

This Final Review Question

A question that has been the subject of much controversy this year, and an apparently increasing amount of late, is that of the dates on which the closing exercises of the school year, particularly Final Review, are to be held this term.

Always before these exercises have been held at the very end of the session. This year, for the first time, Final Review, Final Ball, and other terminating exercises are scheduled to be held a week early—that is, a week before those students who have final exams to take, take them.

This change in the date of the traditional closing ceremonies of the school year was adopted by the authorities of the college during the past summer, in the sincere belief that it was, as a whole, for the general welfare of the entire student body. Of late, with the approach of that time, the question has been subject to much debate. A number of students have expressed dissatisfaction with the change in tradition, and fully as many seem to favor it.

Therefore The Battalion presents herewith a summary of the viewpoints of each side, without itself taking sides on the question. Judge for yourself between them.

For

Yes, week-early Final Review is a departure from custom—but so what?

Simply because a thing has become fixed or stagnant does not necessarily make it right.

Consider the positive side of the matter. There are many arguments to be given both for and against the change; but throughout, the advantages of the change for outweigh the disadvantageous features.

The officials of the college, acting in all sincerity for the good of all the classes—not just the seniors, had a number of important reasons for this change.

One of them is the fact that from each successive Final Review of the past few years, more and more students have been absent—have gone home and somehow failed to return for this, the most thrilling and impressive of all the ceremonies of the school year. It is conservatively estimated that last year some 1,500 students out of about 5,500 then in attendance were absent from the review.

Every year at the end of school, every student is anxious to get away and get home as quickly as possible—to his family, his job, etc. Parents, too, get anxious for their sons to return as soon as possible; many write the college every year wanting to know if their sons may not leave early, before Final Review. Statistics show that 800 letters were received one spring from parents making this request.

Holding Final Review a week early will make it possible for every student to attend, and yet leave earlier. This year lines will not be so straggly; so many holes should not be left unfilled, as before. After all, it's supposed to be the largest, finest, most thrilling review of the entire year, isn't it? And isn't that what so many of our parents and friends come here to see? A review that is a flop would be a fine thing for them to witness!

Every year a large number of the seniors, who customarily finish up their work a week or more earlier than the rest of the student body and usually leave the campus for that time, fail to return for Final Review. This year, were the ceremony at the usual time, a considerable number of seniors out of the class of 900 would never get back for the occasion.

And don't just think of the seniors. There are plenty of other students who fail to appear—some who must leave early for various and sundry authentic reasons, and a large number who have earned exemptions from their final exams and do not return just for the review. This year under the present plan all can and almost certainly all will take part in it.

It's only a part of the student body who will have to stay after the review for exams. There'll be about 900 seniors and 25% of the entire student body exempt from finals and a lot of students will finish before the end of the exam week. Why should they have to remain here a week, with nothing to do, just because some others are taking exams?

That leads up to another benefit of this change. In past years the seniors and others who finish earlier than the majority of the students and have been on the campus part or all of the last week with nothing to do, have indulged in a lot of "hell-raising" which disturbs those students who are having to study for finals. Why should those taking finals be disturbed in their work by idle boys hanging around yelling, playing, carousing, engaging in "bull-sessions," coming in at all hours of the night, etc?

It isn't fair to them. Such a thing has always been a major factor in the cause of final exam failures. Why should it be continued, simply because it has been the custom?

Some may complain against the change in tradition. That change will not actually make Final Review any less final, any less the kind of termination it is supposed to be for the school year. After all, the purpose of it is for students to step up a year in class, and for all the others to tell the seniors farewell. And the seniors will be going then, won't they? What actual difference does it make whether some of the students take their exams before or after? Under the new plan, the ordeal of the review will be behind them, and those who stay can stay and study in peace.

To many seniors as well as other students, having Final Review early is important because they can get to their job sooner. Some must get to them early.

And another advantage in the change is that now, following the review, everyone will have plenty of time to pack his clothes and equipment, dispose of things he is going to ship or store, turn in his military equipment to the college, and wind up all his business and scholastic affairs much more conveniently and efficiently than ever before. He can do these things whenever he wishes, and leave whenever he wishes. Always before there has been a concerted rush on the Exchange Store on the part of all the "fish" and sophomores to turn in their uniforms immediately after review. Equipment is turned in carelessly by all the students; much of it is lost in the shuffle. Thousands

of items of clothing, of school supplies, etc., are left in the rooms annually when they are vacated. And there are hundreds of boys lining the roads all at one time trying to get rides away from school. Think how much better it will be with these conditions eliminated or at least vastly improved!

Most of the objections to this change come from those students who hate to see any CHANGE made around here in any custom or tradition. But there's no reason why a tradition can't be improved.

It was "traditional" until last spring that no one but graduating seniors in their last semester could be exempt from exams. It was "traditional" until last spring that there were no telephones in the dormitories. It still is "traditional" that there are no drinking fountains in the halls, and no public restrooms in the Academic Building and other older class buildings. Would you be in favor of continuance of the those conditions simply because they have seemed to be customary?

Some traditions are fine things. But there is no reason why new traditions cannot be adopted, and old ones renovated from time to time—is there? Do you want to see A. & M. stand still in its stride like a cow stuck in the mud? If the Aggie football team had abided by the "tradition" that A. & M. had not won a Southwest Conference championship since 1927, we would have had no nation's No. one team this past fall!

Of course, as is true of many changes, they are not perfect all at once. A. & M.—like Rome—was not built in a day. There is now one thing at least we object to about the new Final Review plan: that is, that some exams are scheduled to take place the afternoon of the same day the review takes place. That leaves for too short a time for rest and study. We hope and ask that the authorities will change this so that exams will not begin until a couple of days later.

It is hard to stir the student body to accept any sort of change in what it has grown accustomed to. Wait till the new plan has been put into effect a time or two, and everyone will favor it when he realizes its practical advantages.

Against

Many students object to the change in the date of Final Review because it is a change in a fine old tradition. Final Review has always been held at the very end of the school term. To hold it any sooner is more or less sacrilegious. It will spoil the impressiveness, the thrill of the ceremony and lessen its psychological effect.

What if a lot of students do choose to miss Final Review? That doesn't hurt! And besides, they can't be made to attend if it is done any other way, either!

Most of the seniors, even if they are out of school a week or so, come back for the occasion. Why should they miss the culminating and most impressive ceremony of their whole four years?

And another thing: For the seniors, that customary period of a week or so after they finish their school work till they return for Final Review has always been the last grand time of their school career at A. & M. when they could have one last occasion for fun in the good old Aggie style. The new plan will cut out entirely this last grand fling.

The hundreds of parents and friends who always come down for the end of school don't come to see a fine review. They come to bring their cars, pack their sons off and take them home. With the review a week early, fewer people and cars will be coming at that time. And a lot of students won't have time to go home, as they have in the past, to bring their cars back for the end of the school year. And there won't be as many people at the final dances, just as there won't be at Final Review.

One of the worst things about the new plan is the fact that some of the final exams will be given the afternoon of the same day as the review. That is not right. It puts too great a strain on those students who take those exams; it allows them far too little time for rest and study.

The new plan seems to have been put into effect just for the seniors. Well, most of the seniors didn't want it and don't want it, and didn't even ask for it. Why show partiality to the seniors? Final Review isn't just for them alone.

The seniors might have to lie around a week or so and then have to return for the review; but they don't mind returning just for that. Very few if any students have to leave earlier just to get to some job; and most do not care whether they get home any earlier or not. Do they?

The psychological effect of having Final Review a week early, and over and done with while a lot of students are taking their finals, will be very bad on those students. The usual ordeal of taking finals, plus the natural sorrow at seeing the school year brought to a close, at saying goodbye to the seniors and all their friends, and the loneliness and dreariness of that week of only exams, is liable to cause a considerable increase in the number of failures. Boys will just get in a rush to leave after the review, and won't study, but will hurry through their exams; and with such a psychological effect as the week-early Final Review is bound to create, they are going to make lower exam grades than ever before in A. & M.'s history.

You just can't ever get the Aggie corps used to such a radical change.

It'll never work. It's too radical, too partial, too unfair, too impractical a change, and contrary to all Aggie tradition. It can't ever go over as well as the old-style Final Review.

BACKWASH

By George Fuermann

"Backwash: An agitation resulting from some action or occurrence."—Webster.

"Somewhere" in Aggeland . . . dances this year something to shoot at in the way of perfection. Paul Shepherd, speaking of a rather "cool" letter received from T. S. C. W.: "I even had to get an ice pick and chip it out of the box."

And one of the most accurate lines from Shakespeare's pen: ". . . Since the affairs of men rest still in-act, let's reason with the worst that may befall."

A quote from a letter postmarked Denton: "Wouldst be so kind as to quote price of The Battalion. We would like to learn how the 'masses' live, and I believe that reading the 'Bat' would give us a fairly good idea."

A College Station girl's reply to a saleslady who wanted to know what kind of a dress she was looking for: "Something I can wear in the evening when I haven't a date and am waiting around either for someone to drop in or to telephone."

Consistency, anyway: Here's a quote from a letter received by an Infantry junior: "In the spring of the year a young woman's thoughts turn lightly to love—but my love for you is predominant in all seasons."

Town Hall manager Walter Sullivan, George Steurer, and Buddy Williams had the thrill of a lifetime Saturday morning when they drove Gladys Swarthout to Houston where she boarded an airplane bound for New York.

Miss Swarthout, by the way, fully intended to be among those present at Friday night's A.S.C.E. dance, but following her concert—which came after a long train ride—she was "too tired . . . to be presentable at anything," as she expressed it . . . Here's hoping: Buster Keaton and Hector Hernandez have written to Olivia de Havilland and Nancy Kelly respectively asking them to attend the Composite Regiment Ball March 29.

Cat-Astrophe—Phttt, Phttt, and Phttt: U. T.'s Herbert Smith recently penned this gem which is supposed to be read aloud for real effect—but, in the way of a warning, it's as pointless as some of the Confucius stories going the rounds:

Once there were three little kittens. One was named Phttt; one was named Phttt Phttt; and one was named Phttt Phttt Phttt. One day Phttt became very ill. The doctor was immediately summoned. The doctor said gravely, "Phttt is going to die." Sure nuff, Phttt kicked the bucket. 'Twas most sad.

Then, Phttt Phttt became very ill. The doctor was hurriedly called. "Phttt Phttt," said the doctor, "is going to die." Sure nuff, Phttt Phttt up and died. 'Twas most sad, and besides, all these dead cats were beginning to stink up the place.

Yep, you guessed it, Phttt Phttt Phttt became very ill. The doctor's diagnosis was consistent; Phttt Phttt Phttt is going to die," said he. "No, I'm not," said Phttt Phttt Phttt. And Phttt Phttt Phttt didn't die.

Why? It was a pure case of the survival of the Phttt-est. After finding a bundle of certificates valued at \$6,500, Robert Sullivan Jr., of Houston, Texas, refused to accept a reward, explaining, "I'm a Boy Scout."

Justice—Stalin style:

A woman worker in a Leningrad, Russia, chocolate factory was sentenced to death for stealing chocolates; but a Russian surgeon was sentenced to a year at hard labor for leaving a towel, two feet long, in the body of a man he had operated on and who died because of his mistake.

A-la-Sing-Sing:

Prison authorities—tongue in cheek—have barred the pole vault from track athletics at the famous U. S. human safe.

Notes on the Sophomore Ball:

No less than fifteen hundred Aggies greeted the three busloads of T.S.C.W.-ites imported for the affair, and almost an equal number saw them off Sunday afternoon . . . Bill Goodman—somewhat disgruntled: "They oughta make a law that a cadet can't 'cut in' until a girl has taken at least ten steps." . . . And Gene White is telling about the dauntless freshman attired in civilian clothes who managed to get in Sbisia shortly after the dance began. Looking around, the first-year man did an immediate about face and started for the exit, saying "I don't think I'd better stay." . . . "Tiny" Admire's date, explaining why she was enjoying herself so much: "I attribute my good time at this dance to plenty of fresh air and that good College Station water—sulphur taste and all!" . . . Alden Cathey: "Never again will I manage a date bureau." . . . Willard Clark: "This thing turned out even better than we had hoped." . . . And, true enough, the sophs and architects have given other

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Movie Review

by Bob Nisbet

Those of us who have not already tired of remembering our past glamorous football season will enjoy seeing pictures of the New Orleans Sugar Bowl game that will be shown in connection with the regular show Tuesday afternoon and night at the Assembly Hall. It is not the same show the Athletic Department has been showing but is one taken by newsreel running some 12 minutes. At the Palace beginning Wednesday is "DESTROY RIDES AGAIN," a wild and woolly western made top class entertainment by some of Hollywood's best actors. Marlene Dietrich and James Stewart hold the lead. Since this will be reviewed in the magazine, there is no use to waste time here, except to give the show a three grade-point rating.

A most disappointing show is "REMEMBER"; it had the possibilities, big names in the cast and such, but somehow Greer Carson, who gained fame in "Goodbye Mr. Chips," just didn't go over as a semi-vampire after playing such a sweet role as Mrs. Chipping. Too, Robert Taylor's personal publicity has been neglected lately; there hasn't been a great deal of attention focused in his direction. The story, another side of the eternal triangle, is a bit stale but cleverly done. Lew Ayres returns from his vacation engaged to Greer Carson. When he introduces her to his old college chum, the two fall in love at first sight. After several embarrassing scenes, Taylor, the chum(?), and Greer get married. Lew takes a philosophical attitude toward the affair and even helps the two make arrangements for the honeymoon. At that point, Taylor's job delays their departure, and the two have a fuss. Then Lew, the chump(!), discovers a way to make

WHAT'S SHOWING

AT THE ASSEMBLY HALL
Tuesday 3:30 and 6:30—
"REMEMBER," with Robert Taylor and Greer Carson.

AT THE PALACE
Beginning Wednesday—
"DESTROY RIDES AGAIN," with James Stewart and Marlene Dietrich.

AT THE QUEEN
Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday—
"WHAT A LIFE," with Jackie Cooper and Betty Field.

Cadet Players To Cast Third Play This Afternoon

A tryout for the purpose of selecting a cast for the third of three plays to be presented by A. & M.'s newest organization, The Cadet Players, will be held this afternoon from four until six o'clock in room 316 in the Academic Building. The cast will be made for either of the two plays, "The Stoker" or "Submarine."

Students interested in dramatics are invited to attend the tryout. Previous attendance at the organization meetings is not required to take part.

MANY FORMER SMOKERS OF EXPENSIVE PIPES NOW PREFER

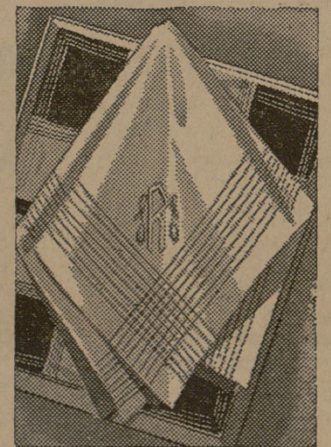
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