BIRMINGHAM ECCENTRIC

(Founded in 1878)

Published every Thursday, at Birmingham, Mich., in The Eccentric Building, 120-122 North Woodward Avenue.

Telephones 11, 12, and 13

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Entered as Second Class Matter in the U. S. Postoffice at Birmingham, Michigan

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

(In Oakland County)		(Outside Oakland County)	
One Year	$2.00	One Year	$2.50
Six Months	1.00	Six Months	1.50
Three Months	.50	Three Months	1.00

All newspaper and advertising copy must be in The Eccentric office by Wednesday noon to obtain insertion for that week.

The Eccentric is a member of: National Editorial Association, Michigan Press Association, University Press Club, and Oakland County Weekly Press Association.

THURSDAY, MARCH 3, 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 Wednesday. The right is reserved, however, to make such superficial changes in the work submitted as are necessary in 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.

(Every person or group of persons handling public monies should publish, at regular intervals, an accounting of such funds.)

Prohibition Reform

There is a very simple, yet effective, demand that life puts upon every individual. It is this: if you want to live, you must eat and sleep—and you ought to work at something. No other can eat for you, sleep for you; you, alone, must look after life's demands if you would live. If you would seek to improve your condition in life, you must necessarily dedicate yourself to the task; you must study, observe, reflect, think,—then act. Others cannot improve your mind for you; life demands that you do it yourself.

If you would seek to bring about an improvement in society, you must refine within your own mind the improvement you wish to see made manifest, and then go about planting that improvement in the minds of others. You, yourself, having arrived at a certain phase of the improvement's development, cannot for a moment abandon continued reflection and thought upon its further development; if you cease thinking about it, reflecting upon it, in other words if you quit working within the laboratory of your own mind upon the desired improvement, your mind is so constructed that it will abandon the cherished improvement, and leave it to self-ruin and decay. If you would keep your mind keyed upon anything, you must necessarily work mentally upon it.

Take prohibition, as an example of what we mean. It came about as the result of many, many minds actively engaged in a desire to improve society. These minds were banded together for years, and eventually focused upon elective methods to place it upon the statute books of the nation. Having enacted the federal 18th Amendment and the Volstead Act, what then happened? Simple to explain; nearly everybody promptly turned his and her thoughts to other problems, leaving the enforcement of the new statute to paid officials. Those who either fanatically or conscientiously believed in the value of prohibition, by turning their thoughts to other matters, violated one of life's fundamental demands; they abandoned work upon their cherished improvement, and thereupon ruin and decay promptly started in.

In our humble opinion, even though we have repeatedly declared ourself in favor of temperance, (and also admit that a state of complete sobriety is worthy of human striving), the manner in which the 18th Amendment is being enforced today is a hazardous undertaking for a so-called free people. We have turned a "cherished improvement" over to paid officials, and they have too often revealed that their only interest in the job is the salary connected with it,—which so often results in their getting their pay envelopes from the bootlegger brethren. Actually, as a nation, we have tried to fortify human welfare with a certain form of enforcement machinery comparable to sentries posted with blank cartridges in their muskets. We failed to maintain an active, working interest in prohibition, and thus, by presenting an apathetic public opinion upon the subject, took the lead bullets from the muskets' cartridge belts.

The laborers in the vineyard of prohibition turned the task over to some mythical Santa Claus detective bureau at Washington, and then went about their other affairs. State organizations and local dry organizations practically went out of business. People broke another of life's demands; they thought they could eat and sleep the diet of prohibition without opening their mouths, so to speak. They left it up to an inadequate, incompetent federal bureau. They forgot that the federal government, like Providence, "helps them that help themselves."

What America needs is a return of police powers to the individual states plus a parental guiding influence from the parent government at Washington. We need more "personal thought" and effort upon the subject. We need to remind every citizen that his various governmental units can but reflect the thoughts and the wishes of the composite citizen.

Our personal belief is that prohibition will never be a success as it is now operated. History has repeatedly demonstrated that a government cannot "wear out" its citizens; those who have tried it, whether they be kings or parliaments, eventually find themselves out of a job. Temperance is a goal worthy of all human striving; total abstinence, too, is a further peak of human happiness that may well challenge the power of an individual or a nation. But these things must come by evolution, not by revolution; they must be retained more by moral suasion and less by police threats.

The federal government should not be asked to do more for a state than the state itself is doing. Perhaps some system of having the Washington government match, dollar for dollar, the funds used by each state to enforce prohibition would be more successful. This would revive state interest in the matter; it would, at least, bring into play the only worthwhile balance of American government, namely: it would bring into play the genius of democratic liberty, the ballot box. It would allow people to live by the rule of the majority.

Vote Next Monday

Next Monday, March 7, you will be given an opportunity to select the officials who will conduct the affairs of Bloomfield Township for another year. The candidates, and their qualifications, are set forth in other sections of this issue of The Eccentric. Here is your chance to take an active part in government; here is the time and place when, under the American plan of doing things, government is either aided or hindered by your choice of officials. A few moments of serious consideration now will save you many hours later on—for the people you put into office to levy and then to spend your taxes, will very largely determine the quality of your government. Elections are periods when the voters are reminded to "stop, look, and listen." So please don't forget the Bloomfield Township election next Monday, March 7.

Untrustworthy Nations

As a citizen and a taxpayer of the United States, we are opposed to the wasteful expenditure of federal funds. Most other people feel the same way about it, too, we have observed. But there are some expenditures that are necessary and desirable, among them adequate national defense.

The Eccentric has been an ardent supporter of many movements designed to eliminate war, and to reduce armament; we still maintain that belief—with qualifications that we have added during recent weeks, as the result of the Japanese-Chinese fighting, and the apparent inability of the League of Nations to put a stop to it. The qualification we have is simply this: no longer shall we allow our enthusiasm for disarmament to over-run the practicalities of the situation. No longer shall we mount to the house-tops and shout, "Be big and brave, America, by laying down your arms and thus setting an example for the rest of the world." On the contrary, we shall acknowledge that, for a while yet, human cupidity and greed, plus human desire for power and fame, still ride in the seats of the mighty; and as long as the leaders of nations are so lacking in international honesty; so long as they refuse to subordinate their own selfish strivings to the general world good, just so long will national defense be necessary to preserve what semblance of civilization we now possess.

The inability of the world to adjust itself politically, economically, and socially since the World War proves—if it proves anything—that the so-called older nations of this earth are not trustworthy. The United States has, by the manipulation of European obligations owed to us, been required to pay for a world folly. From the standpoint of permanent world peace, the United States perhaps can afford to pay for such a world possession—if there seemed to be assurance that the world had learned the lessons of foolish bloodshed. But there is nothing to point out today that the greater powers of this earth have learned any such lessons, at least to the point where they can rely upon one another's pledges and promises.

The United States was eventually lured (and we do not criticise the fact, either, from a world standpoint) into the World War; and now it must pay the debt incurred beyond its own boundaries. That's the irony of war! You lose even when you win!

There are some things worse than war, of course. We once discussed this with Senator Arthur H. Vandenburg in his Washington office. One of them is slavery to an unjust principle, an unjust monarch, or a foolish fancy. Let's continue to crusade for world peace—but let's be practical about it. Let's get the forge of logic and reason into a white heat so that we can re-shape the sword into a plowshare; but let's not lose the temper while we do it, or even the plowshare will not be able to resist the hard soil, and will curl up into bluntness as it is rubbed against the hard realities of the earth.

Yes, let's crusade for eventual world peace, but not without an adequate army and navy, capable of competing with the national defense of other countries who present the menace of war.

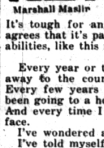
EVEN COAL IS NOW SOLD with free wheeling—from the sidewalk to the chute.

All of Us

By Marshall Maslin

I TALKED to a man who had been sick for a long, long time. For years and years. And he gave me a valuable tip.

He explained to me how a man can be "sick for a long, long time, for years and years," and still be smiling at the end of it.



Marshall Maslin

* * *

This man is "brilliant." That's the word all of his friends use when they talk about him. He has one of those minds that are swift and thorough at the same time.

He reads a book and gets it all in one reading.

Give him a problem and he has it solved in a flash.

Give him a job and it's done immediately.

It's tough for a man like that to be so hampered by illness. It's tough for anybody, of course, but everybody agrees that it's particularly bad for a man of great abilities, like this man I know.

* * *

Every year or two he has to quit his job and go away to the country to "get his strength back." Every few years as long as I've known him, he's been going to a hospital or just getting out of one. And every time I meet him he's got a grin on his face.

I've wondered and wondered about him.

I've told myself that it must be because he just naturally has a happy disposition. Knowing how most of us act when we've a pain in the stomach or an ache in a tooth, I don't want to give him credit for being too different from the rest of us.

* * *

But the last time I saw him, this fellow who's always in hospitals and always just about to have an operation, I asked him how he managed to keep so happy. And he said:

"I had to learn how. . . . Happiness isn't my natural state of mind. My natural disposition is sort of sour and cranky, and it didn't come easy. It didn't come until I discovered that I couldn't get any happiness out of thinking about myself. When I was well, I thought I got a lot of happiness out of that sort of thing; but when my old body went back on me I discovered that thinking about myself just multiplied my misery. So I cut it out, and you can't imagine what a difference it makes in the pleasure a fellow gets out of life."

* * *

Yes, I can imagine it. I know now why my sick friend is happy. But I'd like to know where he got the common sense to see for himself that he couldn't be happy unless he quit thinking about himself. And where he got courage to do what he knew was right.

That's his own private secret.

From THE ECCENTRIC Columns of Long Ago

FIFTY YEARS AGO

Clawson growth.

New dancing master in town.

Little Robin Redbreast is tuning up for the spring campaign.

Prof. F. A. Mills the psychologist and mesmerizer, is creating lots of sport at Flushing at present.

H. McBride salutes his friends with his usual broad smile over the arrival of a 12-pound boy at his house last week.

The biggest nuisance is the school boy loafer at noon, who driveth the weary merchant nearly unto death by his smart pranks and cute sayings.

The Redford and Southfield Gun Clubs will have a glass ball shoot on Saturday next for the oysters. The match will take place at Birmingham and there will be 15 contestants on each side.

The past week seems to have been a bonanza for births. Mrs. Kip Opdyke modestly stepped to the front with a 12-pound boy one day last week, and Kip thinks with proper care and plenty of cigars that he (Kip) will weather through.

The regular spring wire-pulling has commenced and a prominent Saginaw street politician was surprised by his young son coming home bathed in tears, and upon investigating found that a neighbor's son called his little Willie "a son of a wire-puller."

The Big Four, Messrs. Cal Jenks, Elmer Phillips, Joe Rainey and Will Adams, are soon to form a "Delta Psi Kappa Society" a kind of mutual treat-yourself-to-a-cigarette affair. We trust the venture will prove beneficial to each and every member.

The Phantom party at Library Hall last Friday evening was well patronized and everybody said "it was the best party they ever attended," but of course, the last is always the best anyway. Meanwhile the energetic managers of the dramatic element of the Ladies Library Society are including a stiring comedy in one-act entitled "Slasher and Crasher." Full Particulars later.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

One of the choir girls caused quite a commotion at St. James Church last Sunday by fainting during song service. Nothing serious, but the excitement was intense while it lasted.

Mrs. Elizabeth Randall and Mrs. Hannah E. Mitchell are on a western trip for a few weeks or so. Denver is their objective point west. Headquarters at Greeley, Colo., with Mrs. Nellie Randall Nichols. The happy couple sailed away last Thursday evening for Chicago and spent the next day with Drs. Smith and Mitchell in the big city.

The semi-annual inspection of the jail was made on Wednesday of last week by Poor Commissioners Spooner and Beardslee, Judge of Probate Joseph S. Stockwell, and County Road Agent Chadwick. They went all over the jail and barns thoroughly and found them in most satisfactory condition. They complimented Sheriff George Greer on the excellent manner in which he cared for the jail and other buildings connected, and stated they were pleased with the inspection.

The 22nd, Washington's birthday, was appropriately observed and duly celebrated by the Presbyterian ladies at the home of Mrs. Stearns last Friday. All enjoyed the services, as conducted by Bro'r Jamieson, who spoke very highly of George's qualifications, as to be able to fill all the requirements needed by the father of his country. All those participating did remarkably well, the large crowd was cosily seated, and generously served with coffee, cake etc. The treasury was swelled to the tune of $20.

FIVE YEARS AGO

Birmingham will remain a village as the result of a resolution to that effect presented to the Village Commission Monday evening by the city-village committee. This committee was appointed Jan. 3 to investigate the advantages and disadvantages attendant upon the chanering of Birmingham from a village to a city and was dismissed after the resolutions were presented.

Overwhelming opposition to the proposed legislation against Sunday motion pictures here was shown in opinions expressed today by a number of clubwomen. The reasons were varied in nature but the stand taken was the same. Many of the women said that, although they did not care particularly about attending the movies on Sunday themselves, they knew there were those in Birmingham who could find no other time to attend.

Objections to the changing of the names of village streets will be heard by village commissioners Mar. 14, according to a decision made Monday night. It is proposed that South Madison avenue from Lincoln to Clawson road be changed to Grant street and that Dorchester boulevard from Lincoln to Clawson road be changed to Stanley avenue.

Work on the razing of five houses was begun today on the library site on Merrill and Martin streets.

The state will have an attorney at the Woodward avenue injunction hearing in Circuit Court, Pontiac, Mar. 14, it was announced today by Highway Commissioner, Frank F. Rogers.

Preparations are nearing completion for the annual junior play to be given Wednesday evening, Mar. 16, in the auditorium of the Baldwin High School.

THE YELLOW PERIL

The Other Chap Says Something—

DAMMED WEALTH

The United States has been placing over emphasis on money. People have been made to see that it could be used to purchase influence, power every greedy human strives for. Money will buy these when merit fails to earn them. They scramble for more of it.

Once upon a time an individual was satisfied with one occupation, so long as that earned a decent living for himself and his dependents and allowed the setting aside of a little for a nest in case of a rainy day. A job came to be despised, almost. Money was concentrated. The rich became richer. The accumulation had to come from somewhere—you can't dam up the river, holding back the water without drying up the river bed below.

Look over the unfortunates filling our penal institutions in Michigan, as in every other state. What has brought them there, the gangster, the murderer, the thief? Nine times out of ten it was the lure of money.

The mere possession of money is not evil. Many of those who are rich have earned it and they put the money to good use. But our system of capitalism has allowed many to profit by speculation causing misery to the masses. And there is no law to reach this type, the arch criminal of them all. Yet it is who sits with the mighty, manipulating our governmental machinery to suit the whims and fancies of his kind.

The manipulator will profit even from a depression such as the present. He will hoard his profits during the unrest. Then he will buy stocks and bonds at rock-bottom prices, and also the homes of the poor unfortunates whose homes have been taken from them, likely by mortgage foreclosure made necessary by conditions not of their making. Again the rich will become richer. It is an endless cycle, endless at least under the system to which we as a nation have suscribed.—Joe Sturgeon in Delta (Gladstone) Reporter

HOLDING OUR END UP

If the average citizen who is barely making ends meet, or who is falling behind financially, would check himself up he might find some interesting fact concerning his affairs.

He would probably find, among other things, that his difficulties arise principally from his indulgence in the ancient game of trying to outshine his neighbors.

Take our automobile problem for example. First our neighbor buys an inexpensive car, and we must do likewise—on the installment plan. Then before it is paid for another friend invests in a six-cylinder machine, so in order to keep up appearances we must take another plunge, probably going him a little better.

It is the same with other things. We must have a better radio set than the family next door; better furniture; more stylish clothes. We must send our Mary to an expensive boarding school because Mrs. Jones is sending her Sally—who is both would be as well or better off in the home town high school. Then we must give expensive parties for which the Smiths or Browns have set the pace. We must have extensive vacation trips, when we might see as fine a collection of billboards right at home. And we wonder why we seem to get hopelessly behind financially.

It is safe to say that at least one-third of the average family's income is spent for such gratification of vanity, beyond what would be necessary to live decently and comfortably.

And by reasonable economy a lot of people who can not or do not pay their honest debts might be able to do so, and thereby enjoy a satisfaction equal to that of "keeping up with the Joneses."—Tuscola County Advertiser.

TOWNS DO NOT DIE.—THEY COMMIT SUICIDE.

"Towns do not die, they commit suicide," is the subject of an editorial which we read recently, and we have pondered over that statement to a considerable extent since then. We have reached the conclusion that the statement is true and that towns are not murdered by rivals, but rather that the town (meaning the people in it) opens up its own veins by a series of pin pricks, not one of which is so serious, but which in the aggregate permits the life blood of the town to slowly but surely ooze away. Just a few illustrations will indicate what we mean: Take any town of 1500 or more population and call that town by the name of your home town. If all the baked goods bought by the people of the town and surrounding country were baked in the home town bakery the business would support at least four families occupying that many houses, with a truck driver in another; if all the printing used was done in the home printing office it would add another family, and possibly two; if all the laundry work was done in the home laundry you could add a couple more families; if merchants knew they would have all of the community trade they could carry a larger and better selection of goods and add a few more clerks; if all the flour and grinding was done in the local mill, another miller might move in; if—but what's the use enumerating them all? You get the idea; if everybody who makes or earns money in the community would spend in in that same community and deposit their savings in the banks of that community, that town would thrive, but the little drains of money out in every direction constitute a mode of suicide that is slow but sure.—Bill Berkey in Cassapolis Vigilant.

The "Big Shots" Say:—

Ogden L. Mills, Under-Secretary of the Treasury:
"Some over-timid critics fail to distinguish the unmistakable dividing line between inflation and the arresting of the deflationary process which has gone to extreme lengths."

John J. Pershing, General, U. S. A., retired:
"We have become a little more frightened than the situation warrants."

David A. Reed, U. S. Senator of Pennsylvania:
"All nations who owe us are amply capable of meeting their debts without reference to reparations."

Robert B. Howell, U. S. Senator from Nebraska:
"Uncle Sam has proven to be the champion goat of all times."

Rose Macaulay:
"If anyone tells me that he does not mince matters, I agree with the lady who replied that she preferred them minced."

Paul Poiret, French fashion authority:
"America is composed of 120,000,000 school children."

Stanley Walker:
"The only really disturbing change I can discern in press agents as human beings is that each year they pass out fewer good cigars."

Albert C. Ritchi, Governor of Maryland:
"Our army of Federal employes is now rapidly approaching the million mark."

Sinclair Lewis, author:
"Nothing I say is to be interpreted in favor of the movies."

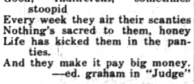
Carl G. Gaum, professor.
"Tell me what you laugh at and I'll tell you your mental age."

Wm. E. Borah, U. S. Senator, from Idaho:
"Governments will do nothing unless driven by public opinion."

Jest For the Fun of It

Getting the Lowdown

Pickpocket: "What are you doing reading a fashion paper?"



Colleague: "Well, if we are to do well in our profession, we must know where pockets are worn."

Old Hound in the Manger

Dorothy Parker, Margaret Fishback,
Ogden Nash, lots of others,
Rhyme the lowly little wisecrack,
Damn their sisters and their brothers
Profane ancient institutions
Scoff at fashions, cross with Cupid
Set down all their resolutions
Good, Indifferent, sometimes stoopid
Every week they air their scanties
Nothing's sacred to them, honey
Life has kicked them in the panties.
And they make it pay big money.
—ed. graham in "Judge"

Just Reverse

"Have you Dr. Embonpoint's book, 'How to Get Slim'?"

Bookseller: "No, madam, but will you take Dr. Slender's book, 'How to Get Fat' and act against his directions?"

Why Didn't You Tell Me?

Doctor: "You are overworked. You must take more exercise—much more exercise."

Patient: "You mean I must work harder?"

Doctor: "Just the opposite. You must do gymnastics—"

Patient: "But I am the circus acrobat."

Famous Firms
Trial & Tribulation

Noah Numbskull Wants to Know:
Does a window get all steamed up because it has a pane?
What is the sky blue about?
Where can I get some seeds to raise shoe trees?
If a captain of a ship marries a widow will he just be a second mate?
Can a dentist be arrested for selling false teeth?

He: "So your love for me is dead?"

She: "No, but it's awfully ill."
—"Everybody's Welcome"

PEOPLE'S COLUMN

The Eccentric is pleased to receive communications for this column, but all communications must be signed, but signatures will be kept confidential upon request. Letters must be limited to 150 words.

Township Salaries

To the Editor:

When, in Bloomfield Township, can we expect any lower taxes, while we are paying such exorbitant salaries to our township officers?

The supervisor was voted $5,000 per year by the Township Board last year, but he felt ashamed to take it, so reduced it voluntarily to $4,500.

The assistant supervisor is drawing $4,000 per year. Just stop and think of that, Mr. Taxpayer! It very nearly equals the salary paid to the Governor of our state!

Our Township Board voted Mr. James V. Bayley $3,800 per year, but Mr. Bayley, being a man with a conscience, felt ashamed to accept that amount. So he cut off $800, making $3,000 per year. Very fine, Jim, but you should have gone down the line just one more step before your conscience hardened up again.

The Township Board voted to pay our treasurer, for part time, $1,800 per year. Then they made a full-time job of the office at $2,200 per year and gave her two assistants at $25 per week. Mr. Taxpayer, open your eyes from slumber!

The Township Board voted to pay our highway commissioner a salary of $2,500 per year, and furnished him a car and running expenses. We have dozens of men in our township well qualified for the job who would be pleased to get $150 per month and furnish their own car.

Now Mr. Taxpayer, just watch these township officers and see if they are willing to take a cut. If they do not cut their own salaries, do not look for any reduction in our township expenses and taxes.

We are now faced with a simple question: What to do about it? Economies in public office—in states, counties, townships, cities and villages, as well as in the national government—consolidations and simplified efficiency, are essential to material reduction of governmental costs.

Officers of the Township of Bloomfield—think seriously and act wisely!

FRED MALLENDER
144 Chesterfield Road
(A taxpayer for 40 years in this township).

FIRST STATE BANK

To the Editor:

The report of the one-man grand jury into the affairs of the First State Savings Bank is most illuminating and comprehensive!

The fact that one employe abstracted $2,900 which has been repaid by his father, and another $25,000 which has been made good by the bonding company, and that $50,000 was loaned on a mortgage of the Birmingham Creamery and Ice Manufacturing Company property, which mortgage has been taken over by a private party and the bank reimbursed, indeed fully elucidates why the First State Bank, with close to two millions in deposits, closed its doors.

Seriously, does it not appear to other depositors, as to myself, that an investigation into the activities of the receiver and of the committee appointed by the depositors at the meeting so ably addressed by Judge Lacey, is most due?

I personally am getting tired of "listening to the silence" of these gentlemen.

Are they just pussyfooting?

If so, let us appoint another committee—men with spikes in their shoes.

W. F. ROBINSON
728 South Adams Road

(Editor's Note: This communication was received and prepared for publication some time before the statement of Thomas H. Cobb, president of the First State Savings Bank, which appears on the first page of this paper).

Our Scrap Book

PROVINCIALISM

Two small birds chirped!
They were contemplating marriage.
When a woman passed
Wheeling a baby-carriage.
The small lad just laughed!
(I think the woman frowned.)
"How silly," said the birds,
"Pushing a nest around!"

Donald Page.

PHILATELIC ASTRONMY

Stars are shown on a great many stamps of the world. The Star of Bethlehem appears frequently. . . . The constellation known as the "Southern Cross" appears on the stamps of Brazil and New South Wales. The sun appears on the Revolutionary stamps of the Philippine Islands and on the stamps of Peru. The moon is shown on the stamps of Turkey. A rainbow, on the stamps of Poland; lighning, on the stamps of Bosnia.

A telescope is shown on the stamps of St. Kitts. . . . Instruments used by the astronomers are shown on the Vasco de Gama series of Portugal.—Sigmund I. Rothschild, in "Stories Postage Stamps Tell."

The Co-Debtor

A merchant addressing a debtor
Remarked in the course of his lebtor,
That he chose to suppose
A man knose what he ose
And the sooner he pays it the bebtor.

—Exchange.