The Birmingham Eccentric

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GEORGE ROGERS AVERILL, *Editor and Publisher*
ALLEN TENNY, *Managing Editor*
PAUL NEAL AVERILL, *Advertising Manager*
CLARENCE S. WARNER, *Asst. Advertising Manager*

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THURSDAY, JULY 14, 1932

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 copy 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.

When Citizens Are Helpful

Tucked away on page one of part two of last week's Eccentric was a brief "We Heard It Said By—," quoting Perry A. Vaughan, Bloomfield Township Supervisor, on the subject of citizen-aid in welfare work. Here is an excellent example of what an alert, helpful citizenry can accomplish in the name of humanity. The Eccentric is grateful to publish again Mr. Vaughan's own expressed gratitude, as he said: "I would like to take this opportunity to thank the many clubs and organizations in Birmingham which cooperated with the township last winter and spring in caring for indigent families of the community. I haven't figured out exactly the value of their aid and support, but I know it saved the county and township a lot of money, and it won for Birmingham the reputation of being the most co-operative community in Oakland County."

Fortunes Vanish

Samuel Insull, for many, many years, was Chicago's big utility magnate. His material wealth ran into the millions. He controlled vast groups of people. To him the handling of even a state election was but a part of the day's work. Whatever he touched turned into golden profits. Yet, under the terrific hammering of the present depression, Samuel Insull's great organization has broken down. He has lost his money, most of his influence. As he quit his palatial offices he uttered these pathetic words: "I've gone from the bottom to the top and now to the bottom again. I only hope I will be able to keep a roof over my head and care for my wife. I have ceased to be newspaper copy. And I am out of public life . . . So I ought to be entitled to privacy . . . Here I go, after 50 years of work, a man without a job."

Visit Cranbrook Museum

Rugs, ceramics, and samples of fine book binding are being displayed free to the public at Cranbrook Museum, Bloomfield Hills. If you wish to hide away from some of your troubles and cares, just slip out to "this other world of beauty" right here in your own township, and glimpse loveliness, symmetry, harmony, beauty, the product of skilled minds and hands in this really great, yet simple, institution dedicated to the finer things of life. The Museum is open from 9 A. M. to 5 P. M. daily, and on Saturday and Sundays from 2 to 5 P. M.

REFERRING TO SENATOR BORAH'S disagreement with the Republican platform adopted at Chicago, a nearby daily newspaper says "Bolts Hoover Camp." Would you say, mechanically speaking, that a nut and a bolt always should be together?

THREE CALIFORNIA youths were stricken seriously from drinking poor booze consumed at a student class picnic. Even California is afflicted by unethical bootleggers.

OAKLAND COUNTY SHERIFF Frank Schram says he will not allow women to parade around the streets or near bathing beaches with only bathing suits on. We suppose the popular cry around bathing beaches this year will be "scram!"

ANOTHER HANDICAP to lengthy courtships will be the three-cent stamp necessary to send a letter through the mail, which goes into effect July 6. In order to save money from then on, a fellow will have to marry his sweetheart earlier in the game.

ALFRED E. SMITH, Tammany's defeated warrior, pledges his support to Franklin D. Roosevelt, the Democratic party's nominee for President. Smith tried to scalp Roosevelt at Chicago, but failed to harm a single hair of the New York Governor's head. Politics is an ever-changing scene of scheming and contriving; it is a game at which some people play while other people pay.

IN SPITE OF THE FACT that a slump has turned the recent depression into a near-panic, gangsters still ride around in expensive motor cars and gun continues to be something wholly outside the cotton industry.

AL CAPONE IS WORKING over the prison tubs in the federal prison at Atlanta, Georgia. It seems that no matter where Al is put, he is sure to give the government a good cleaning.

IF THE SEABURY INVESTIGATION of New York's Jimmy Walker keeps on New York may require the dapper Mayor to at least change the tempo of his motions by getting him on the run.

NOW THAT A ROOSEVELT has been nominated as the Democratic party's candidate for the Presidency, it was only fitting that the Chicago Convention go to the great state of Texas to get a Vice-Presidential candidate to garner the votes.

Reading A Great Book

Why is the book that has the greatest circulation in the world failed to reach into the lives of more people? Why do so few men and women, when confronted with some human extremity, either of adversity, loss of a loved one, or even ill health, fail to recognize that "Man's extremity is God's opportunity"—only that man is required to desire the realization of this "opportunity," because "God helps those that help themselves?"

Perhaps, in the great and noble life of Captain Robert Dollar, world-famous steamship operator who recently died in his 89th year, you may find some gleam of hope that you, too, will obtain from your Bible a real help and inspiration. Captain Dollar, in a recently released letter, wrote: "For the past sixty years, every morning before breakfast, I have read part of a Chapter in the Old and New Testament. Why did he do it? His answer is that "by commencing the day with the reading of my Bible I find it gives me much valuable information and inspiration which is past my power to express."

Well, in every room on the big fleet of passenger steamers of his line there was a Bible, placed there by him. On his Pacific liners a supply of Chinese Bibles were provided for Chinese passengers, cabin boys and waiters. To assist the American Bible Society in distributing the Scripture, he paid the freight charges on all shipments over his line.

Explaining his attitude, when past 87 years of age, he said: "The older I become the more benefit do I derive from this habit of reading from the chapters of the Bible each morning, not alone from a spiritual standpoint but from a commercial one as well, as I find it of great help in my business. It has meant guidance and help in my efforts to make success in this world."

Here is a Book that has survived the ages. It has made a greater impression upon human consciousness than any other arrangement of the human alphabet. It contains the world's greatest poems, the most just of all law-giving, the most sublime record of human gratitude, the most divine of all human sacrifices. To read its pages and to reflect upon and ponder its simple profundity, is to cleanse your mind of many of this world's vain strivings and snarled tanglings. Happy, indeed, are those who, like Captain Dollar, make of it a daily companion.

Back And Forth

From one extreme to another, with scarcely any attainment of a secure and economical middle ground, society swings its social, political, and business activities. In prosperous times the cry is "Spend! Spend! by spending you get more to spend!" In panic or depression times the alarm sounds "Save! Save! by saving you bring back prosperity!" And then there follows the hybrid yodel "Save some and spend some, by savingly spending you bring back good times!" Feast and famine, heat and cold, light and dark, trust and fear—too much of life is a contrast because GREED & SELFISHNESS, Inc., operate human affairs.

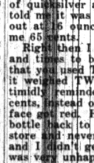
THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE last week almost cried about the paternalism of the federal government. It sobbed because it seems that the politicians down in Washington keep adding extra tax burdens on business and incomes. We agree with the Tribune that Congress is hypocritical in its attitude toward national economic re-adjustment—but we would remind the Tribune that its own city needs to have some weeping and wailing done over its own sad financial plight.

THE STATE ART COMMISION of Massachusetts refuses to accept an oil painting of former Governor Frank G. Allen, presumably because it shows him with his hands in his own pockets. The picture was scheduled to hang with that of other Governors in the State Capitol. Here is a case of a man who had sense enough to keep his hands in his own pockets, yet whose personal willingness to do this is criticised by an Art Commission. There are times when Art art artless.

MAYOR MURPHY SUGGESTS a five-day week for Detroit's municipal employees. That's one of the few good utterances Hizzoner has made upon the problems confronting the Fourth City.

All of Us

By Marshall Maslin



Marshall Maslin

AT A VERY early age I learned that it is sometimes dangerous to know too much.

I'll tell you how it happened.

My brother and I found a mysterious, very heavy jar under a stairway in an old house. . . . We opened it and found it filled with a thick, silvery fluid. Our father told us it was mercury, left there probably by some man who had used it in his profession. But whoever he was, it didn't belong to him any more. It was OURS. It was TREASURE, just like the gold doubloons that Captain Kidd had buried on some forgotten shore.

We could do what we wanted with it. . . . And we had fun. We put coins in it and turned them bright and silvery again. We changed a gold ring to silver. We put some on a hot stove and watched it disappear. We took it to school and rolled it along the peeli groove on the desk. We traded some of it for marbles and tops and all-day suckers. And, finally, when half of mine was gone, it occurred to me that I might convert what was left into money. I might be able to sell it.

So I put my treasure in a bottle one hot day and trudged up and down a business street in our town, and in and out of drug stores, asking clerks and proprietors whether they didn't want to buy some quicksilver. (I think I was nine years old.) I didn't have much success. There didn't seem to be any enormous demand for quicksilver.

But, finally, when I was about to give up one man seemed interested. He said he'd buy my bottle of quicksilver and he put it on his scales and told me it was so many ounces. Then he figured it out at 16 ounces to the pound and began to pay me 65 cents.

Right then I learned that there are times to talk and times to be still. . . . My father had old me that you used Troy weight for quicksilver and that it weighed TWELVE ounces to the pound. So I timidly reminded the man that I should have 85 cents, instead of 65. And that made him angry. His face got red. He called me a smarty. He gave my bottle back to me and told me to get out of his store and never come back. . . . The deal was off and I didn't get my money, not even 65 cents. I was very unhappy.

Because I knew too much and talked too much. . . . And since then I've always known that there are times when it is dangerous to know too much about things. But it's done me little good. I've never known just when to use that hard won wisdom and when to disregard it. . . . Perhaps you've had the same experience.

From The Eccentric Columns of Long Ago

FIFTY YEARS AGO

Hay is now sold underway. Frank Rashall, jeweler, has a new $114 gold watch. It's a day!

John Baldwin slowly recovers from his bad attack of rheumatics.

On a wheel—the new Elgin. James now tooms, having purchased a brassified new bicycle—the first ever passed in Birmingham.

James Hoffman has returned home for his annual vacation. James is one of the boys who works hard, and knows a vacation when he sees it.

Last Sunday evening, Dr. A. A. Chase delivered a very interesting lecture on the subject of Temperance at the Presbyterian church, it being the regular monthly union meeting. The house was filled and the doctor handled his subject without gloves in a masterly manner, and interested his hearers very much.

For genuine cuts and bruises, ed lying and open faced deception, commend us to our friend of the quill at Oxford. The journal man solemnly avers there were 8,000 people in that retired hamlet on the Fourth, while the howitzer of the Globe midly declares that 5,000 would not be too large an estimate to put upon the gaping multitude. The truth of the business is, Oxford had no larger crowd than we did right here at home—and we didn't make any blow about it either. . . .

Our old friend, Hon. James Bayley celebrated his eightieth birthday on Friday last, July 7, in a good old fashioned way. His children and grandchildren and several invited guests gathered at his residence on Saginaw street, in the afternoon of that day, and upon seating themselves at the table whereon a bounteous feast was spread, Mr. Bayley and his estimable wife were made the recipients of two very elegant arm chairs, and the aged couple expressed themselves as well pleased with the situation of affairs. Mr. Bayley is one of our oldest pioneers, and bears his burden of his four-score years in a remarkable manner, being as hale and active as the average person who has barely reached the allotted years of man. We heartily wish the aged couple many more birthdays of peace and happiness.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

The park has been mown and the west end of town is looking its best.

The Village improvement Society is preparing a sign for Vinewood avenue and also for Brownell street.

William C. Reynolds wants anyone knowing of Canada thistles growing in the village streets to inform him at once.

A great many of our people now-a-days pack a basket with good edibles and hie away to Belle Isle, Palmer Park or Water Works Park for the afternoon and evening.

Edwin Miller has been away for a week or so, visiting his brother Charles at Grand Marais. He thinks it was a good place fishing in Oakland County that he can up there; but he had a most delightful visit just the same.

The young women who climbed the fence in front of Bert Peabody's residence and stole the roses could have seen themselves as others saw them, they certainly would not try it again.

E. S. Peck, Rochester's painter justice, retired from police July 4, after 16 years of continuous service.

We feel sorry for the man who does not read his home paper. He is no better than a man without a country. He is like a homeless cow, that has no regular pasture, but grazes promiscuously over weeds and thistles. No matter what other paper he may read, the straightforward citizen always insists on having his home paper.

Visitors at the Mitchell home—Mitchell, home from Chicago for a summer vacation; Mrs. Nye M. Corey, who celebrated her 59th birthday anniversary; Mrs. Caroline Tilt, who enjoyed her 85th Fourth of July; Miss Ida Gores and Miss Mamie Utter. The two elderly ladies enjoyed a good dinner, drank red lemonade, and played Flinch the better part of the afternoon.

FIVE YEARS AGO

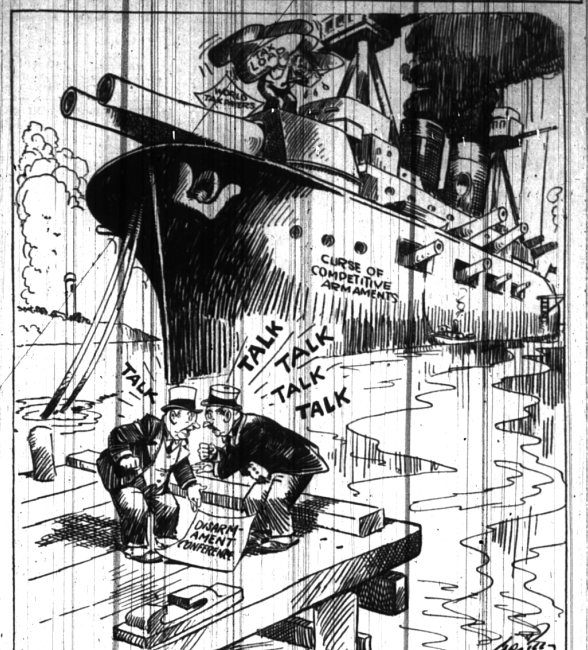
Approaching volume of business by the Birmingham Post Office is that required for a first class rating by the postal department, was announced today by Postmaster James W. Cobb in his quarterly report of the activities of his office. The sale of stamps from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31, 1926, brought in $36,000, while $40,000 in stamps must be sold to meet the first class requirement.

The valuation of Oakland County stands today at $307,232,000 following the acceptance of that figure as a compromise by the board of supervisors at their meeting Saturday in Pontiac. There were to dissenting votes to the equalization report, however. The original figure was $312,774,128. Last year's figure was $390,540,775.

When the group was deadlocked, Supervisor Robert Y. Moore of Bloomfield Township offered the compromise, which, it is said, made possible the agreement and avoided the necessity of calling in the state tax commission for a settlement.

Whether the $160,000 addition to the Barnum School or the new Chesterfield School, which is to cost $240,000, will be built first will be decided at the next meeting of the school board to be held next Thursday night. Superintendent Clarence Vliet announces today. Architectural plans will also be selected at that time, Mr. Vliet believes.

ANOTHER "FORGOTTEN MAN"



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, and must be in the office by Tuesday noon for publication the following Thursday.

To the Editor:

Your column, "Reflections of a Freshman", has been of tremendous interest to me because I have just completed my freshman year in a small college. I find that many of my impressions are very similar to those of your columnist but would like to correct his opinion that a large university always offers more advantages than a small college. I believe that it depends upon the individual whether he should go to a university, a college, or cease his education when he has completed his studies at a secondary school. If a candidate for college wishes to obtain a cultural background for life, I maintain that he should choose a small college.

At my college there are between 600 and 650 students and more than 85 men on the faculty. This means that for every seven students there is one faculty member. Each faculty member is able to give over a great deal of his time to individuals. Students are treated as individuals and not as machines. This permits education to be raised above the level of the "academic goosestep" which is so terribly criticized and condemned by such men as Alexander Meiklejohn.

Another advantage of the small college which is rarely stressed is the fact that it has no student instructors and usually more professors than regular instructors. In order to point out the benefits that may be reaped from this, I will cite my own example.

Last year I carried 21 hours of work per week during the first semester and 20 the second, making a total of 41 hours for the year. Of these 41 hours, 24 were taught by full professors with an average teaching experience of more than 30 years, seven by an associate professor with 12 years of teaching experience, and six by instructors, both of whom have been instructors at Harvard and have been teaching four and eight years.

This record can not be approached by a large university where many of the instructors are students who know only a little more about the subject they are teaching than the men who are studying under them. Young instructors such as these are unable to impart anything but book knowledge to the students and frequently do not succeed in this attempt.

Because of he small number of people in each class and because of the frank and informal discussions that take place in the class rooms, the students soon become very well acquainted with every one there. Acquaintances are deepened and more of them are created through the means of intramural sports and extra-curricular activities until at length everybody knows every student on the campus that is at all inclined to "come out of his shell."

It is interesting to note that at my college over 80 percent of the total enrollment are members of social fraternities and that the remaining men have banned together and have formed a "Commons Club." Fraternity politics, those tactics which are very similar to the ones that are employed by our national administrators, are practically non-existant. Fraternities serve only to board and house the men and to promote social activities and fellowship.

A large university is the place to go if you want to study engineering, agriculture, business administration, or any other highly specialized work. The cultural side of life can be fulfilled far better in the atmosphere of a small college where there is a spirit of friendly co-operation, not competition, and where there is unity and not complexity.

Morris K. Winborn
648 Dewey Road
(Amherst, '35)

(Note: Another letter to the editor, received too late to be inserted on this page, appears on Page 5, Part 2).

The Other Chap Says Something—

JUDGMENT

"Who are thou that judgest another?" The psychologist will tell you that "the reason we recognize evil in another is because we possess that evil to a degree." It would seem that we might accept this as true in a general sense, though with quite definite exceptions. However, it is doubtless true that if the good in us predominates, we will surely find good in nearly everyone. Whether it is true or not, it remains a fact that we can hardly judge our fellow men in absolute justice. We know too little of each other. I sometimes find myself at a loss to express my thought so that I may not be misunderstood and therefore be misjudged. It is as impossible to exactly express what we feel in our hearts as to describe a pain that afflicts us, so that another can feel it. There are doubtless many men beneath us in the religious, moral and social scale, who would outweight us by half if they were given our opportunities, and we might be lower than the lowest if subject to their temptations.—Lapeer County Press.

POLITICAL BAIT

Don't grab political bait until you have examined it very carefully; see if there is any string attached to it and if it covers a barbed hook; look at it from all sides; smell of it; do anything with it but swallow it, and before you do the swallowing act go away to some quiet place and think it over. We need some good straight thinking right now more than we need anything else. Noisy promises won't save our country, or solve a single problem.—W. H. Berkey in Cassopolis Vigilant.

The expression of "thumbs down" is an old Roman gesture expressing disapproval, given as a signal to participants in gladiatorial combats to kill the loser.

The "Big Shots" Say:—

Edouard Herriot, French premier: "We criticize nobody."

Robert Horne, British political leader: "Currency is like the blood in the human body. You can have too much or too little. If you have too much, you have apoplexy; if you have too little, you have anemia."

Franklin D. Roosevelt, Governor of New York: "The millions who are in want will not stand by silently forever while the things to satisfy their needs are within easy reach."

Joseph Scott, Los Angeles attorney, who placed the name of Herbert Hoover before the Republican Convention: "I may not be able to walk with kings, but I am not a lame duck."

Jules Sauerwein, French editor in America: "It is perhaps not too late but every day every week must be used. In a few months it will be too late to save Europe."

Henry Ford, defending his plan for idle to raise food: "When a family lifts itself off the welfare list or increases its free cash by raising its food, it actually helps the farmer as it does everyone else, including itself."

John Erskine, author and critic: "Man is creative in art and agriculture only. It is there that all true progress is made. In the vast area between, of business and the learned professions, we only think we see progress."

Ramsay MacDonald, British Prime Minister: "The problem to be faced (at Lausanne) is not merely the recovery of one nation, but the restarting of world commerce."

John N. Garner, Speaker of the House of Representatives: and advocate of huge relief program: "If the Reconstruction Finance Corporation has aided materially in reducing unemployment or relieving human distress resulting from the prolonged depression, I have failed to observe it."

Henry Berenger, former French Ambassador to the U. S.: "The whole Lausanne Conference depends on the settlement between Europe and the United States but the United States refuses to enter the negotiations."

David A. Reed, U. S. Senator of Pennsylvania: "I hope both parties can adopt an identical plank on Prohibition and take the question out of national politics."

Peter B. Kyne, author: "I wish I had my youth back but if I thought I had to live another fifty years, while the Government gradually becomes centralized in Washington and our boasted liberties drop away one by one like autumn leaves. I would take Rough on Rats and end it all."

Dr. Linsley Williams, opposing more aid for Veterans: "Democracy is on the skids. It is faced now with the life and death problem of coping with so-called patriotic organizations which are intent on greater and more frequent raids on the public treasury."

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