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GEORGE RODGERS AVERILL - EDITOR AND PUBLISHER
ALLEN TENNY - - - - - MANAGING EDITOR
PAUL NEAL AVERILL - - - ADVERTISING MANAGER
CLARENCE S. WARNER - ASST. ADVERTISING MANAGER

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THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 1931

NOTE: The Eccentric is pleased to publish stories of events which have news value and which are written by persons not connected with the editorial staff of the paper. All copy must be presented before noon on Wednesdays. The right is reserved, however, to make such superficial changes in the work submitted as are necessary to the style of the paper and as are required by laws of the state. Because of a mechanical situation in the composing room, headlines written by those other than members of the staff cannot be used. Any erroneous reflection upon the character, standing or reputation of any person, firm or corporation which may appear in the columns of The Eccentric will be gladly corrected upon being brought to the attention of the publisher.

The Farmers' Plight

A number of Michigan newspapers, including some of the leading weeklies, are accepting wheat from the farmers in return for their respective newspapers. It is but a gesture on the part of the newspapermen to aid the American farmer to procure a necessity by exchanging some of the products of his toil. While a surplus of farmstuff may be manifest now, it is not surplus alone that brings the American farmer to a condition of near-famine; the lack of a practical, safe system of finance is the real reason, we believe.

A Federal government that finds it possible to conscript human lives in case of external invasion ought to find some method of preserving the same country from the perils of a disordered financial system. There is plenty of money in the United States, and there is plenty of food in the hands of the farmers; there are millions needing work and food, too. Thus you are allowed to view two fantastical human tragedies; first, plenty of money and food but no means of distributing them; second, plenty of human hands willing to work to fill hungry bellies, but no means of getting it.

What is the answer? It remains with the Federal government to lead the way—not in the form of doles, but rather in the setting up of machinery that will bring about a practical guarantee that finance may profit through the employment of labor, and that labor may profit through cooperation with capital.

Drink, Drank, Drunk . . .

A Massachusetts judge has defined four stages of intoxication. At first the free imbiber is jocose, the state of seeing things through a rosy mist, and being satisfied with the world at large. Second, you may become bellicose, as when one looks for a fight; after, or before, you may change to lachrymose, the whimpering state. Last, but not least, if your supply of liquor is not exhausted, you may slip into the "passing out," or comatose stage of drinking; other names for this stage are "plastered," "stuccoed," or, to paraphrase a golf action, "tea-ed up." Would it be true to state, in summing up all the four conditions in these days of questionable liquor, that in any of the conditions enumerated one is in bad spirits?

State Politics

Concluding some pertinent comment upon the subject of "Budgets and Politics," Verne Brown, Ingham County publisher and a member of the House of Representatives, has this to say about Governor Brucker's recent attempt to slash the state budget:

What Michigan needs and what most municipalities need is just a little plain common sense applied in budget making. If requirements could be determined by some other measure than providing jobs for henchmen and if revenues could be determined by some other measure than election results, the harassed taxpayer might see some hope of relief.

Economy is the watchword but loading up the payrolls with incompetents is the practice. Daylight government is talked but secret agreements are the rule. Juggling of funds is condemned but the practice continues.

Budgets are the playthings of politicians.

Maybe some day Michigan will elect a set of state officials whose ambitions are only to serve the state while they are there and who don't care a rap whether they or their supporters ever are returned to office.

What a day that would be for Michigan!

Who Shall Reduce Taxes?

Judge Arthur J. Lacey, Detroit's tax expert, says that a taxpayers' strike is being created in the United States, caused by inability of people to pay their taxes and an unwillingness on the part of public officials to promote governmental reforms that will require less taxes. Undoubtedly Judge Lacey is correct. But what is the solution? In our opinion, the only answer is this: the taxpayers must band together to insist that their public officials get along with less money; and when they insist, the taxpayers must please remember that, in most cases, they are responsible for the original increase in taxation—for they sought, by petition and bond issue, most of the items that have so greatly increased the cost of carrying on modern government. Public demand, once directed toward more services from government, must now go in the opposite direction. It is foolish to expect the majority of public officials to initiate economy in government.

SOMEWHERE WE READ the suggestion that the Farm Board relieve the cotton market by using its bags to store the surplus wheat in. There's more than the mere kernel of an idea in it, too.

Filled With Gratitude

Basil King was an American author who, after becoming blind, wrote a dozen books that have done much to lighten the burdens of mankind. One of his books he called "The Conquest of Fear." In reading it a few evenings ago, we were greatly impressed with his interpretation of gratitude for blessings which he had received direct from God. "In order to banish fear I think it necessary to train the thought to seeing God as expressing Himself in all the good and pleasant and enjoyable things that come to us," writes Mr. King. " . . . The things we lack are more vivid to us, as a rule, than those we have acquired. Having hung, as it were, a cloud about ourselves we disregard the uncountable ways in which God persists in shining through, in spite of our efforts to shut him out."

Continueth Basil King: "To try to enumerate the uncountable would be folly. You cannot reckon the good which comes to every one of us through such channels as family, home, friendship, income, business, amusements, studies, holidays, journeys, sports, books, pictures, music, and the other hardly noticed pleasures of any single day. To ascribe them specially to God would seem to us far-fetched. That is, theoretically we may ascribe them to God, but practically we dissociate Him from them. Few of us, I think, ever pause to remember that through them He is making Himself known to us before doing it in any other way. And yet, it seems to me, this is the beginning of our recognition of the Divine. I have little hesitation in saying that this is what parents should teach children before they teach them to lisp prayers. The prayers have hardly any meaning to the baby-mind, and not much more than a sentimental value on the later life, if they have as much as that. But any child, from the very budding of the intelligence, could grasp the idea of a great, loving Super-Father, who was making Himself visible through gifts and care."

It is, of course, difficult for adults to grasp entirely new concepts of their life, after years and years of example and precept, custom and tradition, that previous generations have handed down to them. But what a really glorious inheritance is in store for our children if, as Basil King suggests, we start them off into life with the correct emphasis of gratitude that washes away the really groundless foundations of fear that so upset the happiness of the human family.

These Testing Times

Here is something to ponder deeply, especially if you possess great gobs of money, and seek to protect it; and if you are among that growing legion of worthy people unable to find employment, you may receive some consolation in knowing that the industrial and political leaders of today are beginning to be impressed with the fact that unless they lead the world to better days, the mob will take the matter into its own hands—and then Heaven help the capitalistic system!

But let the Chilton Times, of Wisconsin, tell you, and console you, if it can, in its recent editorial titled, "Trial The Real Test of Character":

"There are not wanting signs to indicate that a deep sense of fear for the dissension and strife which the approaching winter may bring is abroad in the nation and the world. The trend of a long train of depressing events has crystallized belief that next winter will witness the climax of the present unrest. Portents of brewing trouble are scattered among the news stories of the day—generally inconspicuously. President Green of the American Federation of Labor warns that the government must aid the jobless, or face rebellion . . . . A flat tenant in Chicago is evicted, a riot results, three are killed, many wounded . . . A northern Wisconsin city, on the brink of bankruptcy, asks the attorney general how its poor are to be fed . . . Montague Collet Norman, governor of the powerful Bank of England, broadcasts the warning that unless drastic measures are taken the capitalistic system of the world will be wrecked within a year . . . Banks close their doors—silently—intensify distress, kindle into flame the discontent on which communism thrives.

"We have at least passed the camouflage stage and begun to face facts. No one any longer denies that industry is in a bad way—not even the professional political optimists. At last we are facing realities divested of bunk, and that is progress. The people that sat in darkness have seen a great light. We know that in spite of the luminous vision and lofty designing of the mighty wizards of industry and finance things can go awry, show them up suddenly as mighty little wizards. We know that the politicians cock sure formula for prosperity, die-cut, stamped and trade-marked, can be turned by events into a withering irony. We know, in a word, that we still have a good deal to learn about industry, trade, commerce, economics, finance. Recognizing our ignorance, there is hope that in time we may learn.

"It does seem that the people who sat in darkness have begun at least to see great light. Our next most urgent need is faith, faith in ourselves and, to be honest, faith in God. We need to remind ourselves that Providence will not suffer us to be tempted beyond that which we are able may be relied on to limit equally our physical trials. We can catch glimpses of a rainbow of hope in the parable of the birds of the air that "neither sow nor do they reap nor gather into barns," and yet they find food enough somehow, and time to exercise the blessed gift of song. We can find inspiration in pausing to consider the lilies of the field that labor not nor do they spin and yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed as one of them.

"We are facing a time that may bring organized unrest. We can face it in the spirit of the timid and cowardly, ready to turn tail and flee at the sound of the first stir in the brush. Or we can face it bravely and confidently. Trial is the real test of character. It is Waterloos and Valley Forges that fix names in history, not the eras of artificially stimulated prosperity about which there has been so much ballyhoo. There is nothing to be gained by taking a fearful prospect of what is ahead. Generally the anticipation is worse than the reality. Everything is to be gained by facing the situation squarely and resolutely and adapting our manner of life to meet it. The winter may not be so bad after all."

FEMININE FASHIONS have gone romantic. They are swinging back to the styles of several centuries ago. If only they would stop at last season's fashions, that a lot of truth the old saying "a stitch in time saves nine" would really mean.

From The Eccentric Columns of Long Ago

FIFTY YEARS AGO

State Fair this week.

Where is our flowing well?

Fun alive in the school district No. 5 meeting Monday night.

Notice — Anyone missing a pumpkin, call on Till Trowbridge.

Hyland has gone to Jackson—if he returns it will be perhaps because Gov. Jerome pardoned him.

Only two Tonies left in town. The Misses Mamie Utter and Jennie Keyes are all that remain of that once strong organization.

Harvey Carter struck it rich on the farm of Adams Baily in Troy, getting a flowing well at 116 feet depth, that flows 20 gallons a minute.

There is to be a dance at Dave Rainey's, one mile south of Franklin, on Tuesday evening, Sept. 27. All are invited. Music by Brooks and McHenry's band.

The following new books have just been received by the Ladies Library Association: "Pilgrim's Progress," "Cecelia," "Natural History," "Hero Worship," "Hypatia," "Ten Decisive Battles," "Wilhelm Meister," "Corinne."

It is understand that the members of the High School Lyceum have challenged the Birmingham Reading Club to a debate on the question, "Resolved: That the Birmingham reading room, as now conducted, is detrimental to the best interests of the village."

Frank Van Every is making extensive preparations for building a new and commodious residence on Townsend street. The excavation for the cellar is nearly finished and judging from the appearance, the new house will be a fine addition to that part of the village.

Our friend Edwin R. Adams of Gilbert Lake fame had the misfortune to fall from a tree Monday last and came very near making a fatal accident of it by striking on his head and shoulder. As it was, his neck escaped breaking, and we are glad to say he is around again.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

At this writing still very dry.

We'll like a little more rain in ours, please.

We saw yesterday a plate of four large, smooth, round, ripe tomatoes from E. A. Starr's tomato patch. They weighed four and one-half pounds. And they were beauties too.

Good roads will lead to the general improvement of the countryside. The farmer who drives to and fro from town over a spacious well-cared for road will unconsciously come to effect corresponding improvements in the management and operation of the farm.

Here's a fine bunch of fishermen who went for a few and got them at Walnut Lake last Monday: Messrs. Bert Baldwin of Grand Ledge, Sat. Trowbridge, Till Trowbridge, George Case, well of Detroit and Volney Nixon. They caught eight fine lake trout. If Nixon hadn't forgotten his fishing tackle, he solemnly avers, the catch would have numbered 15, and we believe him.

One of our exchanges advertises a cow for sale as follows: "Full-blooded cow for sale, giving milk, three tons of hay, a lot of chickens, and several stoves." While we have always had respect for the meek-eyed gentle bossy, we never suspected for a moment that she would branch out into the junk shop business.

FIVE YEARS AGO

A history of Birmingham in pictures is the present object of the Library Board. The Board hopes that a record of Birmingham may thus be obtained to be placed on the walls or in albums in the new library building.

Four tables each 60 feet long were necessary to hold the wealth of flowers brought forth for the annual exhibition of the Bloomfield Hills and District Horticultural Society held last Saturday in the Baldwin High School.

Lee A White, resident of Birmingham and librarian of the Detroit News, dedicated the bronze tablet which marks the site of the first newspaper in Detroit. The paper was published in 1817.

All of Us

—By Marshall Maslin—

JUST A flat, circular piece of cardboard, half an inch thick. Just 33 holes arranged in the form of a cross, punched into that board. And just 32 little wooden pegs in those holes. The hole in the center of the cross is empty.

The problem is to jump one peg over its adjacent peg—removing from the board each peg as it is jumped—until at last only one peg is left and that is sitting snugly in he center hole.

It looks easy.

It isn't.

You jump—and you jump—and you jump. You mow down those little pegs ruthlessly. Then you find yourself with six or eight or 10 of those pegs left and nowhere to jump. Or you end with one peg, but it isn't at the center.

You try and you try, but you can't seem to work it out. Somewhere there's a path through those pegs and holes that leads smoothly and easily to the center—but you can not find that path. It is hidden. Other people can find it—but not You. . . . A friend come along and picks up the puzzle and begins to jump the pegs. You see him do it. You watch every move. You say to yourself: "He can't do it. He'll never get it?" . . . But he does! He knows the path—and suddenly, when you think he is hopelessly defeated, he goes round and round and lands triumphantly at the center.

It was no accident! He knew how—he knew what he was doing.

He knew the way through those puzzling pegs just as clearly, just as surely, as some people know their way through life. It was no trick, it was not luck. Neither is it luck for those other people who—in Life—are so calm, so sure, and who know just where they want to go and how to get there, and who do get there so triumphantly, with joy on their faces and peace in their hearts.

They feel the path beneath their feet and around a thousand corners, beyond ten thousand errors and puzzles they know that a quiet center of things awaits them.

Right now, I do not know how they do this thing. I envy them, I can not emulate them, but I know that what they can do—with the little puzzling pegs or the enormous puzzle of life—almost every man who sets his heart to it may do as well as they.

For this life that is such a puzzle has a path running through it—and it can be followed! There's a way!—if only we can put our feet upon it.

PEOPLE'S COLUMN

The Eccentric is pleased to receive communications for this column. All communications must be signed, but signatures will be kept confidential upon request. Letters must be limited to 500 words.

HENRY CHALLENGES SUIT

To the Editor:

In a recent issue of your valued paper there appeared an article concerning the controversy between the village and myself relative to the dispute about the work done on Cataipa drive. It is gratifying to know that every story has two sides, although the others side of this one is almost indescribable on paper. Nevertheless, I would thank you for sufficient space to convey briefly to the citizens a few of the facts which brought about this trouble.

It originated long before I ever thought of becoming a village commissioner. It began when our county drain commissioner was forced to construct an faulty, incomplete and unnecessary sewer, 15 feet deep and 1,300 feet long, in the center of the above mentioned Cataipa drive which at that time was a beautiful road.

Furthermore, the sewer was installed in zero weather, apparently without the knowledge of anyone except the drain commissioner and some irresponsible contractor. The excavation was left open almost three months until the frost came out, causing the entire length of the road to tumble outside-in. Immense lumps of frozen dirt crashed to the bottom, breaking several large crocks.

In vain did I try for three months to get from Mr. Arthur W. Spencer (then county drain commissioner) and his associates some information or enlightenment as to whom I should go to get relief, but invariably was given evasive answers.

Not long after this the village did considerable work, some of it good and much of it poor, installing risers and extensions and rebuilding the road. Ninety percent of said work was made necessary owing to negligence. My contention has always been and still is that the county should have been sued instead of me.

Why should I be blamed and penalized for blunders and mistakes made by unscrupulous officials who draw plenty of money from the reservoir the tax-payers are almost coining their very blood to keep filled? It is high time we cease to be gullible and tolerate such a distressing and deplorable situation as exists in Oakland County today.

Furthermore, I wish the citizens of our community to know that in addition to this sewer blunder for which I am asked to pay approximately $6,000, this subdivision was equipped with 1,300 lineal feet of six-inch water main at a cost of $3,128, also 2,900 lineal feet of a four-foot cement walk at a cost of $1,812, and gas mains installed by the Consumers Power Company at a cost of several hundred dollars, all of which was paid by me. The village was never asked to contribute one cent.

Writing is far from my specialty, but I have made an effort to be fair and be mindful that it is much easier to be critical than to be correct, also that just and constructive criticism can do no harm.

Looking forward to a lawsuit is far from pleasant especially during such hectic and perilous times. However, I welcome this one or even a Grand Jury investigation if necessary. Thanking you again.

Respectfully yours,
W. W. HENRY,
981 Woodward avenue.

ParaLaffs

So It Does.

With deficit estimates jumping $50,000,000 or more a day it looks as if Andrew Mellon will have a fine opportunity to show his Hamilton stuff.—The Cleveland Plain Dealer.

His Secret

We do not know whether the secret of longevity is hidden somewhere in the item which said a woman in Rumania died at the age of 126 years. "after she had called in a doctor for the first time in her life."—Boston Herald.

THE OTHER CHAP SAYS SOMETHING

WET NEWSPAPERS

A close perusal of the editorial columns of our best country weekly newspapers inclines us to the belief that if our city dailies were half as urgent and sincere in their demands that public law enforcement officers get down to brass tacks and perform the duties they are sworn to perform, and that if the public would once arouse itself to the dangers that have been enmeshing our country in the last dozen years, the yoke could soon be thrown off, the criminal element properly disposed of, and much of this dangerous unrest and disorder and lawlessness would be done away with. Public sentiment invariably designates the action law enforcement officers take toward their sworn duties.—Al H. Weber in Cheboygan Observer.

Defeat of the Referendum

The emphatic manner in which the people of Michigan turned "thumbs down" on capital punishment will probably settle the agitation that has been on in Michigan for many years to return capital punishment. It's certain that the people are not in a frame of mind to support any such a proposition at the present time.

Many honestly supported and voted for the bill with the conviction that it would be defeated by the people. Among this number was The Diamond Drill. It was very apparent from the outset that the people of this community were not of a mind to support such a proposal—not at this time. Sentiment against the taking of life is too strong in the human breast and sentiment ruled. Perhaps it's for the best. Perhaps it will stir those responsible for good government to emulate our sister state of Wisconsin in dealing with the criminal element. The vast inrush of people to the Detroit area brought with it woefully lax administrative methods, especially in dealing with crime, great and small. Criminals are coddled; shysterlawyers are given too much leeway in plying their trade. The people are suffering from these conditions and as a way out they turned to capital punishment. The good people of Detroit who championed capital punishment were sincere in their efforts to better the crime situation in their territory. Their views didn't meet the views of people out in the state nor did it meet the views of a lot of people in their own territory, as the vote plainly shows.

One result of the vote will be to remove the question of capital punishment from the legislative program of the next legislature and in that respect it is a healthy accomplishment.—Tom Conlin in Crystal Falls Diamond Drill.

Poems That Live

INDIAN SUMMER

These are the days when birds come back,
A very few, a bird or two,
To take a backward look.

These are the days when skies put on
The old, old sophistries of June—
A blue and gold mistake.

Oh, fraud that cannot cheat the bee
Almost thy plausibility
Induces my belief,

Till ranks of seeds their witness bear,
And softly through the altered air
Hurries a timid leaf!

Oh, sacrament of summer days,
Oh, last communion in the haze,
Permit a child to join.

Thy sacred emblems to partake,
Thy consecrated bread to break,
Taste thine immortal wine!

—Emily Dickinson (1830-1886)

The "Big Shots" Say:

Ralph T. O'Neil, National Commander, American Legion:

"The American Legion never has in the past, and in my opinion, never will in the future, ask anything that is unfair or that will place an unjust financial burden on the country."

Merle Thorpe, editor, Nation's Business:

"We might sum up the qualities of leadership in four words—the ability to visualize, to organize, to deputize, to supervise."

Andrew Mellon, Secretary of the Treasury:

"I have lived through several crises—they have been caused, either directly or indirectly, by serious dislocations which were due, as a rule, to wars and their aftermath."

Henry Ford, auto maker:

"Next year every man with a family who is employed at the plant will be required to have a garden of sufficient size to supply his family with at least a part of its winter's vegetables, or he will find himself out of a job."

Dorothy Dix, columnist:

"A mother-in-law, to come up to requirements, has to be dumb as an oyster, as blind as a bat, as humble as a worm of the dust, as invisible as a spirit."

Sinclair Lewis, author:

"You can tell an American in disguise by the fact that he thinks he is a great orator."

Oswald Mosley, British M. P.:

"If a man were drowning today he would have to shout for help in German."

Nancy Astor, British peeress, Virginia-born, back from Russia:

"Soviet-Russia is the best-run country on earth."

Sometimes the matter of a few minutes makes all the difference in the world, and that's the very reason why we emphasize the fact that our ambulance is maintained on an **emergency** basis. We answer calls promptly, at any hour of the day or night.

This is a fact worth knowing and worth remembering!

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