The Birmingham Eccentric

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THURSDAY, AUGUST 18, 1932

NOTICE—The Eccentric is pleased to publish stories of events and 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 Wednesday. The right is reserved, however, to make such especial changes in the copy submitted as are necessary to the style of the paper and to conform with the rules of the U. S. Postoffice Department as required by laws of the state. Because of a special situation in the composing room, headlines written by persons 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.

Curtailing Our School Program

Two reactions are foremost among those resulting from the solution adopted by the Board of Education in meeting an anticipated deficit of more than $60,000 during the coming school year, and thus balancing the budget.

First, it was probably the most satisfactory solution that could possibly be found for what was at best a supremely difficult and undesired problem.

Second, it puts the school system clearly in a position for testing whether those people who are still able and willing to pay their taxes will take up the additional burden of those who are unable or unwilling to pay.

In theory, at least, neither teachers nor students will suffer beyond endurance by the curtailments made. Shortening of the school year by two weeks and the discontinuance of courses in art, music, etc.—commonly termed the "frills" of education which a few will miss deeply but which the majority will, unfortunately, hardly miss at all—does not extend beyond what is expected in times like these.

The brunt of the burden in respect to salary reductions falls on the married women teachers, and it is assumed that they are not entirely dependent upon themselves for a means of livelihood.

In spite of these curtailments, however, it should be found that the School Board found it impossible to make any major reduction in the school tax levy. The levy this year will be $371,500 as compared with last year of $389,000. To have reduced it any further the Board found, would have necessitated half-day sessions. And half-day sessions, the Board has decided, are to be the last resort.

The reason that lower taxes could not follow in the wake of reduced expenditures is, of course, delinquent tax payments. The newly adopted program is based—somewhat optimistically, it might appear—on anticipated tax collection during the coming year of 48 percent, about the same as that of last year.

If that percentage is not attained, or at least approximated, it is admitted by Board members themselves that half-day sessions must be resorted to during the spring semester.

In other words, the proposition which has been put up to the people of Birmingham by the Board of Education is this: "We have cut our expenditures as far as it is possible to do so without turning to half-day sessions. At the same time, we have found it impossible to reduce taxes in proportion to curtailments in expenditures because we know that some people are unable and others are unwilling to pay their taxes and we are counting on those who are still able and willing to carry the entire load."

Whether they will respond to the extent of the 48 percent anticipated by the Board and necessary to the success of the present program remains to be seen. It is up to them to do so, will make the half-day session unnecessary, and it is just this that Superintendent Charles W. Sandell means when he says, in a statement published elsewhere in this paper: "If the community, after having been given an opportunity, fails to avert the conditions which will necessitate such drastic steps—then the community must assume the responsibility for the consequences."

Hoover Still Leads

In accepting the Republican nomination for re-election to the Presidency of the United States, Herbert Clark Hoover presented the problems of his country in a masterful fashion. Though we have often criticized some phase of the federal government's operations, and at times have found ourselves complaining against a specific act of even our President, we are very thankful that he lives today to accept the responsibility our country has given him. Between President Hoover's mental and professional assistants and those of his Democratic opponent, Franklin D. Roosevelt, we feel a great gulf exists, so far as fitness for such times of stress and readjustment. Hoover towers higher today than ever he did. With all his faults, he is still America's leader.

Money-lending is going to be depended upon to return prosperity to America, then let us paraphrase the Merchant of Venice and say: "A Shylock cometh to judgment!"

It is gratifying, indeed, to have people come in and say that the Eccentric's ability to produce effective printing of every form is an asset to me in my own business. Your friendly and able help in preparing printing, office forms, catalogues, or direct-mail pieces is appreciated. I'm glad to be able to depend upon your organization."

The real reason why some of those athletes won in the Olympic games is that they trained themselves, devotedly, to their task. Similar records come to business and professional men and women who "see it through."

One sign of a real spineless individual is one who has the backbone found in the shadow of a jellyfish.

County Welfare Relief

Oakland County's Welfare Commission, headed by C. B. Wilson of Pontiac, has started suit against Wayne County to collect $120,000 owing for the feeding and care of Wayne County's indigent who have wandered into our own county. Already, since the suit was started ten days ago, Wayne has paid Oakland $22,000 of that sum. This is just another reason why Oakland County, as a whole unit of government, will be wise to retain the present centralized welfare agency. From a strict humanitarian standpoint, and from the county angle of complete economy, the centralized plan is best today.

Although at first glance it may appear that Bloomfield Township and other units will be able to save money by de-centralizing the welfare disbursing agency, it is easy to see that in districts where the local taxes cannot pay for welfare necessities, help will have to be given from the County-at-large. This condition prevails in many sections of other communities and what first appears to be a savings becomes an extravagance and ever-mounting tax burden upon those who can pay their taxes.

Take the southern section of Oakland County, especially in the Hazel Park area in Royal Oak Township; it cannot raise more than a fraction of the funds necessary to carry on needed welfare relief work, so it must depend upon the County for help. Whatever is expended in that area would be done with less economy than is now possible through the present centralized welfare agency. Duplicate this in other sections of the County, inject the element of probable political maneuvering, and you will get a picture of the situation that will confront the entire county's taxpaying purse if the poor relief is returned to the old, perhaps well-meaning, but nevertheless extravagant system.

Our Country Best Of All

In spite of the fact that all of us, at times register mild or severe disgust with the manner in which government is operated in the United States, never fail to remember that our country is still the best one in which to live. The good old U. S. A. still offers greater security for your efforts than any other land in the whole world. Except, possibly, a perpetually endowed cemetery lot. But the latter is only for dead ones.

Mere wishes never put that bone in the chicken. The old girl had to rise early to get the worm, and then spend the remainder of the day pecking away for grain. It's the same way with humans, too. We've got to go back, and back, and back again to the same task if we would strengthen our spines.

It's very easy, of course, to say: do this or do that and you will some day be a success. But the only reason more people are not successful is because they merely accept the suggestion, but never act upon it. You've got to transform good intentions into completed acts if you would make progress.

Walter J. Connelly, member of the Village Commission and an interested citizen in good government policies, is doing a quiet bit of personal work for William B. Rossiter, Jr., Republican candidate for Congress from the 17th District, which includes Oakland County. Rossiter, hitherto unknown in political circles, is making an active campaign for the office, and is each week gathering new friends to his side. He lives just southwest of Birmingham.

Hopes springs eternal in the human breast—and that's one reason why so many candidates are seeking public office this year.

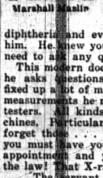
No business can succeed without plenty of intelligently directed busy-ness on the part of those engaged in it.

Every newspaperman early learns that most people want all the news that is possible to be obtained—generally about the other fellow.

All of Us

By Marshall Maslin

SCIENCE is wonderful. Just marvelous . . . The things those doctors and surgeons can do. When you go into a doctor's office these days, you can't even keep a secret. They want to know everything. What you ate for breakfast. How much you smoke. What dreams you have. How many hours you work. And whether you're a pessimist or an optimist. And how much you lost in the crash, and who's your favorite talkie star.



Marshall Maslin

Well, maybe I AM exaggerating, but not so VERY much . . . It was different in the old days. The old family doctor knew all about you. He'd brought you into the world. He knew your grandfather and he knew your mother and he carried you through measles and mumps and diphtheria and everything else. You couldn't fool him. He knew you through and through and didn't need to ask any questions.

This modern doctor never saw you before . . . So he asks questions and he wants facts. They've fixed up a lot of machines that furnish him with the measurements he needs. Fluoroscopes. Metabolism testers. All kinds of jiggers . . . And X-ray machines. Particularly X-ray machines. You mustn't forget those . . . The doctor says that first of all you must have your teeth X-rayed. He makes an appointment and you go. You DAYE to go—it's the law! That X-ray room is a Sax Rohmer setting . . . The servant of the machine laughs at your fears. You take off your coat and loosen your necktie and you lie down among the sand bags on a curved, polished wagon. It looks like the curved stone the Aztec priests used for human sacrifices . . . You hold your head this way and you hold your breath, you twist it that way and hold your breath, you count and you curse. Ha! tells you this is nothing and what are you complaining about—he had the president of the United States and that president of Mexico on that metal couch . . . The worst is yet to come—he's about to photograph your skull. Put your face down on that polished surface. Hold your breath. Keep still. Don't move. Play dead dog. Wait, wait, WAIT! There! Now turn on your side and do it all over again . . . Now get up. Now rest. Now do it some more . . . Come back next week and look at the plates. See the foggy places near the floor of the sinus. Observe the "insufficient calcification." Look at that tooth! You can't see that it's bad? You can't? Well, it is, take my word for it, boy, it's bad, all right. You'll just do what the doctor says. We'll tell him and he'll tell you and everything will be all right.

And that's modern medicine. They say the Age of Faith is past and nobody believes anything any more. Nonsense! This IS an Age of Faith—and you MUST believe what the doctor tells you. He's the boss.

From The Eccentric Columns of Long Ago

FIFTY YEARS AGO

We smell a wedding.

Mark Miller to box miller at Erickson's.

Mrs. Lyons Rose visited South Lyons lately and now this week he is pasturing at Bay City.

Tom Adams solemnly avers that he didn't attend the Auburn ice dance. Hope he didn't "pull."

F. W. Sherman of the Birmingham Quadrille Band has purchased from L. B. Peabody a $90 gold trimmed cornet. Sherman is daisy, and Sherman can blow it!

Married: In Troy, Tuesday, Aug. 8, 1882, by the Rev. Mr. Hicks, at his residence, Augustus Cline to Miss Therese Bourdine. It's a genuine Kline match, and the friends of both parties join in wishing a new household, the best of fortune.

Miss Mary Orden, a former teacher of Big Beaver, is at present the guest of Mrs. G. C. Orth. Miss Orden will teach young ideas how to shoot at White Lake with the usual success and interest that a qualified teacher always enjoys.

The low branches of the shade trees overhanging the walks are a nuisance which we meet with in every part of the town. The village board of health directed the marshal to order all property holders to trim the overhanging limbs of their shade trees to a uniform height of not less than eight feet from the sidewalk. It is a consummation greatly to be desired, and we hope to see the marshal's instructions obeyed promptly.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

Wanted, more water.

Wanted, a street sprinkler.

A lady resident remarks: "that it don't look as tho the old Library Society was forced to give up when it died with money in its pocket?"

Do you know that Willits street is one of our best? The well-kept lawns on either side, the neat grounds of the Baptist church and the grounds of Ed Lamb challenge all competition.

Harvey Rosso of Birmingham and his cousin, Roy Miller of Disco, (both 11 years old) are visiting at their Grandpa Miller's on the bank of the Clinton river. They took a spear and went fishing. In about 30 minutes they came home with three of the biggest fish—two of them weighed 10 pounds each, and the seven pounds. It was the first time the boys went fishing.

If the pickpockets who have been making a practice of turning on the gas of the street lights after they have been extinguished for the night, do not stop and pocketing, they will be prosecuted and punished to the fullest extent of the law. Fun is one thing, but this trick is a big damage to the company.

A travelling man said on Tuesday last to ye editor, "Say, every little dinky town in Michigan has a street sprinkler, but you hear no thunder don't Beautiful Birmingham?" This was a poser for us, and as a thick cloud inclosed his attic form drop view, we 224 before he could get the tears from his eyes and the tears from his voice. It certainly is there, this dust situation! There is damage spending months of the year previous. This brings the possibility of Birmingham's becoming a first class office, which would result in a new post office building.

Plaster is being worked out today for an eight-story office building on West Maple avenue and Hates street by Albert Kahn, Detroit architect for Messrs. Cousens of Detroit. This will be the largest office building in Oakland County.

Unanimous favor of village commissioners was given at a special meeting Tuesday night to a proposal to widen Maple avenue to 86 feet from Southfield avenue. The street is now 66 feet wide.

Village Manager James W. Parry today is making arrangement for three new trade lights to be placed on Woodward avenue within three weeks. The village commission, in approving the purchase of the lights for a total of $1,200, declared they are needed by absolute necessity because of the constantly increasing traffic. One will be placed at Lincoln, one at Oak and another at Brown streets as they intersect Woodward avenue.

With more than $4,000 worth of repairs to Birmingham public schools and school grounds already complete, Birmingham school buildings stand ready today to open their doors Sept. 12, to the 2,400 students expected this fall.

Raising of the old pumping station on West Maple avenue, a landmark in Birmingham for a number of years, is to be started Aug. 20. It will cost Birmingham $300 and the material, which is now deemed useless.

Waitress: "I have stewed sidneys, boiled tongue, fried liver and pig's feet."

Patron: "I don't care to hear your troubles, sister. Just bring me a steak."

The Glory That Was Greece, and the Grandeur That Was Rome!

THE OTHER CHAP SAYS SOMETHING—

WHAT FEAR AND FRIGHT WILL DO

Once upon a time a criminal was condemned to death, and the executioner was allowed to choose the method. Some scientist heard of this and arranged with the executioner to do it by the method of bleeding. The criminal was told how it was to be done and the date.

At the appointed time the criminal was strapped in a large chair and his right arm fastened to the arm while his left was bound to his body and a large cap was drawn completely over his face.

The executioner proceeded to slash the criminal's wrist with a knife, hardly cutting the skin. At that instant a tiny stream of water about the same temperature of the blood was allowed to flow upon the wrist and run off into a basin.

From time to time the doctor would examine the heart and pulse of the criminal and report both growing weaker and weaker. The criminal said he could feel that he was getting weaker and weaker, and after a reasonable time did die thinking he had bled to death, yet not a drop of blood had been lost.

This is what fear and fright will do to an individual and it will do the same for a nation because that is made up of individuals. Many think the world today is bleeding to death when it is in a large measure imagination. What we need is something to change our thought and attitude, and if Christian Science has a place it is right here.

If the world could be put to sleep for 3 months when it awoke from this night-mare we would forget this horrible dream and go on as we should. Let us not lose courage because we imagine all is wrong; let us fight to make it right.—Branch County News.

MULTIMILLIONAIRES DISAPPEAR

Social reformers have played with the idea that it might be well to redistribute all individual fortunes every generation, so as to put people on an approximately equal footing. Then every young man might start free scratch and prove what he could do.

There were insurmountable difficulties in the way of carrying out this plan. But apparently with no planning for any such idealistic condition, it is rapidly developing in the crash of values of the last three years. A New York dispatch says the multimillionaire has virtually disappeared. Country estates around New York city are being closed, and some of them are selling milk and eggs in an effort to make both ends meet. Evidently the fading of great fortunes is one reason why there is so little demand for the plentiful bargains in the stock market.

So, as we are all down to almost equal terms, it is up to the energetic youngsters to show what they can do in building up the country for the next redistribution of capital, to take place, say, 20 years hence—unless we learn in the meantime how to stabilize things better than we have in the past.—Kansas City Times.

Lost Fortunes—Lost Lives

Last week the newspapers carried the information that a Pontiac man "worth $2,000,000 in 1929 committed suicide because his fortune was gone." If that sum of $2,000,000 was all the fortune possessed by the man then the loss of it meant the loss of his life. Perhaps he had a fortune of $2,000,000 but the record should be corrected so that no one would be led to believe that the man was actually worth $2,000,000. Worth is not measured in terms of money. If the Pontiac man was worth $2,000,000 in 1929 he was worth the same amount in 1932.

A man who had lost $2,000,000 might well be worth more after the loss than before. Too often the worth of a man is erroneously computed from his bank balance instead of from his character. Somewhere we read, "Wealth beyond the requirements of nature is no more benefit to men than water to a vessel which is full. Both alike overflow. If thou wilt make a man happy, add not unto his riches, but take away from his desires."

Stocks and bonds, real estate and mortgages, money and bank accounts, in themselves do not make a man rich. Such things may enrich or they may impoverish his actual worth. Wealth can become a curse to its possessor, especially if he is filled with anxiety that he may lose it.

To know whether or not the Pontiac man had any reason to end his life because of the loss of $2,000,000 we first must know how he accepted his riches, to what ends he devoted them, in what spirit he held them, and how he spent them. These things are of greater importance than the mere fact that "he was worth $2,000,000 in 1929."—Vern J. Brown in Ingham County News.

Fleecing The Suckers

When the New York state boxing commission robbed Max Schmeling, German, of the world heavyweight boxing title last week they did something more than offend Europeans. The entire country, as well as the 70,000 suckers who paid $400,000 to see the fight, were first dumfounded and then disgusted. There could scarcely be better evidence that the government-controlled box fighting is just a plain racket. Al Capone never pretended to be anything but what he was. Running rackets under the protection of and as a part of state government explains somewhat the attitude of Mr. Average Citizen these days. The prize fight and its outcome is not particularly important, but some of the other governmental commission functions are—take our Michigan Securities Commission for instance. There is a distinction, of course. Deliberate manipulation and criminal neglect or indifference may come under different categories, but the $400,000 paid by the New York City fight fans sinks to insignificance when the millions of Michigan dollars which were lost in securities okehed by our Michigan body is considered.—Schuyler L. Marshall in Clinton County Republican News.

Politicians, and particularly officeholders, are always more critical of the news, especially if it concerns themselves and their jobs. Only last week we were given a dignified but definite scorching for statements, the bulk of which actually praised the officer and his administration. Anything short of superlative praise is considered a knock by most orthodox officeholders. The moment a person lands in public place he takes on some of the attributes of a genius and is a hapless and idiotic newspaperman who occasionally misses this transcendency. Most folks have always wanted to run a newspaper. We wish it could be every one's privilege for just a week. Your first disappointment would come from friends.—M. H. DeFoe in the Charlotte Republican Tribune.

Count Von Luckner of world war fame, as commander of a German sea raider that caused a great loss of allied shipping during the war, and a man that has been all around the world on all kinds of adventure and expeditions was a guest last week on a yacht that cruised around Lake Superior. He said that the greatest thrill he ever experienced was his airplane ride over Isle Royale sweeping down on lakes and bayous to seek out startled moose. You will remember after reading this that the editor of your home paper took this same trip on the same plane, with the same pilot, and saw moose scampering out of Island lakes just as the German Count did and you will remember that he too thrilled at what he saw and experienced.—Al Weber in Cheboygan Observer.

Note to Wife: Please Read

Hubby: "I've been waiting an hour for you."

Wife: "But dear, didn't I say I might be a few minutes late?"

Too Late

"Well, dad, I just looked in to say hello."

"Too late, my boy. Your mother looked in to say hello and got all my change."—Troy Times.

Jest For the Fun of It

Unique Proposal

There was a shy young man who wanted to propose to his lady love, but never dared. Finally he took her to his family lot in the cemetery and said: "Wouldn't you like to be buried here some day?"

Go Ahead, Joe Me!

A ptarmigan's ptesty, I'm ptold,
Ptied up by a ptonch of ptomaine;
A gnu's gnever gnettled by gnerves,
A dhole dhoesn't dhwell like a Dhane;
A xerbus combines xest and xeal,
A llama likes liver and llimes—
(Xoological dhetails ptbat gnever ptack charm,
Pthough I've heard pthem a gnumber of ptimes.)
—E. B. Crosswhite in "Judge"

No Foolin'

Angler (describing fish that got away): He was that long—oh, a whopper!

Wife: You shouldn't have rushed him. You should have played him!"

"Played him! When I go to fish I go to catch fish, not play pianos!"

Famous Firms Live & Learn

Partners:

"Yes, me and Bill are in partnership in this selling game, but we don't carry the same goods."

"Explain yourself."

"Well, Bill goes around selling a stove polish that leaves a stain on your fingers, and two days later I go around with the only soap that will take it off."

The "Big Shots" Say:—

Herbert Hoover, President, signing relief bill:

"It is a strong step toward recovery."

Norine Lattimore, "Dolores, the dancer":

"A thousand hearts of men of all classes have broken at my feet."

Gilda Gray, dancer:

"I have a presentiment that I shall drop dead on the stage before this tour is out. But I'll die dancing."

Ernestine Schumann-Heink, world famous singer:

"My voice is a little scratchy. I am not content with it, but I shall sing as long as I live if only to my great grandchildren."

Calvin Coolidge, former President:

"There is always a temptation in time of adversity to think anything would be better than that which we have."

Johnson Hagood's annual report, as Major-General, U. S. A., commanding the Seventh Corps Area at Fort Omaha:

"Nothing to report."

George Herman (Babe) Ruth, baseball slugger, planning to retire after 1934:

"It would just about ruin me to have the fans give me the razz because I couldn't do the things of which I was once capable."

David Lloyd George, war premier of Great Britain:

"The French Army, despite the League covenant and the Kellogg Pact, is the ultimate weapon of French diplomacy in European affairs."

Alfonso, ex-King of Spain:

"I do not have to explain to you that the business of being a king is not what the outsiders think it to be."

LOOKS At LIFE

By EDWIN M. CLARK

One of the major causes of our industrial paralysis is the improvidence practiced during prosperous years by our toiling mass accepting non-essentials on contract at highly inflated prices. They failed to use the inevitable retrocession of war's insane surge. The inflated wages of war time, and the then evidences of industrial activity induced people with a false conception of their worth stimulating vanity and false rate of life.

During the few years of "prosperity" following the war our mercantile element was not slow in interpreting the spirit of the times, and have worked the credit system extraordinarily under the contract system of divided payments with no change of ownership until all is paid.

A friend of mine went into a store to buy two radios. The clerk named a price of $175 each, and explained the divided payment plan. This friend asked for a spot cash price. The clerk did not know it. He had to consult the proprietor. The friend took away two radios for $200 complete payment.

Here is shown a $150 advance in price for a $200 credit. This case is typical. Such contracts have been made by millions of our toiling people. Imagine the changed rate of life to effect these payments and its effect upon industry. Ninety percent of these contracts have been for non-essentials such as automobiles, radios, pianos, furniture, jewelry, etc., and the payments thereof have been subtracted from the normal rate of life. The usual demands for the normal rate of life have been curtailed 20 to 40 percent with a consequent effect upon industry.

The news of any temporary unemployment in one factory touches the psychological nerves of the whole industrial body, instils fear, and prompts instant economy which augments the primal cause.

Our people very generally fail to realize that the ponderous aggregate of the nation's business is no more than the multiplicity of the seemingly insignificant transactions as individuals. It matters not how gigantic a business may be, its tentacles spread and terminate with the individuals.

The fallacious view of an inflated wage paid in low valued dollars being evidence of "prosperity," and the vanity of our toiling mass taking non-essentials on contract, are evils nigh impossible to correct. The desire of the individual citizen to keep up with the Joneses is a yet dominant over judgement and logic. It is an error of our public school system that sociology is not more taught in our schools. It is unfortunate that our adult mass do not read enough of sociology.

No doubt that in time the custom of accepting of goods on contract with its reduction of other personal expenditures will evolve to a normal condition, but a degree of unbridgeable labor to capital, will continue with it. Capital will continue to demand a price that insures against some loss on good returned, plus interest.

It would be better to prohibit by law the exchange of goods on contract. That would force the mass to a spot cash basis, and keeping up with the Joneses would be on a cash basis for all. This would reduce prices to merely reward for service rendered and effect a more equitable distribution of wealth.