

Battalion Editorials

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TUESDAY, MAY 9, 1950

More 'Thanks' From West Point . . .

A&M received a journalistic compliment this month in the latest issue of "The Pointer," bi-weekly magazine of the United States Military Academy. In review of the West Point Debating Team's travels, A&M was listed as "the friendliest place in the country." The article reported that Cadets Jared Schopper and Frank Watson especially were impressed with our "vigorous handshaking."

The article in "The Pointer" is the second "thank you" we have received from the two Army debaters. Last month, following their visit here, they wrote a letter of thanks to the Corps of Cadets. In it they asked us to send a debate team to the Academy so they could have "another

crack at the boys and an opportunity to show them the same kind of hospitality that we received."

We are particularly proud that A&M was singled out in the manner in which it was. The West Point Team has traveled throughout the South, debating on many campuses which, without a doubt, have some attractions which we can't offer. Nevertheless, their reception here was still the best they had received. Regardless of how you look at it, we have both as individuals and as a group the power to maintain and improve the name of A&M throughout the country. We're our own publicity department, and from the looks of things, we're moving along on all eight cylinders.

The 'New Look' in Graduate Studies . . .

This year Humble Oil and Refining Company continues for the fifth consecutive season a program which should be of interest to every college student and staff member. Called the "Humble Lectures in Science," the project is actually a series of "on the job" graduate studies. The company brings to its Baytown refinery technical experts from every field to lecture to its personnel. In effect, the series "brings college to the man."

These technical lectures presented to Humble employees are not mere refresher talks. They are intensive studies which the company says are each equal to a semester of university graduate study. The technical employees who take a course are relieved of all plant duties and devote full time to lectures which usually last about two weeks. There is a written examination at the end of each course.

The men who conduct the lectures, so a Humble publication says, are invited from a group of the most distinguished educators in America. They speak on topics which are, in a large part, determined from personnel demand at the refinery.

The original purpose of the Humble lecture series was to broaden the base and raise the general level of scientific knowledge among its Baytown refinery tech-

nical personnel. Proof of the value of the program is dramatic. Almost half of the refinery's new research projects initiated during the past three years have stemmed from the lectures in science.

Enthusiasm among plant personnel has been significant. They have accepted the opportunity to study in the company of the visiting scientists and they have been quick to take advantage of the lessons to be learned.

Such a program as this can well be a forecast of things to come. The problem of crowding all possible subjects, both technical and liberal, into a four year curriculum is becoming increasingly difficult. Graduate school, while a valuable and necessary phase of our educational system, requires time away from the job which few technical men in industry can spare. As a result, the Humble publication says, people in industry are torn between the task at hand and the urgent need for raising their general level of scientific knowledge.

This program might well lead the way toward solution of the growing problem of providing adequate training and education for the technician without requiring him to spend an unreasonable number of years within college walls.

A man in business had just finished making out some complicated forms for a government survey and, when he reached home that night, he was exhausted. After dinner he wearily made his way to bed but instead of going to sleep, he tossed and turned for hours. His brain in a whirl as he thought of the various government regulations with which he had to comply. Finally he started to grin as a thought flashed through his mind.

"Thank God, we're not getting as much government business administration as we're paying for!"

In twenty seconds he was sound asleep.

Jones was extremely proud of his golf scores and brought his mother-in-law along so he could exhibit his prowess. "Now, you sit right here and watch me," he told her, and then proceeded to the first tee with the friend with whom he was playing.

"I'm especially anxious to make this first drive a terrific one," Jones whispered to his friend. "You see, my mother-in-law is visiting us and she's sitting right over there and I . . ."

"Don't be an idiot," interrupted his friend, "you can't hit her from here. Why it's over 200 yards!"

The Battalion

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The Battalion, official newspaper of the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas and the City of College Station, Texas, is published five times a week and circulated every Monday through Friday afternoon, except during holidays and examination periods. During the summer The Battalion is published tri-weekly on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Subscription rate \$6.00 per school year. Advertising rates furnished on request.

News contributions may be made by telephone (4-5444) or at the editorial office, Room 201, Goodwin Hall. Classified ads may be placed by telephone (4-5224) or at the Student Activities Office, Room 202, Goodwin Hall.

Entered as second-class matter at Post Office at College Station, Texas, under No. 402 of March 3, 1919.

Member of The Associated Press
Represented nationally by National Advertising Service Inc., at New York City, Chicago, Los Angeles, and San Francisco.

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HOLDING UP EVERYTHING BUT HIS END



Astronomer Slated For Lecture Here

Dr. George Van Biesbroeck, noted astronomer who speaks at A&M Tuesday, May 16, can lay claim to the distinction of being the scientist who turned up an error in the calculations of Albert Einstein, father of the theory of relativity. Dr. Van Biesbroeck will speak under the joint sponsorship of the Graduate Club and the American Association of University Professors.

One of Einstein's three basic predictions in support of his theory in the "Einstein Shift" which says that the gravitational force of the sun "bends" starlight passing nearby.

Dr. Van Biesbroeck's research confirmed that such a shift does occur and he can also offer photographic proof that this deflection is much greater than Einstein's original prediction.

To prove this theory Dr. Van Biesbroeck, equipped with special instruments of his own design, was able to take pictures of the 1947 solar eclipse in Brazil. The photographs recorded the light of distant stars passing near the sun.

Returning to Brazil three months later, he photographed these same stars, at night when unaffected by the sun. Using night pictures

for comparison, the scientist was eventually able to establish that starlight, subjected to the influence of the sun, shifts 2.01 seconds of arc, instead of 1.745 seconds of arc as Einstein had predicted.

Adverse weather conditions denied Dr. Van Biesbroeck the opportunity of doing further research on the subject during the 1948 eclipse of the sun in the far Pacific. His observation post for this eclipse was Korea, under the auspices of the National Geographic Society.

Dr. Van Biesbroeck persuaded Lt. Gen. John R. Hodge to postpone a United Nations plebiscite scheduled for the day of the eclipse, as the Koreans, a superstitious people, might consider the solar occurrence a bad omen.

Dr. Van Biesbroeck is now at the W. J. McDonald observatory, which he helped to plan and lay out on Mount Locke in West Texas near Fort Davis.

The scientist has recently returned from Northern Africa where he has for the last few months engaged in locating and laying out an observatory for the Belgian government. Born in Ghent, Belgium, in 1880, Dr. Van Biesbroeck came to the United States in 1915 as visiting professor of practical astronomy at the University of Chicago's Yerkes Observatory. Williams Bay, Wisconsin. He became an American citizen in 1922. His awards include the gold medal of the Royal Society of Copenhagen, the Maillat prize, Belgian Academy of Science, and the Vain prize, Academy of Science at Paris.

TEC Rules No Pay for Strikers

Austin, Tex., May 9—(AP)—Striking Texas Company refinery workers will get no unemployment benefits, the Texas Employment Commission ruled yesterday.

An immediate appeal and court test of the case were forecast. The TEC voted unanimously not to pay unemployment insurance claims for approximately 2,000 workers at Port Arthur and Port Neches.

The TEC held that the work stoppage was due to a labor dispute and therefore no claim could be approved. The union contended that the strike had been called off but the TEC said that a labor dispute still existed.

Texas workers who had been on strike tried to go back to work April 26, but the company refused to allow them to enter the plants. The unions called it a lockout. The company said that the refineries would not be reopened without assurance from the unions "that operations will be maintained for a reasonable period of time." The workers then filed claims for unemployment benefits.

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From Where I Sit . . .

Brooklynese Philistines In C.B.'s 'Samson and Delilah'

By HERMAN C. GOLLOB

Samson and Delilah (Paramount) starring Victor Mature, Hedy Lamarr, George Sanders, and Angela Lansbury (Queen).

That Cecil B. DeMille, Hollywood's greatest exponent of philistinism, should make "Samson and Delilah," a film definitely anti-Philistine in character, is not in the least paradoxical.

Producer-director DeMille long ago learned the value of exploiting historical stories which bore reli-

gious impetus ("Sign of the Cross," "The Crusades," "Ten Commandments,"). Out of history and religion he fashioned spectacle, the technical perfection and grandeur of which was matched only by the eloquent artificiality of script, acting, and direction.

"Samson and Delilah" is no different than the rest. Here DeMille has done more, under the veneer of extravagance, made mockeries of both history and religion.

Dialogue is pretentious ("Your mercy is like your love—ruthless!"), thereby necessitating an irritating flamboyance on the part of the performers who with the exception of Hedy Lamarr are all capable of sound emoting. Had Hedy not been required to speak, her beauty might have seen her through. C. B. has not only made her talk, but forced her to try to act, a move she responds to by rolling her eyes and writhing on a tiger rug. Victor Mature is an acceptable Samson, and George Sanders, who can't give a bad performance, plays the cruel Saran with tongue in cheek.

Philistine soldiers storm through the film equipped with first-rate Brooklyn accents, and get their noggin's duly smashed by a provoked Samson. We can recommend "Samson and Delilah" only as a technicalized Tarzan picture, in which Chechak is replaced by Hedy Lamarr.

Dallas Theatre 50 is currently presenting its six week Repertory Festival, during which it offers its plays of this last season for

the benefit of those who missed them, or want to see them again. "My Granny Van" is scheduled for May 8-13; "Heart House" for May 15-20. The last two weeks, "Southern Exposure," "Romeo and Juliet," "The Golden Porsucine," and the two aforementioned plays, will be offered on alternate nights.

Truman Taking 'Stump' to Aid Brannan Plan

Lincoln, Nebr., May 9—(AP)—President Truman, taking the stump for the Brannan Farm Plan, asserted yesterday its enactment would help assure "peace and prosperity for ourselves and the world."

He lit into what he called the "mud-slinging, name-calling opposition" which he said fights against every new proposal offered for the benefit of the country. It includes the same people, he said, who attacked past farm programs as "Communist" and attempts "to enslave the farmer."

Taking up the prime feature of Secretary of Agriculture Brannan's plan—under which the government would pay farmers the difference between what they receive at the market for perishable crops and a pre-determined "fair return," the president asserted:

The plan fact is that the production payment plan is the best plan yet proposed for getting an abundant production of perishable crops consumed without knocking the bottom out of the farmer's income.

"It is in the farmer's interest. It is also in the consumer's interest. I firmly believe it should be made a part of our national farm program."

The president said those who say it would cost "fantastic" sums don't understand the plan. Actually, he added, it may cost less than the present law.

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