do. He says he won't know exactly where the money will come from until the budget is adopted, perhaps not until next summer, but that he will get it somewhere."

I did not think of sending it to you before, but it now occurs to me that this is a good example of the spirit of cooperation that we are encountering in connection with these grants.

Sincerely yours,

Oswald Veblen
Oswald Veblen 9.13.

Dr. Abraham Flexner
P.O. Box 631
Princeton, N.J.
OV:GB

THE INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY
SCHOOL OF MATHEMATICS
FINE HALL
PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

November 21, 1936

Dear Doctor Flexner:

The arrangements are now complete for issuing a formal invitation (on the recommendation of the mathematical group) to Professor Cyrus C. MacDuffee of the University of Wisconsin to be a temporary member of the Institute during the year 1937-8. The exact amount of the stipend depends upon the considerations set forth in the following paragraph of a letter from Professor MacDuffee:

"My salary is something that requires more than mathematics to figure out. The nominal salary is \$5,000, but we have a waiver system which brings it down to \$4,140. for this year. The figure for next year will be somewhere between those bounds, no one knows where."

I would suggest that the letter to MacDuffee state that the amount of the stipend will be equal to the part of his salary paid by the University of Wisconsin but not more than \$2,500.

Yours sincerely,

Oswald Veblen

Dr. Abraham Flexner
20 Nassau Street
Princeton, N.J.
OV:GB

C O P Y

November 14 1936

Dear Professor Veblen,

I thank you for the kind letter from you and Professor Eisenhart and look forward very much to come to Princeton according to your kind invitation. I am sorry, however, that it will hardly be possible for me to stay in Princeton for more than a week, as on account of my duties here I shall not be able to leave Copenhagen as early as I hoped when we last summer in Tisvilde talked about my visit to America. I might propose to be in Princeton in the week from February 7th til 14th, and during that time to give three lectures: two on the general problem of measurements in atomic theory and one on my recent work on transmutations of atomic nuclei. Above all, of course, I greet the opportunity of discussions with you and your collaborators at the Institute for Advanced Study and to learn about the progress of experimental investigations in the laboratories of the Princeton University.

(Signed) NIELS BOHR

Sunday 4/8/36

November 11, 1936

Dear Professor Veblen:

I awoke this morning with the strong conviction that I am by no means as clever as I thought, for, if anybody was ever completely taken in, I was taken in by you fellows last night, and it is not the least satisfying feature of the whole business that I had been since Sunday congratulating myself upon my superior cleverness. Well, it is never too late to learn, and I now once more have been taught that it is well for a man not to think too highly of his own wits.

Aside from this I was very deeply touched by the spirit which was shown by the members of the various groups last night. I think I must have been extremely clumsy in expressing and showing how deeply I was touched, and I shall be grateful to you if, as occasion offers, you tell your associates ^{that} what they did and the way they did it pleased me far beyond anything that I could say or do on the spur of the moment last night. To have with my associates the informal relationship which came out in that incident gives me greater satisfaction than anything that has happened since I came to Princeton to join you and them in this new enterprise. It shows that we have created a spirit of camaraderie which affects not only the professors but includes me, and my one regret is that the women like your wife and Anne and others, who have done their part in the same spirit, could not also have been present.

All this, as you have a chance, you can make clear as you and your

Professor Veblen

November 11, 1936

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associates laugh over the incident at tea within the next few days, but it is not unfitting that I should add something that is meant for you alone.

I should be very distressed if I thought that you could possibly misunderstand the letter which I sent you because last night's incident was much more characteristic than anything else that has happened. No matter whether you and I differ on a matter of detail, I do not for a moment lose sight of the fact that you are the maker of the School of Mathematics and without that school, fashioned as you have fashioned it, the other schools would lack an ideal towards which they can strive. On the other hand, let me ask you this: I am not of the common type of college or university president. Tell me quite candidly always what is in your mind. If it involves far-reaching plans, do as I suggested in my recent letter. Put them on paper, and give me a chance to think of them, for I am living in a very high atmosphere for me, and I need time to think propositions over, for, until our endowment is complete, the financial side of every move needs to be carefully considered. I don't want ever to get into the position of institutions which are blocked by the lack of a few thousand dollars. I can readily understand that in the past it may have been necessary for you to feel your way carefully and that, if you had said everything that was in your mind, you might have accomplished far less than you have, but you need not employ such caution with me. You can be perfectly frank without fear that even an ambitious plan will weaken my confidence in the ultimate wisdom of your judgment. I want also, if I can, to reassure you about the University. No one but myself knows the kind of helpful cooperation which we have received, in most instances without the expenditure of a cent, from the Princeton authorities. Hardly a day passes that they do not do something for us that we simply could not do for ourselves, and they do it modestly, unostentatiously, and without asking or expecting any return. I should

Professor Veblen

November 11, 1936

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like, therefore, to get our relations with the University on such a matter of fact basis that the question of relationship is non-existent, and that is what I had in mind when I deprecated a formal discussion by any group or all the groups as to the question of the relationship between the Institute and the University. Of course, as we grow, problems will arise, and we shall have to talk them over, but such problems as have arisen up to now have always been capable of settlement in an informal fashion, and that seems to me to be under the circumstances and for the time being ideal.

It would, I think, surprise you, if I told you, as I think I had better not tell anyone, that one or two little matters of friction which have arisen have been deprecated to me not only by the members of the Institute but equally and with perhaps even more emphasis by members of the University. Where so many persons are gathered together absolutely perfect harmony, never broken by the idiosyncrasy of any person, can't be expected. It can't even be expected in a small family, but it has no significance and must not be magnified. So please consider this letter in the spirit of its content as a supplement to the more reasoned and formal letter which I sent you on Monday, ^{Nov 2} and do not for a moment forget that, as long as I live, I shall never forget or fail to recognize the outstanding importance of your contribution towards making the Institute in point of standard and personnel in mathematics and in other subjects what it is today and what I hope it may continue to be indefinitely.

With all good wishes and very deep appreciation,

Sincerely yours,

Professor Oswald Veblen
Fine Hall
Princeton, New Jersey

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

AF:ESB

November 7, 1936

Dear Professor Veblen:

I have your note of November 5. I was surprised, as I told you in my reply, on reading your memorandum entitled "Building for School of Mathematics", to find that you had gone so far afield as to take in chemistry and biology without any previous communication to me in respect to this extension. Now to my further surprise I learn that your imagination has gone so far as to play a decisive part in your thinking not only about the future of the School of Mathematics but of the relationship of the Institute to the University. I feel that I should not have been presented with a problem in terms of space when, back of the problem of space, there were, unknown to me, implications of which I had had no intimation.

At the present moment the School of Mathematics is utilizing well nigh the entire income from the original endowment of the Institute. The other two seeds which I was anxious to plant, though there was some difference of opinion as to the wisdom of my recommendations, are existing on a minimal basis and will naturally be entitled to prior consideration in the event of any substantial increase of income. I value very highly your fertile, fundamental thinking, but, as there is no immediate likelihood, even should space have been obtained, of any such expansion as you apparently have been thinking of, I should like to suggest that you commit your reflections and suggestions to paper in the form of a memorandum to which I and my successor can have access when the moment you contemplate

Professor Veblen

November 7, 1936

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arrives, and I hope it may before too long. As far as your colleagues are concerned, I should think it wise informally to impress upon them the importance of doing the utmost with the opportunities which you now possess, for, short of a surprise, these opportunities are not likely to be increased for some time to come; and the opportunities must really be very great if a man like G.H. Hardy asks me directly the question as to whether we really wish a monopoly on mathematics in Princeton.

I feel even more strongly as to your intimation that you have been thinking of the relationship of the Institute to the University and that you would like to consult your colleagues on that point also. I should regard any discussion on that subject as inopportune and ill-judged. Knowledge that such a discussion had taken place would almost inevitably spread and would do incalculable harm. The relations between the Institute and the University are very intimate, and they are important to each other in ways in which you and your mathematical associates do not and cannot possibly know. A discussion on the part of the mathematicians on that subject would be futile and might be harmful. It would be like pulling up a tender plant after a short period to find out whether it is growing. Should it ever become necessary, as I hope it may never become necessary, to have a faculty discussion on this point, the discussion could not be limited to the mathematical group. It would be called by me, and would be attended by all groups. I should preside and actively participate, for the very obvious reason that, leaving all else aside, I am far better informed than any one in any of the groups regarding the substance of the relationship. Any move that at this moment suggests that that relationship be modified, when it is the rock on which we now rest, and anything that could possibly interfere with the type of collaboration which we are trying to work out would be deplorable. In my opinion, therefore, and this is the result of very careful reflection, the whole subject should be

Professor Veblen

November 7, 1936

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dropped and the entire incident regarded as closed. Should the subject be mentioned by some one else, you can easily sidetrack it. At the moment we can not expand in any direction or for any purpose. Let us, therefore, be as productive as possible in our individual capacities and in addition do what we can for those who come here for inspiration and guidance.

I trust that you will not misunderstand this letter. You surely know that I set the highest value upon the services which you have rendered to me personally and to the Institute, but your memorandum and your letter have both disturbed me, and it seemed to me only right that I should put you quite candidly in full possession of every doubt that has crossed my mind since receiving them.

With all good wishes,

Sincerely yours,

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

Professor Oswald Veblen
Fine Hall
Princeton, New Jersey

AF:ESB

P.S.

November 9, 1936

Since writing the above letter, I have had a call from one of the most important men in the Princeton faculty in reference to a specific topic, but without any intention upon his part or mine we drifted into a discussion of the mutual importance to each other of the University and the Institute. I confess I was amazed to find the enthusiasm with which he regarded the relationship and his anxiety to contribute everything in his power to its permanence and its interaction. I believe that this represents the general sentiment of the Princeton faculty, and it surely would not become any member of the Institute, which has been a beneficiary of Princeton hospitality, to raise any question that affects the fundamental relations between the two institutions.

November 7, 1936

Dear Professor Veblen:

The phrase to which you called my attention in my report, namely, "to take the same action in Miss Goldman's case as in Professor Capps'", referred simply to the payment of an annual honorarium, because at the present time we are not in position to add to our budget anything that could be called a salary in dealing with persons of their eminence. These motions, which were drawn up by me and which were in Mrs. Bailey's hands, in reference to the two appointments, read as follows:

"1. That Dr. Edward Capps be appointed Visiting Professor in the School of Humanistic Studies for one year, beginning October 1, 1936, with an honorarium of \$200.00 a month.

2. That Dr. Hetty Goldman be appointed Professor in the School of Humanistic Studies, beginning November 1, 1936, with an honorarium of \$200.00 a month."

There was, Mrs. Bailey says, a good deal of talking going on at the time these appointments were confirmed. However, as far as letters received by us from the members of the Board are concerned, there does not seem to have been any question except your reference to Dr. Goldman's appointment and a question raised by Mr. Maass in reference to Dr. Swann's appointment. As a matter of fact, both appointments were intended to be indefinite in tenure, as all staff appointments are.

Professor Oswald Veblen
Fine Hall
Princeton, New Jersey

Sincerely yours,

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

THE INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY
SCHOOL OF MATHEMATICS
FINE HALL
PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

November 5, 1936

Dear Doctor Flexner:

On thinking over your letter dated October 31 but received yesterday, I find that the expectation that our quarters in Fine Hall would be extended either on the Campus proper or into a building across the street, has played a decisive part in my thought about the future of the School of Mathematics and its relation to the University. Since it now appears that this expectation is not to be realized, my opinion on some of our fundamental problems has changed. I have no doubt that the same will be true of my mathematical colleagues, and therefore feel that I had better consult with them before replying to your letter. I hope that this will meet with your approval.

Yours sincerely,

Oswald Veblen

Oswald Veblen

Dr. Abraham Flexner
P.O. Box 631
Princeton, N.J.
OV:GB

THE INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY
SCHOOL OF MATHEMATICS
FINE HALL
PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

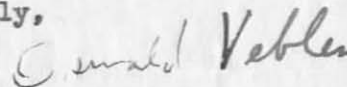
November 5, 1936

Dear Mrs. Bailey:

In response to your request for corrections to the Minutes of the last regular meeting of the Trustees of the Institute, I would submit the following:

With reference to the motion recorded on page 16 with regard to Dr. Hetty Goldman,- my recollection is that the motion was not to appoint Miss Goldman a professor, but rather to take the action which is described in Dr. Flexner's report as it appears on page 6; that is, to make an annual appointment analogous to that of Professor Capps. In the motion as made, according to my recollection, there was no mention of any title.

Yours sincerely,



Oswald Veblen

Mrs. Esther S. Bailey
20 Nassau Street
Princeton, N.J.
OV:GB

November 2, 1936

Dear Professor Veblen:

I have given very thoughtful consideration to the gratifying memorandum submitted in behalf of the faculty by you and Mr. Riefler. I am inclined to believe that the attitude which the faculty group recommends is sound and that we should make no commitment until in the course of nature it becomes unavoidable.

The one change I would suggest is the following, that in place of my communicating such ideas as float into my mind from time to time as I think of the problem, I will embody them in confidential memoranda which I shall seal and deposit in Mrs. Bailey's care. In that way I shall feel free to change my mind, and there will be absolutely no danger of leakage which inadvertently might take place under the method suggested by the group. This is of course not meant, as you well understand, as a reflection upon their discretion but rather as a means of enabling me to retract or modify my opinions in the light of experience and further thought.

I am very deeply touched by the attitude of the whole group towards me, and I trust that for the few remaining years nothing will ever disturb the spirit which has prevailed within the Institute and between the Institute and the University.

Will you let Mr. Riefler see this and use your own discretion as to communicating it to the other members of the faculty group?

Very sincerely yours,

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

Professor Oswald Veblen

October 31, 1936

Dear Professor Veblen:

I have repeatedly read the statement which you and Professor Alexander sent me regarding accommodations and have given a very considerable amount of thought to the entire problem.

One or two thoughts are clear: we have no present or, as far as I can see, future reason for taking chemistry and biology into consideration at all. It will be many years before our endowment is such that we can hope to enter the experimental sciences and, if and when we do so, some very large questions are involved going far beyond the provision of studies for the professors which those subjects need. The question reduces itself, therefore, to the possibility of procuring three large studies and two more small ones for the present staff.

My inquiries lead me to think that, if additional facilities were provided, they would not be occupied by members of both staffs but simply by members of the Institute staff, and this would involve a separation which I think would be unfortunate for all concerned. For the present, therefore, inasmuch as an extension of the facilities connected with Fine Hall is not feasible, I think that it is the lesser of two evils if we restrict our enrollment scrupulously to, we will say, a number around forty by excluding persons who have not obtained the Ph.D. degree and who have not given plain indication of unusual ability. It may be that the

Professor Veblen

October 31, 1936

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number will fall below forty, but I should not regard that as a misfortune.

It may also happen that the opportunity to obtain someone like Dirac may make it run above forty - a situation with which I think we can cope, as things now stand.

I have not lost sight of the fact to which, I believe, Alexander first called my attention that numbers count for less in the Institute than in the Graduate School, for example, because of the fact that the Institute members are often very mature and able and hence organize small groups within themselves, but it would be a grave error, I think, to push this type of thing too far, for it might ultimately come about that the members would be teaching or conferring or having contacts with one another rather than with the mature and permanent group which really attracted them to Princeton. When I think of what my intercourse with President Gilman, Professor Gildersleeve, and others meant to me fifty years ago at the Hopkins and what Simon's informal and frequent contact with Dr. Welch meant to him almost as long ago, it would seem to me that, if the men who are attracted here are to get the most out of the opportunities which they seek, they should have abundant opportunity to come in contact with the Institute faculty. They have this opportunity in the form of lectures and seminars, but this is not enough. They should have in addition to it every opportunity for informal contact. Now if informal contacts are well developed and easy, then the number of persons in the Institute is a matter of prime consideration from the standpoint of the professor, for if, for example, we say that there are seventy-five or one hundred men in the Institute who are to have such opportunity, then each of the permanent professors would be completely swamped as far as their own thinking is concerned. I do not therefore see any reason for changing the position which I took when I urged Mr. Bamberger and Mrs. Fuld to establish the Institute and which I have reiterated in every bulletin issued to the public and in every report read to the Board, namely, that the Institute is a small affair and that, while there are a few stated lectures

Professor Veblen

October 31, 1936

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or seminars, its real uniqueness consists of the opportunity for men not only to confer with one another but to have easy access to the professors without feeling that they are making any undue demands upon their time. I cannot but feel, therefore, that the question of numbers is an important one and that our influence in the long run will be the greater if we have a small number well selected who really feel the influence and stimulus of the professors than if we have a larger number whose opportunities in this direction are limited.

Without any mention of the situation of the mathematicians I have talked this thing over with the humanists and with the economists, and I find their thinking coincides with mine. I cannot see that the subjects really make any difference, whether it is pathology or physiology or mathematics or epigraphy or economics. The great thing is that men who possess unusual thinking capacity such as we have brought together should be easy of access to the persons who come here to spend a period with them, that is, alas, really too brief and that, therefore, must be utilized to its maximum.

There is another point which is suggested to me by the attitude of certain members of the Board on the question of stipends. As you remember, Dr. Weed objects to the stipends on principle. Since the Board meeting he has written me a long letter on the subject arguing his point, and I have replied, defending the stipends. However, another Trustee has orally taken the thing up with me and has told me that not only he but other members of the Board question the wisdom or necessity of the stipends. As long as we utilize the stipends to bring together a small number of carefully chosen men, we can hold our ground, but if the numbers increase, it is obvious that the abolition of stipends would still leave us with as many workers or members as, in my judgment, we should endeavor to bring together. There is, therefore, the possibility of which I think it would be a

Professor Veblen

October 31, 1936

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mistake for you to lose sight that the mere suggestion of increased numbers and the provision of additional space for increased numbers may tend to deprive you of an important selective weapon which you and your associates possess in the form of stipends.

However, the whole problem is not quite as simple as the number given would seem to indicate. I have in the last two weeks talked with each one of our registered members. Curiously enough, the first four or five told me that they were working with Princeton professors - Eisenhart, Lefschetz, Bochner, Wigner, etc. This would appear to amount to a virtual reduction of our numbers, though an increase in the Princeton number - an excellent situation. However, I asked Eisenhart to ascertain whether or not he and his colleagues would recommend an addition to our numbers which might mean an addition to theirs, and their answer was negative, greatly as they appreciate and value the kind of persons we are bringing in, but they have their regular academic duties to perform, and they have got to watch numbers. Hence an addition to our number which might amount to an addition to their number is to be avoided. On the other hand, the same argument works the other way around. Some - I do not know how many - of the Princeton men follow the lectures and seminars of our faculty group and doubtless get into conference with them so that the Princeton enrollment may therefore virtually increase our own. Between us the two faculties have in the neighborhood of seventy advanced students of mathematics. We may, I believe, leave it to other universities to do the rest without feeling that we are doing our fair share of the higher mathematical teaching in this country.

In all fairness I ought also to mention another point, that is, the actual burden of teaching any fixed number of students is bound to vary from year to year with the caliber of the members. Nobody can say in advance that

Professor Veblen

October 31, 1936

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forty men this year will create precisely the burden that will be constituted by forty men next year, but over a long period of years I think we are bound to assume that the burden on the two faculties and the opportunities in the two faculties to carry on their own work and to maintain an easy and close and informal relationship with men will approximate the same level. In my conversation with the members I noticed in a good many cases a reluctance on their part to approach the members of the faculty in a personal way. I assured them that this is one of the essential features of the Institute's organization and urged them to have no hesitation in so doing, but I could see that that aspect of the relationship between professor and member has not as yet established itself as clearly as we had intended, and this may very readily be due to a feeling of consideration on the part of members because they realize there are so many other mathematical workers in Fine Hall. A professor has abundant means of protecting himself against a member who may have been inadvertently admitted. A positive effort may be required in Fine Hall to make the men feel that within reason and without unduly infringing upon the professor's time for his own original work, counsel, and guidance are meant to be provided, but the greater the number, the harder it will be to realize this feature of our organization by which I myself hold great store.

The point of view which I have expressed in this letter is as a matter of fact stipulated by Mr. Bamberger and Mrs. Fuld in their letter of gift.

I have continued my investigations into the problem of the Gateway Club. The financial burden resting upon the club is in the neighborhood of \$35,000, far in excess of its value, and the University has, I am persuaded after thorough and confidential investigation, a legitimate and urgent use not only for it but for one or two other buildings of the same character. I am not in position at this moment to explain precisely what these uses are.

Won't you share this with Professor Alexander?

Very sincerely yours,

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

(over)
Professor Oswald Veblen

P.S.

In order to provide more space for the assistants it will be possible to rent an additional room at 20 Nassau Street in which two or three of them could work if that should be worth while.

A.F.

Fine Hall, Princeton, October 26, 1936

Memorandum for Messrs. Aydelotte and Maass:

1. On Saturday afternoon I saw Professor Russell, and found that he is leaving Princeton for the West in about three weeks. He is desirous of seeing Dr. Flexner, and is going to invite the latter to his house so that they can discuss questions on the ground. I have communicated this to Dr. Flexner.

2. I talked with Mr. Paris, explaining that with regard to the land the present policy is first, to conserve what facilities it contains and to try to use these in such a way that the Institute would at least not lose money on it; and second, to make a very modest beginning in the direction of improving the land by reforestation, etc. I also suggested that we should be glad to make an arrangement by which Mr. Paris would continue to cultivate the fields which he already has under cultivation, and perhaps extend his operations to other fields. He pointed out that it is not reasonable to expect a return from fields which have been lying waste, until some time and money have been spent upon them. However, he undertook to study the question and to make a proposal (1) to cultivate as many fields as he reasonably could, and (2) to develop a modest plan of improvement which would not cost the Institute more than \$1000 a year. I am hopeful that we can secure his cooperation along these lines. In the course of the conversation he said that he knew of a man who would be a suitable tenant for the house which we looked over on Saturday morning, and agreed to suggest to this man that he should see Mr. Bergen about it.

3. With regard to the utilization of the Olden Manor, my wife and I got some very helpful advice from President Aydelotte, as a result of which we probably shall not initiate any general discussion of the question, but make a few inquiries and see whether it is possible to make a beginning in a small way which would not commit the Institute too far in any direction.

OV:GB

O. V.

Oswald Veblen

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THE INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY

SCHOOL OF MATHEMATICS

FINE HALL

PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

October 7, 1936

Dear Doctor Flexner:

The arrangement with Professor ^{T.} Vijayaraghavan was made in October, 1935. It was that he should be invited to give one lecture under the auspices of the University, and one under the auspices of the Institute, the honorarium for each to be \$100. It was necessary to make the arrangement then because he was being invited to this country under the auspices of the American Mathematical Society.

I took the precaution of getting it on record, when the final arrangements were made in March of the present year, that everything had been approved by Dean Eisenhart. I cannot recall that the matter was brought to your attention or Mrs. Bailey's. It is quite possible that I did not mention it, under the assumption that occasional lectures and visits by distinguished mathematicians would be looked after in the way which had become habitual.

At present the understanding is that he shall come here and stay for about a week, probably at the Nassau Club, and give his lectures on October 27 and 28 at 4:45 p.m. on each day.

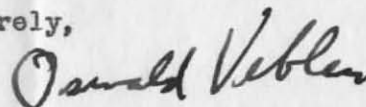
I should like, if possible, to speak with either you or Mrs. Bailey about the proper way of taking care of this. Perhaps I can do so this afternoon.

Dr. Abraham Flexner - 2

October 7, 1936

I should also like to raise the question of having an appropriation of \$1,000 for entertainment and occasional lectures included in next year's budget, and perhaps earmarked for that purpose at the next meeting of the Board of Trustees. It would be very helpful to reduce to a minimum the amount of formality required in making such arrangements.

Yours sincerely,



Oswald Veblen

Dr. Abraham Flexner
20 Nassau Street
Princeton
OV:GB

August 25, 1936

Dear Mrs. Veblen:

Inasmuch as Anne is busy with the first steps towards breaking camp and I have at the moment little to do, I am answering your extraordinarily interesting letter from Vevey in her stead. We had also received a letter from Mrs. Weyl written in Germany and of course with very great restraint, but it was easy to see that your detailed and vivid account only put into plain words what Mrs. Weyl meant to convey.

There seems to be no way of grasping at one and the same time the peaceful life we lead here in the Canadian woods and the turmoil and hatreds and unreason which are sweeping over Europe. We almost dread to open The Times as day by day it reports civil war in Spain, conspiracies in Russia, and the end of the Olympic truce in Germany.

There is little to report about ourselves. The summer has not been quite up to its high standard in point of weather, as the heat of early July was followed by weeks of unusual chill, and for two months the awful drought destroyed not only the crops but gave the leaves on the trees the appearance of late autumn. There were forest fires all around us, and the air was so thick with smoke that for days and days and days it was impossible to tell whether the sun was shining or not. The welcome rains have, however, come at last. The fires are extinguished, but it is too late to help the farmers or the truck gardeners who supply our needs from day to day.

With Jean and Eleanor both abroad most of the summer the camp has been very quiet. Johnnie was here, as you doubtless know, for a few weeks, and Professor Irving and an artist friend paid us a flying visit from Muskoka. With these exceptions Anne and Mrs. Bailey and I have held the fort alone. We have seen of course the Kirklands and the Meritts and a few other campers whom I think you and your husband do not know, but for the most part we have spent the mornings at work and the afternoons, weather permitting, either playing pingpong or walking through the woods or canoeing.

Jean returned from England a week earlier than she had anticipated, and she and Paul have had a week here. Eleanor is leaving Southampton tomorrow and is due to arrive in New York on the thirty-first of August or next day. This explains why we are going to New York earlier than usual. We are both anxious to see her, and of course Anne wants to get the apartment in order for her use so we shall go down in two divisions - half of us Friday and the other half Saturday, arriving in New York early the following morning.

We have had letters from the Einsteins, both Herr Professor and his wife. Professor Einstein is happy with his sailing and his Rechnen. Mrs. Einstein has not been very well, but she has had, so she says, perfectly satisfactory medical attention in Saranac and is hopeful that the good results will show in the course of the winter. Margot is of course with them.

This is no such letter as you wrote to us. It rather reminds me of

Mrs. Veblen August 25, 1936

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the old adage: "Happy is the nation (or the family) that has no history" - and this summer our history is brief and uneventful.

Anne joins me in affectionate greetings to you and Professor Veblen and in all good wishes for the remainder of your holiday and the year to follow.

Ever sincerely,

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

Mrs. Oswald Veblen
Brown, Shipley and Company
123 Pall Mall
London, England

AF:ESB

1936

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Form 2

~~April 30, 1936~~

May 1, 1936

Professor and Mrs. Oswald Veblen
S.S. Britannic
Pier 54, N. R. (West 14th Street)
New York City

Best wishes for a delightful voyage and a happy summer
We have had a wonderful year and Anne and I appreciate deeply how greatly
you both contributed to its success

Abraham Flexner

(Charge Institute for Advanced Study)

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THE INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY

SCHOOL OF MATHEMATICS

FINE HALL

PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

April 20, 1936

Dear Mrs. Bailey:

I have tried to recall such parts of my extemporaneous remarks at the trustees' meeting as might be of interest if written down in the minutes. The result is the following modification of what you sent me in your letter dated April 17:

Mr. Veblen made an oral report regarding the School of Mathematics, remarking that the economic and political conditions of the world have doubtless greatly accelerated its growth and indicating his belief that these general conditions should make it possible to develop certain other fields with ~~like~~ success. ^{similar} The numbers in the School of Mathematics are ^{now} larger than originally anticipated. ~~Contrary to what might be expected by analogy with other educational enterprises, this decreased rather than increased the responsibility of the individual professor. The group is so large and contains so many brilliant individuals that subgroups of those interested in particular problems form spontaneously. Each person concerns himself with his own problems and confers with others who are interested, and no professor is under any compulsion to give his attention where it is not to his advantage. If instead of sixty members of the School there were ten or fifteen, the professors would feel a concern about each individual, and the load of responsibility would be very much greater than it is.~~ ^{more} for

In response to a question, Mr. Veblen said a few words about Topology, which is one of the subjects for which Princeton is famous in scientific circles, and described some of the ways in which the Institute's mathematical group cooperates with other groups in different parts of the world. ^{These} ~~These~~ activities are of a spontaneous nature, but ~~are~~ greatly facilitated by the presence of the ever changing, but thus far extraordinarily able and interesting, group of ~~temporary~~ ^{annual} members.

This is probably more extensive than you wish, but you can cut it down.

Yours sincerely,

Oswald Veblen

Mrs. Esther S. Bailey
20 Nassau Street
Princeton, N.J.
OV:GB

Oswald Veblen

April 17, 1936

My dear Professor Veblen:

Doctor Flexner has asked me in preparing the minutes of the recent meeting to report briefly your extemporaneous remarks regarding the School of Mathematics. I submit the following for your suggestions before incorporating it in the minutes:

Mr. Veblen made a verbal report regarding the School of Mathematics calling attention to the fact that, although it was important to keep the school relatively small, it had resulted that with larger numbers than were originally expected the professors had less responsibility and that there were groups and sub-groups formed spontaneously which were interested in particular problems, all of which was made possible by the larger ~~than~~ than smaller numbers. He pointed out that each person went about his own problems and conferred with others who were interested and no professor was under any compulsion to give his attention where it was not to his advantage, and that this method was possible because the numbers were somewhat large, that, if instead of sixty in the school there were ten or fifteen, the professors would feel a concern about each individual, and the load of responsibility would be very much greater than it is.

With much appreciation, I am

Sincerely yours,

ESTHER S. BAILEY

Professor Oswald Veblen
58 Battle Road
Princeton, New Jersey

April 7, 1936

Dear Professor Veblen:

I have yours of the 3rd in reference to Mr. Givens. Naturally, my approval follows automatically.

I have also your letter of the 16th regarding Dr. Duren. I am delighted that he can come to the Institute and I also hope that Schoenberg will obtain his post in his absence. Your suggestion with respect to the fee of Dr. Duren will, of course, be followed.

Sincerely yours,

Professor Oswald Veblen
Fine Hall
Princeton, New Jersey

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

AF/mcc

THE INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY
SCHOOL OF MATHEMATICS
FINE HALL
PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

April 6, 1936

Dear Doctor Flexner:

I should like to recommend that Dr. William L. Duren, Jr., be admitted to the Institute for the year 1936-37 and that the tuition fee be remitted in his case.

You will remember, perhaps, that I told you about this case some days ago. Dr. Duren is taking leave of absence from Tulane University at considerable financial sacrifice. I have recommended Schoenberg for the temporary position which will be created by Duren's absence. There is some hope that this will give Schoenberg a chance to work into a permanent position.

Yours sincerely,

Oswald Veblen

Oswald Veblen

Dr. Abraham Flexner
20 Nassau Street
Princeton, N.J.
OV:GB

April 1, 1936

Dear Professor Veblen:

For the sake of a record I am replying to yours of March 30. I am sorry that Professor Cartan cannot accept the invitation as you extended it to him. I would suggest, as I said over the telephone, that the sum set aside for him might now be used to offer at once a grant to Professor Morse's choice, whose name I forget, and that, as you suggested, you talk to Bohr when you see him abroad. There is no reason why you should not write Professor Levi-Civita, the sum of \$6,000 being available for one purpose or another.

I am returning Professor Cartan's letter.

Sincerely yours,

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

Professor Oswald Veblen
Fine Hall
Princeton, New Jersey

AF/MCE

April 3, 1936

Dear Professor Veblen:

Thank you very much for letting me see the letter from President Sieg. I do not know him, but it does look as if the ferment were working in the "wild West".

Ever sincerely,

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

Professor Oswald Veblen
Fine Hall
Princeton, New Jersey

AP:RSB

THE INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY
PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

Fine Hall, April 1, 1936

Dear Doctor Flexner:

I thought you might be interested in the enclosed letter which is at least a sign that things are beginning to stir a little bit in the Northwest.

Yours sincerely,

O.V.
Oswald Veblen

Dr. Abraham Flexner
20 Nassau Street
Princeton, N.J.
OV:GB

THE INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY

SCHOOL OF MATHEMATICS

FINE HALL

PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

March 30, 1936

Dear Doctor Flexner:

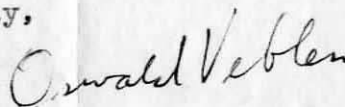
I have received the letter which I enclose herewith from Professor Cartan. I will of course tell him in reply that the University and the Institute are both closed in September, so that there is no chance of making use of his kind offer to lecture at that time.

In view of the action of our trustees which authorized invitations to all three -- Hardy, Levi-Civita and Cartan -- it would seem to be in order now to write to Levi-Civita in the same way that I wrote to Hardy and Cartan. Also, since it now appears that there is a chance that Nils Bohr would be available, a great deal could be said in favor of substituting his name for that of Cartan. A visit from him might be quite significant for the development of theoretical physics both in the Institute and in the University, and I know that it would be welcomed by everyone connected with the University.

However, in view of what you wrote me in your letter of March 27, I feel that you would like to consider both the Levi-Civita and the Bohr question again before anything is done. So I am merely reporting the situation to you, with a request that we may have a chance to talk it over sometime in the near future.

Please return the Cartan letter as I have not yet answered it.

Yours sincerely,



Oswald Veblen

Dr. Abraham Flexner
20 Nassau Street
Princeton, N.J.
OV:GB

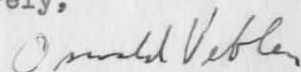
THE INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY
PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

Fine Hall, March 30, 1936

Dear Mrs. Bailey:

I shall be glad to attend the Trustees' Meeting in Fine Hall at 11:15 a.m., Monday, April 13.

Yours sincerely,



Oswald Veblen

Mrs. Esther S. Bailey
20 Nassau Street
Princeton, N.J.

March 27, 1936

Dear Professor Veblen:

I am just this moment free, and Mrs. Bailey has reported to me the conversation over the telephone with you.

I will leave it to you and Mr. Maass to deal with Mr. Maxwell inasmuch as I have left all these property matters in the hands of the Committee on Buildings and Grounds.

It is, I regret to say, impossible for me to make any commitment, even the conditional commitment, respecting further stipends or appropriations. I have explained to you and to others that the situation in Washington being complicated as it is and the tax situation in New Jersey - we hold \$3,000,000 worth of tax-exempt securities, and the New Jersey Legislature and the Governor are at loggerheads, so that there is no telling how much our income from this source will shrink - are such that I am unwilling at this time to incur even a conditional obligation beyond last year's total budget, which I feel sure that we can meet without difficulty. I regret this situation, but I am heartily glad to find myself in a position where short of a financial earthquake we are safe from financial worry.

I may add that I have had requests from persons in the other schools to which I would have to accede if I went further with the School of Mathematics.

Sincerely yours,

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

Professor Oswald Veblen
Fine Hall, Princeton, N. J.

March 26, 1936

Dear Professor Veblen:

Thank you for yours of the 23rd in reference to having an assistant for Miss Blake. The request seems to me an entirely reasonable one, and I feel sure that we can wiggle it into the budget without departing from the principles on which our next year's budget, I think, ought to be constructed, as I explained to you and von Neumann yesterday. Langfeld has asked me if there is any possibility of a job down here for a young woman, Miss Rounds, who is to be married to one of the instructors in his department. She lives in East Orange, and Langfeld has Miss Blake's South Orange address so that Miss Rounds can call on Miss Blake probably over the week-end. I think the first year the job might be made to run from October 1 to July 1, as the summer months seem to be fairly vacant. In this way, Miss Rounds - or whoever may be selected - would be getting a higher monthly salary and would have a good long vacation.

Sincerely yours,

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

Professor Oswald Veblen
Fine Hall
Princeton, New Jersey

AF:ESB

THE INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY

SCHOOL OF MATHEMATICS

FINE HALL

PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

March 23, 1936

Dear Doctor Flexner:

This note is intended as a memorandum of our conversation last week. The mimeographed notes, which contain a record of the work done in some of the lectures and seminars conducted by professors and other members of the Institute, have become very important. They are sold at a price merely covering cost of materials, and they have a considerable and growing circulation both locally and among universities and individuals in various parts of the world. With this the mechanical problems of production and distribution have become quite heavy. During the present year much of this work has been done by Dr. Taub, but as he is leaving us to take a permanent position at the University of Washington it will be necessary to make some provision for orderly continuance of the work. The University, which also issues such notes, contributes to the common enterprise the services of Professor Tucker in general supervision, and assignment of two or three part-time assistants to operate the mimeographing machine. Up to date the most practical suggestion is that Miss Blake should undertake much of this work done by Dr. Taub. This would make it necessary for her to farm out a good deal of the typing which she has done hitherto.

Earlier in the year we also discussed and agreed upon the desirability of giving more help in the preparation of manuscripts and notes to our more distinguished temporary members. The fact that this had not been

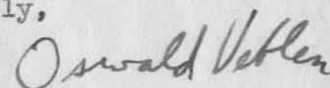
Dr. Abraham Flexner - 2

March 23, 1936

provided for in the budget made it awkward to put such a plan into operation during the present academic year.

Miss Blake and I estimate that if \$1000 were provided in the budget both of these additional enterprises could be taken care of. They are both in the nature of normal developments of the essential work of the School of Mathematics.

Yours sincerely,



Oswald Veblen

Dr. Abraham Flexner
20 Nassau Street
Princeton, N.J.
OV:GB

March 23, 1936

Dear Professor Veblen:

Many thanks for letting me see
Hardy's charming letter. I am delighted at
the prospect of his being with us for a term.

Ever sincerely,

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

Professor Oswald Veblen
Fine Hall
Princeton, New Jersey

AF/MCE

February 1, 1936

Dear Professor Veblen:

I have yours of the 28th with the enclosure regarding the International Mathematical Congress of 1940. If I get a chance to speak with Mr. Fosdick some time in the near future I shall take occasion to put him on his guard and to mention to him the alternative proposition which you and Lefschetz submit.

Ever sincerely,

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

Professor Oswald Veblen
Fine Hall
Princeton, New Jersey

AF/MCE

THE INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY

SCHOOL OF MATHEMATICS

FINE HALL

PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

January 28, 1936

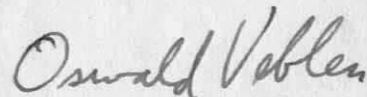
Dear Doctor Flexner:

I enclose herewith a memorandum on the question of an international mathematical congress which I mentioned to you a couple of weeks ago. At that time you intimated that you might be willing to take the matter up with Mr. Fosdick. In case you do so, I wish to mention the fact that Warren Weaver of the Rockefeller Foundation is one of the group in the Mathematical Society who are keen on holding the semi-centennial celebration. On the other hand, Lefschetz and I and some of the other people who are more seriously interested in the science itself, feel that such a celebration is both useless scientifically, and a waste of time and energy for all who are drawn into it. But it would be very difficult for us to refuse to take part because such an attitude would be generally misunderstood. We should like to deflect the movement into useful channels and the proposal which we are now making is the most promising one which we have been able to think of, but it obviously will require a certain amount of tact.

I don't want you to bother with this matter if it should cause you any real inconvenience. I had been intending to try to speak with Mr. Keppel about it, but was a bit discouraged by the fact that he seemed to be so occupied at present that it would be hard for an outsider like myself to get his attention.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Abraham Flexner
20 Nassau Street
Princeton, N.J.
OV:GB



Oswald Veblen

THE INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY
PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

Fine Hall, January 25, 1936

Dear Mrs. Bailey:

I hope you will pardon me for not having previously given you the formal notification that I expect to attend the Trustees' Meeting on Monday.

I enclose herewith a short note for Dr. Flexner which I believe ought to be brought to his attention before the meeting on Monday in case he feels it desirable to bring the matter up.

Yours sincerely,

Oswald Veblen

Mrs. Esther S. Bailey
20 Nassau Street
Princeton, N.J.

Oswald Veblen

MEMORANDUM REGARDING THE INTERNATIONAL MATHEMATICAL CONGRESS OF 1940

It is the custom to hold an international congress in mathematics every four years. It seems desirable that at the International Congress to be held this summer at Oslo an invitation should be given to hold the congress of 1940 or of 1944 in the United States. This we believe would be possible if the expense could be underwritten to the extent of \$25,000.

An invitation such as proposed, if made by representatives of the United States, would be in accord with the usual procedure. There is no permanent organization in charge of these international mathematical congresses analogous to the international unions in physics, astronomy, chemistry, etc., since mathematicians have felt such an organization unnecessary, there being practically no other co-operative work of an international character which needs to be done in mathematics. Consequently each congress is left to organize the next one.

The congress has never before been held in the United States, chiefly because of the expense. It was generally felt that it would be necessary to offer pecuniary inducements in order to bring any large number of distinguished European mathematicians to a congress so far from all the European centers, and I for one have always felt that this would be undignified. Conditions now have changed so that we feel that such inducements would no longer be necessary, and we think that a congress held in the United States would be likely to be a success. The expense involved would be chiefly for the publication of the Proceedings, for the clerical services required for the organization, and a reasonable amount for entertainment of delegates.

The Proceedings of previous congresses are books of permanent scientific value. It is reasonable to expect that the proceedings of our congress would be

a worthy continuation of this series. The interchange of ideas and opinions among scientists has brought forth valuable results at all previous congresses. Therefore I feel that the money asked for would produce direct and valuable scientific results.

I have talked the question over particularly with Professor Lefschetz, who is the President of the American Mathematical Society, because of a secondary though important consideration. Arrangements are being made for a celebration in 1938 of the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the American Mathematical Society. Both Professor Lefschetz and I feel that such celebrations are wasteful of time and energy and likely to be sterile so far as scientific results are concerned. It has occurred to us therefore that if we could deflect the energy which would go into this celebration into the holding of a mathematical congress, it would be a very decided scientific gain.

The arrangements for the semi-centennial celebration are rapidly taking form, and nothing has been done about the international congress proposal because of the difficulty of finding the funds. There is an understanding in the committee of the Mathematical Society which has the matter in charge that if the funds can be found within a couple of months, then it may be possible to substitute the congress proposal for the semi-centennial. But it would be necessary to act before the semi-centennial plans are much further advanced than they are now.

We see no possibility of raising the amount of money needed except by an appeal to one of the great foundations, for the Mathematical Society, the Research Council, and other scientific organizations interested in mathematics, are having their hands full to keep the mathematical periodicals afloat.

Any help or advice which you could give us in this matter would be greatly appreciated.

January 28, 1936

Oswald Veblen

THE INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY

SCHOOL OF MATHEMATICS

FINE HALL

PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

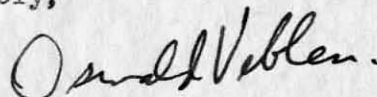
January 25, 1936

Dear Doctor Flexner:

I spoke with Dean Eisenhart last week about the possibility of a joint invitation of the University and the Institute to Professors Cartan, Hardy, and Levi-Civita, who are going to be in this country next fall on account of the Harvard Tercentenary. For various reasons he has not yet been able to give me a definite answer, and so I have not been able to make any definite report to you.

What I proposed to him was that the University and the Institute together should offer each of these gentlemen a stipend of \$2000 for the period ending with the Christmass recess or at some appropriate earlier time in the autumn. If the University should participate, this would involve an expenditure of \$3000 by the Institute. If the University should not participate, I should favor the Institute's going ahead with the matter anyhow, and this would cost us \$6000. I think it would be worth while from several points of view; but I do not think that the money should be drawn from our appropriation for the usual stipends. It would, however, be appropriate to use for this purpose part of the fund for the visiting professor. If you agree, I wonder whether you would wish to have the expenditure authorized at the meeting of the Trustees which is to be held on Monday?

Yours sincerely,



Oswald Veblen

Dr. Abraham Flexner
20 Nassau Street
Princeton, N.J.
OV:GB