The Birmingham Eccentric

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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 22, 1932

NOTICE: 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 received before noon on Wednesdays. The right is reserved, however, to make such superficial changes in the style submitted as are necessary to the style of the paper and as are required by laws of the state. Because of a financial 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.

Will The Big Bankers Reduce School Bond Interest Rates?

The announcement last week from Superintendent of Schools Charles W. Crandell that the Board of Education and holders of school district bonds are working out a compromise agreement which promises to satisfy both parties, and at the same time permit a continuation of the school program for the current year, comes as a welcome relief after weeks of critical uncertainty. It is the most encouraging piece of news that has emanated from the Birmingham schools this year.

No details of the proposed compromise have been made public, for the entire matter is still in a nebulous state, but when an agreement is definitely reached, it will be highly interesting to note just what its terms are, and what concessions it demands from either side.

Above all, it will be interesting to note whether the bondholders are willing to accept a reduction in interest rates—and by bondholders is meant the banks, for the banks, besides holding a considerable portion of the bonds themselves, are the official representatives of all bondholders, and the focal point around which the entire bond situation revolves.

Let us hopefully anticipate that they will agree to a fair reduction in interest rates, for throughout the depression the big bankers as a class, even with wages, commodity prices, and the value of securities tumbling all around them, have, too often, proved themselves unwilling to adjust their demands to the ability of people to pay.

We are in sympathy with the small bondholders who feel that their original investments should be respected, but we must remind them that, after all, the big bankers purchased the various bond issues; the big bankers made their own investigations covering every bond issue they purchased, and even bid against one another for them, after which they sold them to the unsuspecting but trusting public. All of which proves nothing except that "the rain falls on the just and unjust."

In this instance, with the welfare of such an important and valuable institution as the public schools involved, it would appear more than ever necessary that the banks adopt a second character, more in keeping with the new-style drama that has forced its way upon the stage of 1932. They might, if they would, start with pleasing grace the role of "Lower Interest" in the current tragi-comedy entitled "Everything is Coming Down."

Enactment of this role for the Birmingham schools would prove of particular enjoyment to the 48 per cent of the taxpayers in the district who are expected to foot the bill for this year's school program. The other 52 per cent will not escape permanently, for their proportionate share of the tax bill will be charged against them and they will be expected to pay it eventually, but the burden at the present moment, when bearing it is most difficult, must be assumed by that 48 percent. They are fully entitled to some measure of relief from the bankers and bondholders.

The Ypsilanti Choir

The overflow audience which greeted Frederick Alexander and his splendid Ypsilanti Normal Choir in the Baptist Church Friday night was indeed gratifying. It was convincing testimony to the fact that high quality, even in this day, is still appreciated, and that art is not bankrupt even though many other ingredients of our civilization may be.

Let the business horizon be overcast with the deepest gloom and the political camps mired in the lowest fog, the day is still far off when good paintings will not be praised, good literature not be read, and good music not applauded.

The committee of local men and women, led by Dr. Lloyd Kemp, who are responsible for bringing the choir here, are to be commended. May it become an annual affair.

DETROIT BLIND BIG the other day was "boycotted" by two pickets who wore signs imploring thirsty and hungry people that they "Do not patronize this blind pig." Detroit police, horrified at such open disclosure, questioned the pickets, later planned to raid the address. But when they got there they found no one on the premises. So, even though they found the picket, Detroit police only "got the gate."

MICHIGAN'S WILD LIFE is wild. Unfortunately, six people were injured recently up at Baldwin when a deer ran into a motor car, knocking it over a six-foot embankment. If only Michigan fish would knock some of us anglers out of the boat—how happy we would be.

JAPAN'S GREAT STRIVING for a huge army and navy has caused it to pass the largest national budget in its history. Imperialism is a costly procedure for any government to pursue relentlessly. Some day the government will give way to the handicap. Some day diplomacy will give way to friendship.

"I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes . . ."

ONCE AGAIN, in the cycle of endless time, the Christian world embraces the opportunity to commemorate the nativity of its Saviour. In many ways, some of them material, some of them intellectual, and some of them spiritual, men and women seek to make December 25 each year bring something fine and regenerative into their lives.

Whether it be in the palace of a king, or the hovel of a peasant; in the crowded city mart or the thinly settled rural area; in the factory or on the farms; on land or sea or in the air; in the forest or upon the desolate desert; whether the skin be white or black, wherever human hearts yearn for better human relations, there is enthroned the leavening spirit of the lowly Nazarene.

God, the Creator of the Universe, roused mankind from a partially depraved state of thinking when He caused human consciousness, in the persons of the Three Wise Men, to follow the Star of Bethlehem. Soon the entire neighborhood of Bethlehem was interested in the Manger Babe, and from thence on the minds of men and women became aware of the uplifting, sustaining influence of His life and His teachings upon the world in which we live.

Jesus Christ, as we all know, was the name of the Bethlehem Babe, grown to manhood. In every way, we are told by history, Jesus lived the normal life of the normal Jewish lad. He was blessed, of course, with a Virgin Mother; the boy was nurtured, too, under the wonderfully kind protection of a fine foster-father, Joseph. His babyhood and His youth must have been spent under vigorous soul-building and character-forming influences; His early manhood must have been attended by mental and spiritual stimuli that were but the fore-runner of the attributes of self-sacrifice, humility, devotion, loyalty, love, and the myriad other qualities that have endeared Him to the consciousness of mankind.

Today, as we reverence Jesus' name, and at the same time give thanks to a Common Father for giving the world Love through the Man of Galilee, we all agree that without the record of the history of Jesus' life and teachings, as revealed in the Bible and other sacred writings, this world of ours would, indeed, be a barren pilgrimage. We are made mindful, as we concentrate upon the value of Christianity to the world, that the influence of one life can re-make our world, can re-fashion the entire pattern of human existence.

As we search through the documents of scripture, we are caused to realize that a poor infant, born into the world in a lowly stable, (because there was no room in the inn for Mary and Joseph), reared in simple surroundings, without material wealth, most truly exemplified the promise that " . . . he who humbleth himself shall be exalted."

In our world of today we have just emerged from a period of extreme material prosperity. More people have had more money to spend, more entertainment and amusement to enjoy, more luxuries and more leisure than any civilization within the memory of mankind. Truly, if mere material wealth means happiness and contentment, then the world of the past decade should have been supremely happy and contented. But was it? No! A million billion times no! For from its summits of physical wealth it toppled into the abyss of selfishness, of greed, of licentiousness, of lust, of vain foolishness.

And so, in the midst of the valley of a world depression, recognizing that mere material wealth is "vanity of vanities," we approach this Christmas season with the necessity, and also the greater desire, of putting to use the first verse of David's 121 Psalm: "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help."

If Christmas means anything to the world, it ought to mean that human life unless it exemplify those lofty attributes of Jesus Christ in men and women, is as bereft of real security and safety as a house built upon sands. Christmas, then, becomes to us a perennial reminder of a precious Life that once walked with mankind upon the slopes of Judea, and still walks with men wherever Love holds sway. Christmas is ours each year as a time when we are given the privilege of viewing our neighbor as ourself, and renewing our pledges to "do unto others as we would have them to do unto us."

In the springtime, with a little sunshine, some warm rains, and some human hopes, bud bursts into leaf and blossom, the lifeless brown grass transforms itself into lovely green, and beautiful life again covers the earth and glorifies its Nature. So, too, may Christmas bring into our lives the warm sunshine and rain of kindness, of tolerance, of sacrifice, of devotion to all good and true things; under these beneficient influences our hearts will flower into new patterns of joy and happiness, and once again Christ will walk with men and women, boys and girls. The earth will be renewed.

Such, in a measure, is the message of each Christmas to a yearning, groping world of humankind. Blessed, indeed, are those who, upon the perpetual altar of brotherly love, place their offerings to the memory of Jesus of Nazareth. Their days shall be long, their nights restful, and their lives a benediction.

MERRY CHRISTMAS to you all! and God bless you.

(Written by G. R. A. for Christmas of 1931 and re-published by request.)

We Salute Thee!

Edward J. Clark is the 66-year-old night watchman of a Baltimore "flophouse." He earns $8.00 each week—yet a few days ago he gave $140.00 to the Baltimore relief campaign! There's a real example of personal sacrifice; there is true charity from a sympathetic heart and an understanding mind! Though his job in life is a menial one, and his efforts are not directed toward the supervision of any huge material enterprise, this man Clark of Baltimore has demonstrated that he has learned something about the really greatest job of life, the job of being a friend and brother to his fellowman. We salute thee, Edward J. Clark! How sweet and untroubled must be thy sleep.

THOSE OAKLAND COUNTY supervisors from rural townships who voted to return the welfare costs from county to individual city or township obligations, are now complaining because Pontiac industries are reserving all available jobs for Pontiac citizens. How silly—for hasn't Pontiac not only the right but the obligation now to look after its own? And are not its industries doing a patriotic thing by taking people off the dole and putting them on a payroll?

From THE ECCENTRIC Columns of Long Ago

FIFTY YEARS AGO

Any person losing an ear drop will please hand it into this office.

The Salem Tribune—Will trade for wood, corn or anything.

Miss Jessie Taylor has gone to Winnipeg, Manitoba, and ere this, we expect, is married to Mr. Sloan of Winnipeg.

Fred Hyde turned Mott's Hotel inside out Tuesday afternoon, a silk handkerchief alleged to have been lost suddenly turning up in that hostelry was ultimately found in his possession, after half the dining room girls had been thrown into convulsions.

The Postmaster-General says that the two-cent postage law will destroy postal cards, because correspondents will prefer to pay the extra cost, putting their views in their letters read. Perhaps so and perhaps not; there are many stingy persons who will save that extra cost.

Ike Morgan is now again enjoying a short vacation, after having interviewed a bum now at Newago, Isaac's right arm was cut some time ago to endanger that useful appendage.

The following is a list of high school pupils who have not whispered without permission for one month: Martha Fuller, Halleck Gibbs, Myrtle Garrett, May Eldred, Lizzie White, Lizzie Russ, Jennie Huttolph, Carrie Dunzes, Bert Peabody, Frank Soules, Mamie Young, Lucy Allin and Nellie Reynolds.

The complimentary concert tendered Mrs. A. M. Armstrong by the people of this vicinity was largely attended, every seat being taken. . . . We would not attempt to criticise the program, but really think that if the manager would again seek to entertain a general audience, a little United States music of a brighter and livlier class than that which the program contained, would relieve the apparent monotony of so many productions of German composers.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

Good sleighing.

Get that sack mended.

Next Wednesday is Christmas.

Shortest day in 1907 next Saturday.

Many of the towns are starting a campaign against telegraph pole advertising.

D. U. R. cars on the Pontiac division now have their double windows, not a kick is coming from patrons on account of the cold.

Notice to R. F. D. patrons: Please stick your own stamps on your letters as it saves time and it is law.

Mr. and Mrs. Harry Preston are safely home at Southfield avenue after two weeks' trip east, in New York City.

Our weather is just about right for Christmas time. If the snow stays on one week longer, old Santa Claus will have the best of sledding for many years to come.

Mr. and Mrs. Will Nichols of Morrell, Neb., are happily engaged in rejoicing over the safe arrival of a baby girl. Our best wishes for a long and happy life to the new Nichol.

Whenever Archie Craft of Cincinnati visits his sister, Mrs. Dr. Shaw, he is sure to be stopped by anybody on the street until he has started on his return. Come again, Art, the latch string is always hanging out, welcoming with a big "Hello" always ready for you.

"The Silent Places" by Stewart White is the last book in the Public Library.

Conductor Sholts and Motorman Frank McHugh went hunting Wednesday and only came back with ten fat rabbits.

Speaking of feeding your soul, did you ever notice what poor soul fodder money is? The love of money is base, making your soul eat husks and digest and what, in time, will kill it.

FIVE YEARS AGO

First services will be held Christmas Day in the new Christ Church Cranbrook, according to announcement made today by the Rev. L. S. Hawkins. While the church is not yet completed, he said, but the plans for the services on that day will not be changed.

The Baldwin Public Library, constituting the first unit of the village civic center, is open for the general public today following impressive opening ceremonies in the auditorium of the beautiful new building Saturday afternoon.

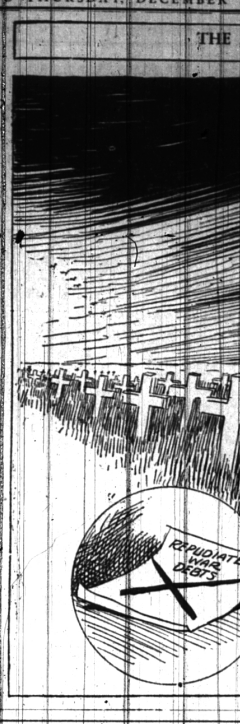
With the number of days before Christmas dwindling down, postal employes are rushing today under the heaviest pressure brought to bear upon them, to make delivery of the mail in Birmingham homes.

Word that the state is prepared to start widening Woodward avenue to 100 feet through Birmingham at the earliest date possible was received here yesterday from the office of Frank F. Rogers, state highway commissioner.

Of the number of acres of land comprising Bloomfield Township, which, just a few years ago was one of the best agricultural townships in Michigan, only three active farms remain today, Robert Y. Moore, Bloomfield Township supervisor, told members of the city-village committee here last night.

Thirteen of Birmingham's leading citizens gathered around the village commissioners' table last night, and, after two hours of earnest discussion, launched forth in plans which seek to prove the respective merits of village and city forms of government, the outcome of which is anxiously awaited by citizens of the community.

THE FORGOTTEN MEN



The Other Chap Says Something—

Cut 'Er Down!

In boom times extravagant government, is a luxury we can't afford.

In normal times it is a drag on industry and the individual, acting as a barrier to progress that would otherwise be achieved.

In depressed times, it is one of the greatest obstacles we must battle in the work of recovery—an obstacle creating more unemployment, more mortgage foreclosures, more business failures, a deeper depression.

Soon Congress will again convene. It will have before it many bills, most of which will deal with the problems of depression. It will have as its duty the advancement of a recovery which has already started. There is no way it could do it of greater service to us all than to reduce the cost of government.

It can do that without in the least harming the real, the necessary functions of government. It can eliminate useless and duplicating bureaus, archiac commissions, purposeless departments within departments. It can cut millions from the budget. Doing that would not only help to relieve the tax burden—it would set a sorely-needed example to states and municipalities, which cost us a great deal more than does the government at Washington.

Efficiency, economy, service—those are the watchwords of progressive businesses now. They must likewise be the watchwords of government, in all its branches.—St. Ignace Republican-News.

THEORIES—AND WORK

An amusing story has come out of China. It concerns the influence of Bolshevism on Chinese peasantry. An aged mandarin rose to address a Bolshevized crowd in Peking.

"My brothers," he began, "you are working men."

"Hurrah! Glory!"

"And being working men—"

"Hurrah! Glory!"

"You must work."

. . . Throw him out! Down with him! Tear out his false, lying tongue!"

The tale illustrates admirably the often cataclysmic difference between theories and fact. With much of the civilized world in a state of seething turmoil and unrest, with conflicting propaganda and opinion beating furiously upon our established beliefs and precedents, it is not surprising that the average individual's state of mind is one of bewilderment. Perhaps this explains the apparent callousness and indifference he displays towards anything he does not completely understand.

Hard work is a weather anchor for the most severe storms. It has yet to prove unreliable when put to a test. While theories are disproven and discarded, while social and economic structures are modified and changed, the world goes on—thanks to work. We shall continue to work.—The Detroit Edison Synchroscope.

THE SEVEN AGES OF WOMEN

The infant.
The little girl.
The big girl.
The young lady.
The young lady.
The young lady.
The young lady.

Don't know who the author of this supposedly famous historical bit of information is. He may be expressing the facts in the case, the feminine viewpoint, or just his own.

Of course it may be that Dame Fashion has things fixed so that the lady of forty closely resembles her sister in the twenties, but we have a hunch that this male editor has been squinting at the ladies still wearing their before-the-depression gowns.

Maybe he doesn't know that in this age a new wardrobe actually means hauling out last year's bonnets, and dresses and tacking on a new bow or two some place or other.

There just hasn't been any difference in our appearance for so long that he just couldn't help the outcurst, "the young lady . . . the young lady . . ." Oh well! thinks the feminine world, "I haven't a thing to wear."—Alice Fox in Delta County Reporter.

None

You see, our early settlers came from Europe, and none of that kind was left over there.—Buffalo News.

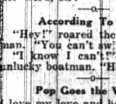
Something Left

The mortgage was introduced to Arizona along with rocks and shirts and other trappings of a decadent civilization that we were much better off without. In the last year or two they have taken socks and shirts away from us, but they've left us our mortgages intact.—Arizona Producer.

Jest For the Fun of It

In Or Out?

Visitor: Are you sure Mrs. Wilson is not in?



The Maid (coldly): You doubt her word, sir?

—o—

According To Rules

"Hey!" roared the park policeman. "You can't swim there!"

"I know I can't!" shouted the unlucky boatman. "Help! Help!"

—o—

Pop Goes the Weasel

I love my love and he loves me,
So obviously there must be
An office safe about to drop
Upon the unsuspecting top
Of one or both of us, and mash
Our triumph into so much hash.
—Margaret Fishback in "Life"

—o—

Famous Firms

Pretzels & Beer

Compromise

Merchant—Look here, you've been owing me this bill for a year. I'll meet you halfway. I'm ready to forget half of what you owe me.

Debtor—Fine! I'll meet you. I'll forget the other half.

—Pathfinder

—o—

Speakeasy Lines

Plaintiff at the Bar
Now that you know I love you, dear
(Waiter, another glass of beer)
And you love me, we cannot fail
(One rye, one gin and ginger ale)
To find our happiness complete
(An Alexander, not too sweet)
For love is sure to find a way.
(One brandy, neat; Absinthe frappe)
If you'll consent to marry me
(Tutto pagato on bar three)
We can be wed at City Hall
(Et pour Monsieur, a Scotch highball)
And nothing, then, our joy can mar.
(Two old fashioned's"; One "sidecar.")

Our Scrap Book

AMONG HIGH GARDEN WALLS

This house then stood not far beyond the gloom and rumours of the town, among high garden-walls, bright all summer-time with Golden-rod, and brown-and-golden Wallflower—"Flos Parietis," as the children's Latin-reading father taught them to call it. . . . Florian found that he owed to the place many tones of sentiment afterwards customary with him, certain inward lights under which things most naturally presented themselves to him. The coming and going of travellers to the town along the way, the shadow of the streets, the sudden breath of the neighboring gardens, the singular brightness of bright weather there, its singular darkness which linked themselves in his mind to certain engraved illustrations in the old big Bible at home, the coolness of the dark, cavernous shops round the great church, with its giddy winding stair up to the pigeons and the bells—a kindred peace in the heart of the trouble—all this acted on his childish fancy, so that ever afterwards the like aspects and incidents never failed to throw him into a well-recognized imaginative mood, seeming actually to have become a part of the texture of his mind. . . .

Also, Florian could trace home to this point a pervading preference in himself for a kind of comeliness and dignity, an urbanity literally, in modes of life, which he connected with the people of towns, and which made him susceptible to a kind of exquisite and well-considered grace in the midst of any person acquainted with early Gothic; but, however idle as a theory, it is most valuable as a testimony to the character of the perfected style. It is precisely because the reverse of this theory is the fact, because the Gothic did not arise out of, but developed itself into, a resemblance to vegetation, that this resemblance is so instructive as an indication of the temper of the builders. It was no chance suggestion of the form of an arch from the bending of a bough, but a gradual and continual discovery of a beauty in natural forms which could be more and more perfectly transferred into those of stone, that influenced at once the heart of the people, and the form of the edifice. . . .

The Gothic architecture arose in massy and mountainous strength—axe-hewn and iron-bound, block heaved upon block by the monk's enthusiasm and soldier's force; and cramped and stanchioned into such weight of grisly wall as might bury the anchoret in darkness, and beat back the utmost storm of battle, suffering but by the same narrow crosslet the passing of the sunbeam, or of the arrow.—John Ruskin, in "The Stones of Venice."

Reason for Being Tired

"I'm very tired," said the lady at the head of the supper table, one Sunday evening.

"You should not be," said her minister; who had been asked to the evening meal, "you haven't preached two sermons today."

"No," said the lady, absentmindedly. "But I listened to them."—Toronto Globe.

PEOPLE'S COLUMN

The Eccentric is pleased to receive expressions on any subject for this column. Communications must be signed by the author, but name will be withheld upon request. Letters must be limited to 300 words and must be in the office by Tuesday noon for publication the following Thursday.

BOY SCOUTS GRATEFUL

To the Editor:

I would like to express, through your columns, to the people of Birmingham and vicinity the sincere appreciation and thanks of the District Boy Scout Committee for the splendid co-operation given the paper drive last Saturday. Close to six tons were collected.

Special praise should be given the school masters and scouts who did the work. Also The Eccentric, Connelly Building Company, Taylor Brothers Construction Company, Kimball-Bailey Funeral Home, McBride Hardware Company, and Ernest E. Morrow, who furnished the trucks, and B. J. Melrose, Paul N. Averill and James W. Parker, who supervised the job.

We hope to make collections every six to eight weeks, and kindly ask the residents of the village to have their papers for the Boy Scouts.

JULIUS F. WENZL,
President, District Committee.

The "Big Shots" Say—

Nancy Astor, Virginia-born member of British Parliament:

"Nobody will get rich always politicians. At least we politicians are in the light where you can see us and shoot us."

James J. Walker, former Mayor of New York:

"Thank God, I am a private citizen now and can do as I like."

White House statement:

"The administration is determined to present a balanced budget."

Warren A. Candler, bishop, Southern Methodist church:

"If the church does its duty and christianizes men and women, the great questions which worry the body politic will take care of themselves."

Nancy Astor, American-born member of Parliament, speaking of her young son, John Jacob Astor:

"I am so proud of him. You'd think he was raised in a back alley."

Franklin D. Roosevelt, president-elect:

"The presidency is not merely an administrative office. That is the least of it. . . . It is pre-eminently a place of moral leadership."

Benito Mussolini, Italian premiere:

"The Italian people will be an army, absolutely invincible, everywhere and against everybody."

Newton D. Baker, head of National Relief Drive:

"Communities can prove their patriotism by demanding loyalty back of their welfare and relief campaigns for funds."

Kdyienko, Soviet Commissar of Justice:

"People who have not learned to respect property in the course of fifteen years are incorrigible and must be shot."

Henry Ford, quoted in The Boston American:

"If the money system of this country is changed, tariff abolished and free trade established throughout the world, we will see a great change, a new dream of hope, optimism, prosperity and happiness throughout the world."

Norman Kerry, screen star, turned writer:

"The hokum and ballyhoo of the screen is all 'out.' Screen life is a hard life."

James A. Farley, National Democratic Chairman:

"We can get out of the mortgage on him (Roosevelt), or on his opinions or on his acts; no bargains were attached either to his nomination or to his election."

John N. Willys, automobile executive:

"With present prices of motor cars and cost of living with purchasing power, I, for one, feel that car prices must come down even farther."

ParaLafs

Just About

It seems pretty well agreed the peak of the depression is passed, and that we are now creeping up into a better life.—Detroit News.

Not Much

There isn't much chance that immediate beers will be on sale any more immediate than near-beer is now.—Arkansas Gazette.

He Is

A political opponent is the chap who says out that ill-considered puerile, demagogic stuff you wish you'd thought of.—Boston Herald.

Echo: Why?

Worn-out flaps are sold as old junk. But why wait till they are worn out?—Punch.

It Does

How encouraging it is to hear other nations condemn Japan's land-grabbing. It means they have all they want.—El Paso Herald.

Might Be

"Who," asks an ardent Southern orator, "would countenance the idea of robbing Peter to pay Paul?" Well, we dunno, unless it might be Paul.—Boston Herald.