



A CHAW... WE THANK YOU, SIR

Returning to the office the other day from a sojourn down the street, we found a generous cellophaned square of chewing tobacco, and noted that the tiny tin tags which we used to gather in the day of relatively scarce trinkets had been replaced by paper stickers with the Taylor Brothers label. . . . We'd dismissed the possible origin of the plug from our mind, when Pete Hagaman dropped in with the information that Senator Scott had used him as a messenger to send us down the "Peach and Honey," and we thank them both. . . . We don't recall having sliced a quid since we used to fish with Squire Jim Bryan and Crack Council, who'd pass the Brown's Mule when the bamboo rods had been set up, so that there could be chewing while the fly floated on the limpid streams and the fisherman was poised to sink the hook when the trout broke the water. . . . And there seemed to be some sort of solace in the tangy taste of the juicy chew as we reflected on why the trout which just had to be nigh the old log where the water eddied, failed to rise to the Professor, the Hackle, or the Coachman, and why he made the old masters of the art hie away to a rocky field to find a grasshopper or a cricket to lure him into the basket. . . . Chewing tobacco seemed to make for good friends in those simple days, and formed a sort of bond between fellow travelers or fishermen—like eating with a man, or staying the night with him. . . . We're much obliged to the Squire of Haw River for his long-range passing of a "chaw."

AN OLD FRIEND... SHE GOES AWAY

In the death of Mrs. Nella Folk Williams, colored, we are reminded of one of our old friendships, nurtured way back in the days before we had ever heard of race conflict. . . . "Aunt Nella," as she was known, was one of the older residents of the community, and was bordering on her ninetieth year when death came. . . . For almost a score of years she did housekeeping work at the old Critcher Hotel where she was known to everyone who frequented that friendly hostelry. . . . She was particularly helpful and generous to the children of the community, who grew to love her for her uniform kindness and friendliness. . . . Many of these "youngsters" are themselves now in their graying years—at least old enough to cherish the memory of Aunt Nella, who was a good friend and advisor to them in their formative days. . . . She lived long and usefully and there is sadness among those who knew Aunt Nella.

WHEN THE BABY CAME... THE HAT BURNED

From "The Last Word" in the State Magazine we are reminded of the fact that we used to burn the papa's hat when the baby came. . . . Until fairly recently, when in fact hats became scarce, the papa was not only supposed to give down with the cigars, but also was required to forfeit his best fedora, whether he liked it or not. . . . We can recall the glee shared by Cliff McConnell, Sam Atkins, Larna Bingham and others when one of these street-side Stetson burnings took place. . . . We've never been able to quite understand why a new papa is supposed to give cigars, rather than to receive some token, but we did get some stuff on the hatburning, which "The Last Word" credits to Brown's folklore (Duke Press.) We quote:

"THE BURNING OF THE FATHER'S HAT following the birth of his firstborn (we burned 'em also for the last born and those betwixt) is undoubtedly one of the least widespread practices. Although the information gives as the reason for the act the explanation that 'it cleans the baby's road' and brings good luck to the child, we are still at a loss to discover why it should be part of the father's apparel, rather than that of the mother's which is sacrificed. In some other sections of the country, e. g., southern Indiana and Illinois, the hat is snatched from the father's head and thrown away or trampled underfoot on his first appearance outdoors after the birth of the baby. The latter custom would appear to be merely a refinement of the burning, which is certainly the more primitive."

So This Is New York

By NORTH CALLAHAN

Whenever we think we have misfortunes, it might be well for us to consider such letters as that recently written to a New Yorker from a young man in Budapest: "You live in New York and I in Hungary. You live in the world and I in a cage. For us here, evolution of world knowledge stopped in 1939. Of course we have never stopped working in the fields of forbidden knowledge, but our thinking is often a duplication of the discovery of America."

Broadway at last has come forth with a funny play. I refer to "Visit to a Small Planet" which recently opened to a round of raucous laughter at the Booth Theater. So many plays of tragic and mystic men have appeared and as promptly folded lately that it is refreshing to see a light-hearted offering which the public has taken to its rated heart. In this comedy, Cyril Richard is an engaging visitor from another world, and Eddie Mayehoff plays an American Army general who is in charge of the laundry department—but who feels he is chief of staff (stuff!) Maybe he should be at that. For what is more important than clean duds in the spit-and-polish department?

With Ray Erwin I dropped into a reception at the Roosevelt Hotel—or perhaps I should say I went aboard. For the congenial affair was in anticipation of the Inter-

national Naval Review to be held in early June at Hampton Roads, Virginia. At that time, the national government and the Commonwealth of Virginia will join in an 8-months celebration of the 350th anniversary of the founding of the American colonies at Jamestown in 1607. It will be the first such review held in this country in 50 years and with many nations participating, should be larger than the similar review held at Spithead, England in 1933 for the coronation of Queen Elizabeth.

Sitting in the Capitol Theater the other day and looking at the desk where Major Bowes used to sit when he conducted his famous amateur hour, I thought of his successor, Ted Mack, and how he is trying to bring order out of would-be talent chaos. Mack now has in mind a plan to separate the haves from the have-nots. Too many young people, Mack believes, come to New York with the thought—egged on by indulgent friends—that they have what it takes to make good in the entertainment world, when as a matter of fact, they would be better off back in their father's drug store or grocery or on the farm. It would be doing them a favor, Ted Mack thinks, to let them know this before they leave home with impossible dreams clouding their youthful eyes.

(Continued on page six.)

Congratulations In Order

Appalachian High School students, who have long been noted for their academic accomplishments, are also doing well in athletic circles as is evidenced by their wrestlers having gone to Burlington last Saturday to take the State championship, in competition with a number of much larger institutions.

Not only that, but the nearest competitor, from Greensboro, tallied only 82 points, against the hefty 95 taken by the Aps.

And to complete the story of Saturday's activities, Coach Dancy's boys also took six first-place awards to place beside the championship cup in their display at the high school.

Of course the lads had been used to winning. Fact is they hadn't met defeat in dual meets in the five years of their history. They had been gunning for the State trophy right along, and that they had been

properly trained for the big chance is shown by the spectacular results they achieved.

The Democrat takes occasion to congratulate these fine youngsters for their prowess as gladiators of the mat. They have acquitted themselves superbly, won the top honor, and at the same time brought high credit to their school, the town, and to themselves. Coach Dancy and the other coaches before him have shaped the boys into a competitive unit which doesn't tolerate defeats.

We've contended right along that Boone has some of the finest, most capable youngsters we've ever seen. And we're inclined to the belief that their participation and interest in the field of competitive sports have done a good deal toward the development of their wholesome attitudes. We share the community's pride in their continuing accomplishments.

Might Happen Anywhere

The tragic fire at Flat Rock School last week left eleven badly-burned victims hospitalized, four of them hovering between life and death, and one child dead, thus emphasizing how quickly a scene of childish laughter can be transformed into an inferno of agony.

Teachers and pupils, seared and blistered, still don't know just what happened to make the one-story building go up in flames like a box of match sticks, but Principal Phillips said the hope of the people is that their school disaster would lead to adequate fire protection in other schools. We hope so too.

Mr. Phillips said the Flat Rock School wasn't regarded as any firetrap at all. "It was a one story structure, had plenty of exits, and no one would have dreamed it could burn so fast." He added that the fire apparently started on the stage and that, in spite of claims of suppliers to the contrary, the curtain flamed at "terrific speed."

Which all adds up to the fact that a lot

of our children are getting in their academic work in an atmosphere of personal danger.

In Watauga county, where many of our structures are new, there should be lessened pupil peril, certainly, but as in other systems, some of the older structures are far from fireproof, and in some instances methods of escape are not adequate.

We should have learned a lot from the Flat Rock disaster, such as the life-giving concern of a good teacher for her pupil, the horrors which can befall a neighborhood in the wake of a blaze, and the importance of eliminating the school fire danger to the greatest possible degree.

No doubt school officials will be doubly careful for a while at least, and the janitors should be painstakingly briefed on sound safety measures. The man who stokes the furnace and those who clean the buildings are actually more important to the physical safety of the children than many others. Their intelligence and devotion to duty should be unquestioned.

Pipelines Are Booming

Pipelines are big business—and big transportation. The long cylinders which snake now above the earth, now under it, criss-crossing the United States, now rank as the third largest freight movers in the country.

The story of this extraordinary growth is told by Alfred Lansing in the March Reader's Digest in an article condensed from Collier's. Since World War II, our pipeline mileage has increased from 355,000 miles to more than 688,000. That's close to three times the U. S. railroad trackage.

Pipelines have unusual advantages: They're economical. They're almost entirely automatic. There are no empties to return nor unloaded vehicles to deadhead back.

A pipeline operates around the clock, every day of the year, and almost always at peak capacity.

It can get into—and out of—places that stop most other conveyances. Maximum grade on a freight-carrying railroad is three percent, on a highway it rarely exceeds 12 percent. For a pipeline, a 70 percent grade is considered easy.

To ship a 42-gallon barrel of gasoline from Philadelphia to New York costs \$1.05 by rail, eight cents by pipeline.

But, contrary to popular notions, pipeline shipping is not limited to gasoline and oil. You can ship anything in a semi-liquid condition. There are even small exclusive pipelines that carry nothing but antibiotics or fruit juice or ammonia or milk.

Foreign Aid On The Hoof

(Chicago Tribune)

A news story reports the shipment of 37 registered Holstein and Jersey cattle to Turkey This gift, handled by Heifer Projects, Inc. is from Mennonite churches in Kansas and United Brethren churches in Indiana to Turkish citizens, with the Turkish government paying transportation costs.

This is foreign aid in national and religious traditions that were old and honorable before government lend-lease or foreign aid programs (consisting largely of inedible munitions) were ever proposed. By the end of World War II, big government had moved in a big way into the field of sending dollars abroad. Such dollars are raised by the tax collector, administered by powerful and sometimes corrupt officials in foreign governments, and received by the private citizen depersonalized, diminished, and all too sterile, insofar as they reach him at all. Concurrently, Heifer Projects has been sending breeding animals, raised and paid for by private persons as gifts, often transported at the charge of the foreign country to which they were sent, and received by

individuals as warm, mooring, baaing, clucking, or grunting live stock—tangible, reproducing evidence of Americans' good will.

Forty foreign countries have received shipments from Heifer Projects. Germany, Italy, and Japan have had the most, as populous countries hard hit by the war. Most of the creatures exported have been cattle, goats, and chickens, the last often still in the egg. It was estimated not long ago that half the chickens and almost three-fourths the eggs in South Korea are derived from these voluntary gifts. And, perhaps best of all, the people who received an animal in the first instance are urged to pass on the gift—as they can, since animals reproduce. Hundreds of poor Italian farmers, for example, have thus learned the dignity and joy of giving after receiving.

Foreign aid of the sort represented by the 37 cattle just dispatched to Turkey is foreign aid that merits universal approval as a blessing to him that gives and him that takes.

Stretch's Sketches

By "STRETCH" ROLLINS

At The Coffee Clutch, A Crisis

NEXT TIME SOMEBODY asks you to have a cup of coffee, better say, "No, thanks, I'm driving." Or, "I belong to Caffeinists Incognito."

Say anything, but don't touch the stuff!

The doctor-editor of a medical magazine says it produces nervousness, insomnia, even palpitations of the heart, headaches, or aggravated high blood pressure. "You lash your body relentlessly when you give it coffee," he writes. "Every day millions of Americans are bombarding their brains with this powerful stimulant."

With those words (and more) he strikes a blow at one of America's best-loved institutions, the friendly "coffee break." To say nothing of the steaming cup as a prime requisite for starting any day properly.

But he's fighting a losing battle. Might as well forbid an Englishman his tea as try to deprive an American of his coffee.

In its stead the doctor advocates warm milk or fruit juice. If this heresy is taken seriously, the cheery, mid-morning greeting, "Had your coffee yet?" will be replaced by, "Well, let's go

get that slug of warm milk." Ugh!

But perhaps we owe the good doctor a vote of gratitude for pointing out the evils of strong drink. Perhaps in our ignorance we didn't realize that indulging in this seemingly innocuous picker-upper is in reality an act of debauchery. Or maybe I've been drinking the wrong brand of coffee.

IN NEW GUINEA, according to the National Geographic Society, a groom has to pay \$600 for a bride, and in Assam the swain must give the parents a bottle of liquor. If he is accepted, he must work as a servant for three years before and two years after marriage. Among the Urds of Mongolia (because there aren't enough men) every fifth girl marries a dormat.

In some countries, they're honest about these things.

SIGN OF THE TIMES—Quick and decisive action was taken by officials in a California town when library patrons complained about the noise from the saloon next door.

They evicted the library.

ONE FOR THE ROAD—"Winters ain't what they used to be," remarked the old-timer, as he backed up to the red hot stove and unwound his heavy wool muffler.

From Early Democrat Files

Sixty Years Ago
February 25, 1897.

Dr. C. J. Parlier, who has been visiting his parents in Wilkes for the past month, has returned.

Walter Council is in feeble health but we hope he will soon recover.

Mr. W. L. Bryan has returned from a visit of several days to Washington, D. C. He says the inaugural preparations at the capital city are immense.

The Skyland Institute at Blowing Rock was reopened on last Friday.

Married on last Saturday John Wesley Richardson, the carrier on the Linville mail route, to Miss Harrison, daughter of Anne Harrison of Deerfield, C. J. Cottrell performing the ceremony. The bride and groom are now at F. M. Hodges'.

Look out, boys! The Legislature has passed an act making you liable to a fine of \$10 and 30 days imprisonment for smoking a cigarette, and the merchant who sells it to you is liable to the same penalty.

The church house at Poplar Grove has at last been completed, and the church was put up solely by the citizens of that immediate neighborhood, without one cent of help from an outsider.

The Valle Crucis School is moving on nicely with Prof. Nicholson as teacher.

Cattle and sheep are fattened on molasses in Germany, and during 1894-95 not less than a hundred thousand tons were used for that purpose.

Thirty-Nine Years Ago
February 28, 1918.

The cheese factory building near Mr. H. J. Hardin's has been let to contract to Mr. Joe C. Hodges of Adams, who is now working thereon.

Private Ed Hodges of Battery E returned to Camp Sevier the first of the week, after spending a furlough of five days with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. G. A. Hodges.

Miss Mary Swift of Amantha, a trained nurse of considerable experience, has enlisted in the services of her country and is now stationed at Fort Sam Houston, Texas.