

BIRMINGHAM ECCENTRIC (Founded in 1878) Published every Thursday at Birmingham, Mich. in The Eccentric Building, 126-128 North Woodward Avenue. Telephone 11 and 12. GEORGE ROGERS JAVELLIS Editor and Publisher Entered as Second Class Matter in the U. S. Postoffice at Birmingham, Michigan. SUBSCRIPTION RATES (In Oakland County) (Outside Oakland County) One Year \$1.50 One Year \$2.50 Six Months \$1.00 Six Months \$1.50 Three Months .75 Three Months \$1.00 All newspaper and advertising copy must be in the Birmingham office by Wednesday noon to allow insertion for that week. The Eccentric is a member of: National Editorial Association; Michigan Press Association; Oakland County Weekly Press Association; and University Press Club.

THURSDAY, MARCH 8, 1928

NOTE: The Eccentric is pleased to publish stories of events which have news value and which are written by persons connected with the editorial staff of the paper. All copy must be accompanied by return address and must be received by the office by Wednesday noon to allow insertion for that week. The Eccentric is a member of: National Editorial Association; Michigan Press Association; Oakland County Weekly Press Association; and University Press Club.

On Becoming A City

In fairness to the many citizens of Birmingham who, in spite of what seems a negative report on the subject of changing Birmingham from village to city form of government, believe that such a change would result in material benefits to this community. The Eccentric herewith presents a brief summary of certain definite advantages accruing to the city form of government, and upon which you will be able to vote next Monday.

In presenting this information, The Eccentric wishes it distinctly understood that it is presenting such a change merely on the basis of material advantages; it agrees with all citizens who hold the name "village" dear to their hearts, and is quite willing to submit from the standpoint of appealing to people who live in large cities, and who may come to Birmingham—that the traditions surrounding a village are more picturesque than those of a city. The name "village" has a sort of heart appeal within its letters; the name "city" sounds harsh, liked paved streets, bustling activity, and clanging street cars.

Yet, in all fairness, we submit that Birmingham, though it may be known to the world as a village, is confronted with many of the identical problems that exist in the smaller cities. The very thing that makes Birmingham, the village, is the thing that has brought so many citizens out here, and with them the problems of a city—for, you will admit, villages, when they grow, advance into the realm of the city.

Why are cities so shunned? Why do the very name of "city" sort of conjure up harshness, like paved streets, bustling activity, and clanging street cars? The answer is easy, it is because of the things within them, the people, the industry, the prosaic activity of people going about their business.

Birmingham, we are fond to believe, is made up of citizens who hold that the development of homes, the progress of education and religion, the advancement of social relationships, the retention of the spirit of neighborliness; Birmingham, as a village, is what it is because of the thoughts and ideals of its residents. Suppose, in the twinkling of an eye, Birmingham should cast off its village government, attire and step forth in the raiment of a city, with such a change of clothing, result in a complete change of the thoughts and ideals of its citizens? Of course, it would not. Whether it remains a village or becomes a city, Birmingham will always be Birmingham—free from industry, building good schools, fine churches, and developing the intimacy that abounds in a closely knit community of ideals.

Birmingham—whether a village or a city—will always hold within its hands the destiny of its municipal affairs; its officials will always be held liable to the electors for their public acts. And Birmingham can be just as splendid a community as a city as it has under the village form of government—and save a great deal of unnecessary taxation in the process!

And now for some of the actual advantages of the city form of government over the present village form.

(1) By becoming a city Birmingham would have at least four supervisors to represent it on the County Board. As a village, we have but one, who represents the entire township. Certainly four supervisors from Birmingham and one from elsewhere at large would give Bloomfield Township and Birmingham city a better chance for lower taxation apportionment than with but one supervisor.

(2) By becoming a city Birmingham would immediately divorce itself from the Bloomfield township government, and save the expense of contributing toward a township government that exists solely for territory outside of Birmingham. This year Birmingham paid \$64,000.00 toward township government; as long as we remain a village this amount will increase greatly as the outside township develops.

(3) By becoming a city Birmingham would divorce itself from all governmental connections with the outside world and would thus avoid any further political misunderstanding. Birmingham citizens could live in a condition of political friendliness with the remainder of Bloomfield township, just as Birmingham now lives in a condition of social and business friendliness with the outside territory.

Birmingham could attend to its own affairs with Birmingham citizens and the outside world could plan and pay for its own improvements. Birmingham would have but one assessment roll for taxation, and one registration roll for voting purposes.

(4) By becoming a city Birmingham would obtain a new charter; all who are acquainted with the problems of this community and know the contents and provisions of the present village charter, will agree that this charter, adopted in 1877, after twenty years ago, is no longer suited to cope with the present Birmingham. As a village, the best we can hope for is a piece-meal revision of the charter. The candidates to be voted on for the charter commission next Monday are representative of the best thought in Birmingham and will be able to present a new charter that would fit Birmingham's present and future requirements.

(5) Proper interpretation of the new state school code has played a prominent part in the re-

port of the recent city-village committee. The report seeks to give a legal interpretation on the provisions of this code, and those who made up this portion of the report (when any question arose over certain portions of the code) leaned toward the village form of government as the side of safety. Such interpretations, as contained in the report, qualify themselves with the words "might result"; you will note that the report in this respect does not say "shall result" or "will result". A good deal of debate took place within the committee on this question, certain of the members believing that "will result" or "shall result" was the proper verbal phrase to use. Other members of the committee, not convinced that this was the meaning of the school code, objected, with the result that "might" was used instead of "shall" or "will".

The new school code is admittedly without a clear meaning in certain parts; but officials everywhere throughout Michigan are agreed that, when the next Legislature meets, the real intent of the code will be supplied, and remembered, so that this real intent will not harmfully affect Birmingham should it change to a city. In the meantime, Birmingham will remain a graded school district, and, according to local school officials, will not change to a district of the third class until 1930.

In the meantime, it is well to remember that the alleged danger to a school district, which is claimed by opponents of the city plan, are contained within the school code, are applicable to a district whether it be a village or a city. So, it is easily seen, the fear on this score is not in the city form of government itself, but rather in conditions that may arise when a district changes from graded to third class.

Sooner or later Birmingham citizens will realize, if they do not now realize, that their village will be much better off materially as a city than as a village. In our estimation, the sooner this change is made the better off will be the pocketbooks of the taxpayers of this community. If there be any immediate penalties attending the change to a city, they will be more than offset by the immediate advantages that will be derived, advantages that are not at all possible under the present village form of government.

In conclusion, The Eccentric, as part of its duty, has provided information on the advantages of the city form of government over that of the village form only because its business is to keep the public informed. Whether or not the city plan carries next Monday is beside the question; that is for the voters to determine.

The thing to remember, however, in casting your vote, is this: Birmingham is composed of and developed by the citizens who live within its boundaries, who decide its manner of growth and development. As a city the thoughts and ideals of our people will be the same as when Birmingham is a village. The form of government under which you live, either as a village or a city, is like the clothes you may wear; to paraphrase the immortal Bob Burns, we declare that Birmingham, whether it be a village or a city, may be a real residential community for a that.

They Deserve Re-election

The following appraisal of the work of the four Commissioners who are up for re-election to the Commission at the coming election was made for The Eccentric by one of Birmingham's citizens who has had the honor to observe the work of the Commissioners in question, and who also has followed closely the work of the village during the past year.

"I do not know when I have seen a man who has added the zest to the business of running the city government Mr. H. T. Ellerby has. He appears to enjoy it and no part of the village work whatever fails to engage his full interest. He throws his full energy, enthusiasm, and business ability into the job and readily grasps the essentials in every program to be undertaken. The commission meetings are conducted in a business-like way, and no citizen of Birmingham need be at all alarmed of his appearance as a representative of the village under any circumstances.

"I don't believe there is any harder working commissioner on the board than Scott Hersey. He has no political ambition, but, like his own business, he does apparently have an ambition to do well whatever he does. There is no strain after publicity in the way he tackles the village's problems and I rather fancy that he has given more practical constructive suggestions on village development and administration than any other man on the commission. The atmosphere of our commission room has changed since we have had a woman on the commission. Mrs. Halgren isn't interested in politics. It is obvious that she feels that she represents the feminine element of the village of Birmingham and it has been our impression that she does it very well. The citizens of Birmingham can be sure that with her on the commission, questions of public health, public welfare, public protection, city beautification and recreation are going to have intelligent consideration.

"As long as men like Lee White serve on the Village Board there is very little to be apprehensive about. Mr. White brings a well trained and well stocked mind to the task of helping direct the affairs of municipal government. He is absolutely fearless in his approach to questions, thoroughly logical, and it would be absolutely impossible to conceive of his being on the reactionary side of any program.

"When citizens like these are willing to give so great an amount of their time to village affairs can any voter fail to be interested in voting once a year?"

The observer of the Commission shows himself to be able to summarize to be kept in mind. We agree with him that the four candidates are highly deserving of re-election and feel proud for Birmingham that citizens of the high caliber, exemplified in these four, are candidates for re-election.

The record of the Commission is beyond reproach and the work these members have accomplished is commendable. But the village, as it is, is not yet completed and the additional term is a necessity for them to complete tasks started but not finished because of a lack of time.

These members of the commission have familiarized themselves with the affairs of the village. They have shown themselves to be intelligent, and thoroughly capable of coping with the affairs of Birmingham. We therefore, feel that the village will be fortunate to have them serve in their official capacity for another two years.

ONCE BITTEN -- TWICE SHY



A Brooks Memorial "Woe Unto Ye . . . !"

The Eccentric is pleased to pass on and offer encouragement to a suggestion made by the Rev. Henry S. Evans, pastor of the United Presbyterian Church, that a bronze tablet be laid in the Baldwin High School as a tribute to the memory of Harry J. Brooks, who was graduated from the school.

The Rev. Evans suggests that the tablet be obtained through popular subscriptions from the friends of the late aviator and believes the work could best be done under the auspices of the Birmingham schools.

Certainly it would be a splendid thing if the people of the village were to show their appreciation of the works of Harry Brooks in this appropriate manner. The tablet would also serve as a symbol of the young man's accomplishments so that the youth of the village would be reminded constantly of the greatness attained in a few short years by one of their number who has gone before them.

Young Brooks was as splendid an example of American manhood as there is today in the country. His personal life was beyond reproach and he dedicated it to a cause.

We people of today have not yet had the opportunity of realizing the possibilities of aviation, hence, although we know the accomplishments of this young man were great, we fail to understand what his work will mean to prosperity.

Whatever the possibilities, the accomplishments of Harry Brooks will reflect credit on this village. Do you agree with us that we should pay him this tribute?

Voluntary Public Service

Action of the village commission last week in denying recompense to any member of the recent city-village committee for services performed undoubtedly meets with the approval of Birmingham citizens. Not that the saving of \$270.00 is going to lighten the treasury to any great extent, but rather to keep the spirit of citizen assistance of this community in the amateur class, with the result that every voter may feel a little closer to his or her governmental problems. Birmingham, growing rapidly as it has for the past five years, is going to be confronted for many years with municipal problems, many of which will require the whole-hearted assistance of an unparochial electorate. True, there may be times when the services of a local citizen may be used and paid for, but such payment for services should be distinctly mentioned before such employment is engaged.

Members of the recent city-village committee who put in many hours of their time investigating various phases of the problem, exemplified a fine spirit of civic service to this community, and their personal reward lies in the fact that they did take the time to do something for the town which they call "home."

The village commission deserves the public's support in their unwillingness to establish a precedent when they refused to put a price on voluntary public service.

More than 600 citizens attended Father and Son banquets in Birmingham churches during the recent week of observance; emphasis placed upon the real relationship of fathers and sons is never out of order, and certainly works to mutual splendor between the affected parties. Nearly all boys are hero worshipers, and the fact that they often go outside of their own homes for a masculine idol is entirely the fault of the dads. Making real men of boys will make it unnecessary for those boys to be made into real men when they attain the maturity of manhood.

Possibly we might have more great men in a future if someone would build log cabins for them to be born in.

Here is an article from Time, a weekly magazine that always tells much in few words about many things that are happening in this world. It refers to a premium offer by another magazine, in which the substance of absolute Christianity is closely connected with the modern cash register. It is worth reading, and thinking about. It has much to do with the perspective which the world in general places upon the part that Christianity may play in their lives. Here it is:

The Review of Reviews craves subscribers. Like nearly all non-fiction magazines, it lures them with rich promises of premium—i.e., something presumably more attractive than the magazine itself. Through the mails citizens are receiving the latest lure.

The premiums offered with 18 months' subscription to the Review are copies of Bruce Barton's "The Man Nobody Knows" and "The Book Nobody Knows." The Man is Jesus Christ; the Book is the Bible.

In advertising these books the premium circular preaches: "Jesus is a killjoy? He was the most popular dinner guest in Jerusalem. 'A faller? He picked up twelve men and forged them into an organization that conquered the world. 'Every business man will read it and send it to his partners and salesmen, for it will be the story of the founder of modern business. 'Jesus was a real executive.' 'A great advertising man. The parables are the greatest advertisements of all time.'

Scattered through these curious descriptions of the founder of Christianity are paragraphs extolling the benefits of a subscription to The Review of Reviews.

In a letter accompanying the circular was the following paragraph: "Barton's two books interest and aid the rich and powerful; they help any cub salesman to get orders for shoes polish—and to work on principles that lead him toward riches and power. 'Commented The Nation, intellectual weekly: 'Riches and power—and orders for shoe polish. There was once a man who talked differently. 'Blessed are the meek,' he said. 'Why take ye thought for raiment? 'Ye cannot serve God and Mammon. 'Go and sell all that thou hast and give to the poor. 'Verily I say unto you that a rich man shall hardly enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. 'It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God.' And in our terrible passage: 'Woe unto ye, scribes and Pharisees.'

Scattered through these curious descriptions of the founder of Christianity are paragraphs extolling the benefits of a subscription to The Review of Reviews.

The Village Clerkship

Hazel Lawler has been a good clerk for the village of Birmingham for the past seven years. We doubt if there is anyone in this town that knows more about the affairs of village routine than does Mrs. Lawler. She is a candidate for re-election next Monday. Opposing her is Mrs. Myrtle Carson, a very capable woman now employed in the business office of the local telephone company. From the office of pure good business, Mrs. Lawler ought to be re-elected; if Mrs. Carson wins out at the ballot box, it will take several years, at least, for her to be equal to Mrs. Lawler in plain village efficiency. To put it briefly, Mrs. Carson will certainly make a good village clerk, while Mrs. Lawler now is a good clerk. So take your choice of two capable women.

Those new prohibition agents' finger-prints may indicate whether bootleggers' money is likely to stick to their fingers.

Wonder why General Motors doesn't hire a funnyman to make up some Chevrolet jokes.

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