

# Many a Headache . . .

One way or another, American colleges and universities are often up for a roasting. In a front page editorial this week, The Battalion pointed out a number of important problems now disturbing inhabitants of the A. & M. campus.

That some of these are local manifestations of national educational problems is shown by two provocative articles now appearing in current national magazines.

Harvard's President James Bryant Conant, in the May Atlantic, says that land-grant colleges, (such as Texas A. & M.) have forced a radical change in the American conception of education. He finds that the contribution of Morrill-Act colleges has been a good one—especially in democratization of education—but that it may take America another hundred years to digest the new conception, and correlate it with the historic functions of the university.

Another point of view is taken by Harland Logan, editor of Look Magazine and formerly a professor at New York University. In an article called "The Failure of American Education," he blasts away at superintendents, principals, presidents, deans, department heads, state legislatures and Congress. Teachers also fail, he says, but they are helpless in a system not of their own making. Low salaries for teachers and college instructors draw his heaviest fire.

There is bitter medicine in both articles. President Conant points out that until the creation of the state-supported university and the land-grant college, higher education was strictly for children of the wealthy and for those preparing for the ministry, law or medicine. Land-grant colleges put "the mechanical arts" (now known as engineering) and agriculture on a plan equivalent to the older professions. And education was offered by them, not just to the wealthy, but to all the citizens of the state.

This revolution in education was not well received by the Old Guard. Dr. Conant might have cited the early history of A. & M. Some of the early students refused to soil their hands by working in the machine shops, and arbitrarily refused to report for such classes. The faculty condoned that attitude, because they themselves thought that agriculture and the mechanic arts were not fit subjects for a college. They tried to establish here an aristocratic liberal arts college.

Because of this obstructive attitude, the entire faculty and some of the students were thrown out, and a fresh start made. It was not until Gen. Lawrence Sullivan Ross took over, and proved that the new idea in education could work, that the A. & M. we know became a reality. (That's why Sully's statute stands at the hub of our campus.)

It isn't always easy for an institution like A. & M., founded for specific purposes, to keep itself lined up for that job. Conditions change, and tactics need change in order to meet them. Dr. Conant points out how the university has had to change in order to parallel the work of technical schools. The obverse of the question—to what extent technological institutes should parallel the work of liberal arts universities—has never been clear and is today among the perplexing problems on this campus. It is among the major issues, however, in determining policy.

Although Mr. Logan in Look, accuses State Legislatures and Congress of consistent failure to provide more adequate funds for education, the bulk of the blame falls upon parents, citizens and taxpayers, in Mr. Logan's opinion. In the last analysis, it is they who permit appropriations for war, roads, dams, post offices and pork barrels to take precedence over school budgets. Ignorant, indifferent or bewildered, they have too little use of their power as voters to demand educational reforms.

In outlining the present weaknesses of American education, Look's Editor attacks old-fashioned and inefficient teaching techniques; outdated methods of grading; and

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### PROF. INVITES STUDENTS TO HIS CRACKER-BOX

Editor, The Battalion.

One would think from reading your editorial Wednesday that the students around here are simply famishing for knowledge, culture, and education outside the classroom, but that their sincere efforts to obtain same are being rebuffed at every turn by the faculty! As one of the more insignificant instructors, I have been around here for several months, but I have been unable to locate this undying thirst for culture and education among the students!

Go into the library any time you choose and see if these students here really read anything other than their required outside reading and the comic pages of the home town paper!

For the past five weeks, forty-odd people here have been working tirelessly, day and night, to produce an excellent play for the Aggies—but how many students took advantage of this excellent cultural opportunity to see a good play? Less than 400!

Check the student attendance for Town Hall and other cultural activities and give the percentage of students who really go to these educational activities outside the classroom!

Only last week, a prominent Texas educator spoke here on the very problems you mentioned, but less than 100 students heard him. There is a fine musical library here with all sorts of records, but the machine is broken—how many requests have you had from students to get this machine fixed?

classrooms, slow-paced within an arbitrary framework of terms and semesters. He charges our educational leaders with laziness, stating that many of our teaching methods "haven't changed in hundreds of years . . . haven't taken advantage of even so ancient a development as the printed drawing or the more recent photograph, or moving pictures of phonograph or radio." The revolutionary improvements developed by the Armed Forces in the teaching of languages, mathematics, and a dozen other subjects, could be adopted by our schools and colleges, he believes, to the immediate advantage of their students.

The low pay of teachers and college instructors is scored as another great weakness of our educational system, causing reduced efficiency, frustration and bitterness on the part of otherwise able, sincere and hardworking men and women. In this connection, Mr. Logan cites the national average salary for college instructors in 1942 as \$1,872; for high school teachers as \$1,902; for grade school teachers as \$1,366; and for rural school teachers as \$1,018. These, he points out, are considerably below the incomes of shipbuilders, petroleum refiners, printers, and cannot today be called a decent living wage.

You mentioned that professors here fail to encourage students by inviting groups of students into their homes for further discussions. Have you checked up around here lately to see how many of these professors HAVE NO HOMES to which to invite anybody? Did you know that many of them are living in single rooms, cubbyholes, or crackerbox apartments? The cost of these flimsy makeshifts is so excessive that professors do not feel equal to inviting anybody for anything heavier than a glass of water! They do not even invite each other, to say nothing of their mothers-in-law, or their students!

The writer announces to all and sundry that he will hold open house in his half of room nine in the Y any night next week—subject for discussion: the housing shortage!

Sincerely,  
A. CARMEN WHITE  
English Department

(You've got something there professor!—Ed.)

### IS CAMPUS SAFE FROM POLIO EPIDEMIC?

Editor, the Battalion:

As a result of a discussion of the "epidemic" scare in some of our neighboring cities, I am writing this short inquiring note. I do not want to be mistaken for an alarmist, but due to the large number of small children living here on the campus in rather close quarters, and young wives also of the "susceptible" age, I believe, along with many others that some precautionary measures should be taken.

Has anything been done to rid the campus of the many disease spreading flies? Could the school authorities obtain a sufficient amount of G. I. DDT to spray the dorms and immediate area? Have the breeding places of these flies



"I wanted to finish college but was wondering how a married man could make it when that G. I. Bill of Rights came to the rescue," said Army Veteran Everett Lennon whose parents, Mr. and Mrs. C. E. Lennon reside at 402 Briscoe in Dallas, Texas.

Mr. Lennon was discharged in July, 1945 after service overseas as a scout with the 80th Division of the Third Army. He earned such decorations as the Victory Medal, American Theatre Ribbon, European Theatre Ribbon with three Battle Stars and the Purple Heart with one Cluster.

He is majoring in Mechanical Engineering and is entitled to four years of college under the G. I. Bill of Rights.

and mosquitos been sprayed or oiled?

We were all interested and somewhat anxious and wholeheartedly believe in the axiom that an ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure.

Sincerely yours,  
I. E. BURHAM,  
Dorm 14.

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