BIRMINGHAM ECCENTRIC

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A LESSON FROM THE OIL SCANDAL

Not so many months ago the newspapers and other periodicals of the United States were filled with the scandal of bribery charges growing out of the leases of the Navy's oil lands in Wyoming and California. Particularly prominent were the names of former Secretary of the Interior Fall, Edward L. Doheny and his son, and Harry F. Sinclair. And now comes forth the belief that all these men, indicted by a Grand Jury investigation, may go free on a mere legal technicality.

The indictments were quashed on the ground that the presence of Oliver P. Pagan, a special assistant to the Attorney-General of the United States, in the Grand Jury room at the time testimony was taken, was illegal and had the effect of voiding the indictments. In other words, the clever lawyers hired by the three men charged with bribery were able to make Justice McCoy, who quashed the indictments, believe that, had Mr. Pagan not been present, the Grand Jury would not have indicted the trio. Thus do we witness how three men, rich, powerful, able to hire clever lawyers, may escape the penalties commensurate with the staggering amount of law-breaking evidence produced against them by the Government. A poor man would have been languishing in jail long since.

In our own humble estimation, however, the big thing is not that the Government has not been able to send Fall, Doheny and son, and Sinclair to jail; for the world has known for ages that real justice is not the product of our court system. The **BIG** thing is that this trio, who, we are told, violated the tenets of simple decency and pure honesty in dealing with their fellow human beings,—the really **BIG** thing is that they may have proved untrue to the **BEST** that is in them.

For the sake of acquiring **MONEY,** (the easiest thing on earth to get), Fall, Doheny and son, and Sinclair may have deviated from the "street called straight" and "have sold their souls for a mess of pottage." In the meantime there exists—as there has always existed—the inviolate law of **TRUTH,** of **HONESTY,** that has ever dealt out to man according to man's conformity with its stringent requirements.

Any person who has violated laws that have to do with the fairness of one individual toward another, although he may not be apprehended and tried in a court of law, such a person will **PAY** before his eyes close in final sleep.

There have been men and women whose sole object in life was the acquisition of **MONEY,** of material possessions; much of their history is recorded in the archives of our penal institutions, but far more of it is only recorded in the Sacred Volume of St. Peter, and on the silent, neglected, and unloved tombstones that cover their remains in some cemetery.

There are men and women alive today, whose wealth would frighten the imagination of most of us, yet who are incapable of reading with enjoyment anything but the expiration dates of bond coupons and bank balances; they are **POOR,** though, in the real wealth of the world!

There are men and women alive today whose wealth is made up of three meals and a roof, an ordinary job, health, a loving circle of friends and relatives, a desire to drink in the beauties of Nature and to do a kindly act each day. Their wealth is lasting. They pay for their oil and gasoline according to the market price. They know little of Grand Jury investigations.

WORTHY OF YOUR SUPPORT

Desiring to assist in every way possible the continuance of the splendid work of the Community House for residents of Birmingham and vicinity, the Eccentric this week offers its readers part of this edition, hoping that the various articles relating to the Community House will be read by all.

Briefly, the Community House represents a spiritual side of the community, just as the churches and the schools do. Certainly, then, the Community House merits the support of every citizen of Birmingham and vicinity. We commend such an institution to the serious and sincere thought of all.

A GREAT CREDIT FOR OUR SCHOOLS

In these strenuous days of mounting taxation many persons are prone to grumble about the conduct of their public servants in the expenditure of money; in many cases, to be sure, there is sufficient cause to warrant it—but, in our humble opinion, no such barbs of enmity should be directed too harshly against the educational institutions of our land.

Last week the Eccentric gave the names of 15 boys and girls who will graduate from the Baldwin high school next June, all of whom have marks above 90 for their four years' work in the high school. That any high school may turn out so high an average for a small graduating class speaks well for the men and women who constitute the faculty. And, of course, it speaks well for the parents of such studious pupils.

When considering the question of school taxes, let this be your guide: Do I want the best kind of buildings and teachers to bring out the best mental and character qualities in my boy or my girl? If you answer in the affirmative, (as you will answer), then you cannot question the value of the Birmingham school system. And you will be eager to sacrifice much of your money to insure the continuation of a high standard of education for your children and your children's children.

REPUBLICAN FAITH IN DEMOCRACY

In the world of politics we hear a good deal these days about strict partisanship; we are told that many citizens of a certain political faith will stand by one of their party regardless of the merits of the individual who may be seeking office. In other words, many folks believe that many other folks "vote 'er straight" always. Now comes Oakland County with evidence that, though the rank and file of its citizens may be of the Republican faith, most of its supervisors, (who are majorly Republican), believe that a Democrat may have virtues.

This is clearly shown in the recent meeting of the Oakland County Board of Supervisors who, last week, elected James Cuthbert, of White Lake Township, as its chairman—and Mr. Cuthbert is a Democrat, too!

Thus do we witness man's faith in man, even though his thought may bear a different party stamp. All of which proves that what the beloved Bobby Burns said about a "man's a man for a' that" is accepted even in the political halls of our land.

If James Cuthbert, Democrat, proves to be a good chairman, a good citizen, interested in the entire welfare of Oakland County citizens, will he not handle his new job with as much wisdom as a Republican? Of course he will—a good man, be he Republican or Democrat, could not do otherwise!

THE CONVERSATIONAL ART

A friend remarks that he thought he was a pretty good talker, and he felt he was fairly intelligent. "But I got in the other day," he said, "with some gifted people who showed me what the art of conversation really was. They passed their repartee and their discussion back and forth so fast that it reminded me of star tennis players batting the ball back and forth across the net without even letting it bounce. I just had to keep still and listen."

Some people despise the conversational art, and think that nothing but action and ability to do things counts. Some think that ability to talk fast is enough for them, even if they don't say anything in all the stream of words they pour forth.

The more correct point of view admires the deft readiness and finished grace with which a really good talker can express himself intelligently on any subject, with his quickness to meet the arguments of an opponent, and the adroit thrusts with which he will disarm objectors and exchange pleasantries. Anyone who has that gift has power for leadership.

DREAMS OF SPRING

Oh, golden sunshine, balmy air,
Wonderful days, so bright and fair,
Casting a charm o'er everything,
And weaving happy dreams of spring!

Flowers and grass and waking trees,
Gay butterflies and birds and bees,
Blue skies, and hills where echoes ring
Of joyous dreams that come with spring!

Meadows and shady woodland ways,
And silver brooks where elfin fays
Beckon us on to dance and sing
And dream the carefree dreams of spring.

Not idle moments wasted, these:
Borne on a soft and gentle breeze,
Sorrow and care afar they fling,
Gay little dreams that come with spring.

Oh, precious hours that could not last,
Treasured and saved from out the past,
Memories that will ever cling
Of fondest dreams that came with spring.

Dreams that are fine and good and true,
Dreams of the things we long to do;
Courage and life and hope they bring,
Oh, golden dreams that come with spring!

—Beatrice McDonald.

FROM THE ECCENTRIC COLUMNS—of Long Ago

Just Bits Of News Gleaned From Old Files Of The Eccentric—The Items That Make Up the Historical Background Of the Birmingham Of Today

Forty-three Years Ago.

It looked kind'er funny to see them sweeping the snow off the walks last Tuesday morning.

—

The regular annual meeting of the Birmingham and Wing Lake Fishing Club will be held at the store of L. B. Peabody in Birmingham on the first Tuesday in June. J. Allen Bigelow, Secretary.

—

Allie Whitehead, being in Detroit lately and having found it necessary to be shaved, stepped into the barber shop under Rice's Hotel and was astounded to find a female barber ready to wait upon him. At first he was inclined to back out but curiosity prevailed and he seated himself in the chair, prepared to do or die. He did not expire but lives to tell the tale. At first he says when the female began her barberous operations, he was alarmed at the energetic and spirited mannerin which she stropped the razor and began proceedings. When she run her fingers around his face and tickled him under the chin with her lather brush it made his blood hot and his toes tingle. When she slipped one arm under his head, grabbed hold of his off ear, and drew the razor to starboard, he felt like paradise regained. Then she hauled his face over towards her, bringing his nose up against her and proceeded to clean the off side of his head. At this point he called up all his patriotism and recited the Declaration of Independence, immediately after, losing himself completely. When he come to, she had him shampooed, moustache dyed, eye winkers trimmed and his hair cut twice. He paid a bill of $1.65.

—

We were shown by Prof. Clizbe recently a handsome microscope purchased for the use of the school by money raised through the efforts of the Lyceum. It is a handsome affair, very powerful and is used by the botany class in the pursuit of their botany lesson.

—

Ed Miller has a brand new nobby windmill on his barn. Like to see these evidences of solid prosperity.

—

John Rainey is in Owasso and, it is rumored, has taken the position of pitcher in a professional B. B. C. organizing in that place. They can't get a better man outside of the National League.

—

Hon. H. O. Poppleton has returned from his Colorado trip.

—

Wanted—New sidewalk in front of the first-class stores.

—

The Birmingham Union School was closed on Thursday afternoon last week in honor of Arbor Day. A number of the scholars took advantage of this and went flowering in the fields.

—

When these old widowers get to be stylish you may make up your mind that something is going to happen. A. L. Means watched himself last week and it resulted in a new solid silver, patent lever full jeweled watch.

—

W. H. Smith went through town the other day with a three-horse team attached to an enormous load of tile, by a new style of whiffletree.

—

Lost—A plaid gray shawl. The finder please leave it at this office.

—

A petition to the village board is being circulated, praying that the retail liquor tax of G. E. Daines be reduced to $700. The proposed new state tax would practically shut up the National Hotel and everybody knows what a town amounts to without a hotel. Mr. Daines keeps a quiet, orderly house at very moderate charges. In the event of the closing of this house a heavy tax would have to be levied upon the village to defray corporation expenses.

Twenty-five Years Ago.

Over two-hundred trees have been planted in the nurseries at the cemetery this week.

—

The Aid Society of the M. E. church meets with Mrs. Jones today. Committee: Mrs. Frank Allen and Mrs. Houghton, biscuit; Mrs. Lord and Mrs. Vermilyea, cake; Mrs. Simpson, butter; Mrs. Wooster, sauce.

—

Cleaning up the grove opposite the power house is the order of the day just at present. We understand the D. and P. Railroad has secured control of this handsome piece of property and that many changes are to be made in it, all of which will add greatly to the beauty of the village. It is quite likely that this grove will make one of the finest places along the entire route of this popular railway.

—

Last Saturday night a horse was found hitched to a fine young shade tree. The marshall could not be found but the owner of the horse was.

—

A new departure in the way of postage-stamp books has recently been adopted by the government. An extra cent is charged for the book holding the stamps, for instance 12 two-cent stamps with book 25 cents; 24 stamps with book 50 cents, etc. The books are real handy being made to carry in the pocket. You can now get them at the Birmingham post office.

—

The following families have moved into this school district within the past month and entered 21 pupils in the schools in school: Hanna, 5; Brooks, 2; Parks, 2; Busby, 3; Runyan, 1; McDonald, 1; Philips, 1; Hedding, 2; Ashton, 1.

—

With this issue the twenty-third year of the Birmingham Eccentric begins. At the time this paper was started there was another one here. The Birmingham Post, which afterward moved to Midland where the editor died of injuries received while moving a press, in which case the editor was killed by his own paper.

—

Ed Parks and family are Birmingham residents again, Mr. Parks, having closed out his meat market business at Milford.

—

Your money and mine helped to pay for the signs placed on our streets forbidding bicycle riding on the sidewalks. The law is openly defied in plain sight of those who want to see.

—

On May 1st, and 16th, and on June 5th, the C. H. and D. Railroad will sell special excursion tickets to those desirous of seeking homes in the West, South and Northwest.

—

Things are evening up in Warren—three saloons and three churches.

—

Mrs. J. D. Van Every and two daughters, Carrie and Winnie, visited her mother in Southfield, Sunday.

—

You ought to go to Sherman's in the Library Building and get some of that delicious ice cream.

—

Eugene Brooks' house is being painted. Will Robinson is the artist.

Early Shaving Implements

According to Herodotus the Egyptians shaved continually, and only let the hair and beard grow when they were in mourning. The barber of the ancient Egyptians was known as the baq. He employed various instruments. A razor sometimes in the shape of a small short hatchet with a recurved handle, and other instruments shaped like a knife were most generally used.

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