

The Battalion

STUDENT TRI-WEEKLY NEWSPAPER
 TEXAS A. & M. COLLEGE
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of Axis diplomats. The alliance, agrees the Lobo, just "isn't news." These three nations have been informally in a state of cohesion since Germany began its ambitious onslaughts, and the mere addition of a theoretical formality to a known actuality should be no reason for additional jitters."

The Michigan Daily believes that Japan in recent days "has executed one of the most precipitous backdowns in diplomatic history. Whether the Nipponese will persist in sneak aggressions and convert grabs under their apologetic smoke screen remains to be seen. In any event, prevailing ideas about the importance of 'face' in Oriental psychology need revision."

—Associated Collegiate Press

Man, Your Manners

By I. SHERWOOD

A PREREQUISITE TO good manners on the dance floor is, know how to dance and dance well.

A Gentleman—When he wishes to ask a lady to dance, he says, "May I have this dance?" "Would you care to dance?" or "Shall we dance?" And when they part he must always say, "Thank you" or some other phrase of appreciation.

He should always have the first and last numbers with the lady he brought and those before and after the supper intermission, if there is one. An exception is a dinner dance where he asks his dinner partner, whether he brought her or not, for the first number.

At a small dance where there is a hostess he should ask her to dance, and her daughters. He must dance with the guest of honor when there is one.

At any dance where there is cutting-in the man is responsible for the lady he brought. He should introduce his friends to her and see that she has a good time.

In hotels and restaurants where there is no cutting-in he should dance with the ladies at his table, but with none at other tables not in his party.

Having asked a lady to dance a man may not suggest that they sit down before the number is over nor leave her alone on the floor for any reason. If he becomes "stuck" with a girl who hasn't the presence of mind to release him, he may make some excuse and asked her where she would like to be escorted.

When a man wishes to cut in, he taps the other man on the shoulder and says, "May I cut in?" He should not cut in unless he has been introduced to her. When he has been cut in on by another, he should not cut back until they have finished that number. Nor should he repeatedly cut in on another even though he is with different partners.

Girls like their dates to send corsages, but it is optional with the young man.

Rules in General—Neither a gentleman nor a lady should purposely overlook a promised dance. Nor should either of them refuse to accept a cut-in or suggestion to change partners.

Between numbers they should stand or walk side by side. A lady is always on the gentleman's right.

At a small dance it is proper for young people to speak to all the chaperons. At a large dance it is courteous to speak to the chaperons they know.

As the World Turns...

By DR. R. W. STEEN

A stirring political campaign, remarkable in many ways, comes to an end today. The New Deal is far less popular now than it was in 1936, and the numerous polls have shown Mr. Willkie's support to be steadily increasing. Despite these facts, it is difficult to see any result other than a victory for Mr. Roosevelt.

The campaign, always interesting, has at times approached the spectacular. It has pitted the suave radio personality of Roosevelt against the rough-voiced, rather volatile Willkie. The almost perfect diction of Roosevelt has been challenged by the garbled pronunciation and curious grammar of Willkie. In general, the major issues have been carefully avoided, while the welkin has been made to ring with discussions of trivial matters.

The Republicans have made much of the "third term" issue. It should be remembered that a third term is entirely legal. Hamilton in The Federalist clearly looked with favor upon several terms for the executive. Washington refused a third term for reasons that were purely personal. Jefferson, it is true, had philosophical reasons for declining a third term. Few presidents since Jefferson were sufficiently popular at the end of eight years to even consider the possibility of a third term. Factors more potent than tradition were generally at work. Incidentally, about half of the presidents have been restricted to one term each, yet there is little talk of a one-term tradition.

Many time honored customs have been discarded since that fateful October day in 1929 when the stock market began its discouraging plunge. It seems that the two term tradition will join them today. The Republicans will doubtless carry many more states than Maine and Vermont, and will probably increase their membership in Congress. It will be a good thing for the country to have a real opposition party again.

Meanwhile the United States faces serious problems both at home and abroad. The slurs and aspersions of the campaign must be quickly forgotten in order that citizens may talk, not as Democrats or Republicans, but as Americans. It is to be hoped that the next campaign will find this country a part of a world at peace; that the Republican party, as the opposition party, will get around to proposing a really constructive program; and that the Democratic convention will at least go through the motions of living up to its name in choosing a candidate for the vice-presidency.

BACKWASH

By George Fuermann

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

Wherein the history, of The Battalion's tri-weekly column "Backwash" is the subject of a discussion . . . Born in the year 1939, the column's name was the suggestion of one Max Durham, at that time a sophomore pre-medical student. With the collaboration of N. Webster, a dictionary writer of some note who defined the word as "An agitation resulting from some action or occurrence," Durham's nomination became a fact and today the column, or parts of it, appears in two other metropolitan Texas dailies and formerly appeared in one other major collegiate publication.

Backwash made its debut June 6, 1939, in the first issue of The Summer Battalion edited by William H. Murray. The column appeared somewhat spasmodically throughout the remainder of that summer, but it was September 23 of the same year that Backwash began its first regular appearance with the beginning of the 1939-40 long session. During that session 105 of the columns were written—91 in The Battalion Newspaper; nine in the T. S. C. W. student publication, The Lass-O; and five in The Battalion Magazine.

Backwash is generally divided into several items—usually four, five, or six—which fall in one of six classes: humor, human interest, feature, news, sidelight, or editorial.

The column's success, if any, belongs to A. & M.'s corps of cadets for whom and about whom it is written. Hundreds of cadets constantly send by mail, or verbally, many of the items which are published. Without this assistance Backwash would be impossible.

The column's avowed purpose is to be a mirror of Aggie thought and a column definitely written according to the Aggie way of things. . . . A column written for and about the Twelfth Man . . . A column based on the belief that the Aggie way of doing things is the best way.

Your writer has asked a representative committee of five seniors, two juniors, and a sophomore to go through last year's columns and select from them the items which in their opinion are the best in the six classes mentioned above. This has been done, and at intervals throughout the current college year, these items will be reprinted. To that end, the following items are the committee's selection for cream-of-the-crop humor items during 1939-40.

This Time, and Twice More.
 An Aggie freshman was writing a story-theme at the behest of his English professor, and writing either stories or themes was definitely not his strong point. The tale was a wild, romantic outburst about a young Southern belle, full of all the blood and drama that hot blood brings forth. The climax was in the sentence, "She threw open the door and, uttering a piercing scream, fell prostitute upon the floor!"

The professor was unmoved. He returned the paper with one unflinching comment: "We must learn to distinguish between a fallen woman and one who has momentarily lost her balance."
 (From the column of November 9, 1939.)

Life's Minor Tragedies.
 One of the movie-going Aggies is telling about the Dallas theater which doesn't always book new short subjects when a new feature is being shown, but holds the old ones over. Walking in on a new feature this past week end he was appalled to find the same shorts being shown that he had seen the night before. "Don't you EVER change your shorts?" he blurted in disgust to the usherette.

It was a full quarter hour before he understood the resulting slap in the face and the poor girl's aloof and indignant attitude.
 (From the column of Jan. 27, 1940.)

Optimist.
 A Cavalry freshman, recently in need of a date, proceeded to phone a Bryan belle of more or less short

It Can't Happen Here.
 Best of the current gridiron giggles concerns the T.C.U.-U.C.L.A. game a few weeks ago. One of the Frogs had carried the ball and was tackled hard. Looking up, he saw that his tackler was Strode, U.C.L.A.'s negro end.

A minute later he was tackled again, this time by Washington, negro halfback.

Breathing through the line a third time, the T.C.U. back was again hit hard. This trip it was Robinson, another U.C.L.A. negro back.

A fourth time the Frog lugged the ball and a fourth time he was hurled to the ground. Getting up, he found to his surprise that his tackler was a white boy.

The T.C.U. lad stuck out his hand and inquired cordially, "Dr. Livingston, I presume?"
 (This item appeared in the column of October 28, 1939. Although Backwash does not claim to have been the first to print the story, it came to the writer first-hand from a T.C.U. squadman and was later reprinted in a dozen different forms in a hundred other publications.)

Movie Review

By Tom Gillis

For a rough and tumble motion picture of two rough and ready men "BOOM TOWN" is a show that is guaranteed to please. With the fighting and swearing and gambling that characterized the infancy of the oil industry, Clark Gable and Spencer Tracy show the world a thing or two on how to live and enjoy it. As hijack drillers with stolen equipment they drill for their first well and they skip town when the well fails with the sheriff behind them too close for comfort. They play for oil wells like we play penny ante poker and take their fights and their oil where they find them. With such zest and drive that they make and lose several collective and individual fortunes, Tracy and Gable play the oil industry back and forth from the bottom to the very top, making several stop overs in both places.

This feature has its setting in the boom area around Burkburnet, Texas, and many oil men who witnessed the mushroom growth of the area have declared that it is a most authentic picture. The stars too are genuinely authentic with four big name players. Hedy Lamarr however only appears for a short time. Clark and Spencer create one of the best scenes in the show by parading around their hotel room stripped to their suits of long flannel underwear.

"BOOM TOWN" is a show that will be hard to beat and has made a strong bid for its place in the movie sun. It is well worth the time and money to see.

University of Wisconsin has a mail-order dating bureau.

The world is just beginning to use electricity intelligence, according to Dr. Frederick P. Woellner, professor of education at the University of California.

GOING TO DALLAS?
 Be prepared for the first official corps trip by getting your tobacco supplies, pipes, candies, etc., before you leave—
GEORGE'S CONFECTIONERY
 South Station

acquaintance. With a determined throb in his voice he quizzed the girl as to "Whatcha doin' Saturday night?" Quick as a flash she came back with "Gotta date."
 "What about the Saturday night after that?" the poor fish asked.
 "Gotta date."
 Still undaunted, the optimist stuck his neck out once more: "And the Saturday night after that?"
 "Gotta date."
 His honor at stake, the freshman bowed out with, "God, woman, don'tcha ever take a bath?"
 (From the column of November 4, 1939.)

The Wisdom of Socrates.
 Then there's the story concerning John Kimbrough and the Aggie-Rice tilt. It seems that following the game A. & M.'s All-American back was riding an elevator in the hotel where the team was staying. It was a crowded elevator, like all elevators seemed to be after that game, and among its passengers

were two middle-aged gentlemen not at all affected by the hub-bub of gridiron warfare. Each of them carefully scrutinized John—not in any ordinary manner, but much as they would a thoroughbred race horse; one of them even touching his broad shoulders and feeling his arm muscles. All this without a word from either of them. Finally, just as John was expecting them to look at his teeth for age-determining purposes, one of the fatherly gentlemen tapped him on the shoulder, stood on tiptoe, and whispered in his ear, "Son, you should play football!"

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COLBERT - LAMARR
 Screen Play by John Lee Mahin • Based on a Story by James Edward Grant
 Directed by JACK CONWAY
 Produced by SAM ZIMBALIST
 Wednesday and Thursday
 3:30 and 6:30 Each Day