The Birmingham Eccentric

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NOTE: The Eccentric is pleased to publish stories of events which bona fide news value and which are written by persons not connected with the editorial staff of the paper. All copy must be delivered before noon on Wednesdays. The right is reserved, however, to make such superficial changes in the work submitted as are necessary to the style of the paper and to are required by laws of the state. Because of a mechanical situation in the composing room, headlines written by 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.

Framing Our City Charter

A vast majority of those who voted last week are of the opinion that Birmingham should be governed by the laws and ordinances possible to cities, and not by those of the village type. The results of the election reveal how the people of a given area, dissatisfied with their lot under old rules and regulations, accept the offers of a change—hoping and trusting that better things will be manifest from the new day. Better things are possible, too,—in proportion to the intelligence and interest revealed by our citizens during the years to come.

Right now the Charter Commission of nine men is starting its labors to produce the kind and type of governmental regulation that will maintain Birmingham as Detroit's finest suburb; in it will undoubtedly be included every possible provision for the efficient and economic handling of local affairs. The transition from village to city may, indeed, be merely one in name and regulation only; there is no reason why Birmingham should lose its "villagey" atmosphere, or any of the other characteristics that have endeared it to ten thousand people.

In the meantime, as the Charter Commission begins its deliberations, The Eccentric suggests that every interested citizen forward his or her ideas to one or more of the Commissioners; after all, Birmingham belongs to its people, and we are sure that the framers of the new Charter will gratefully receive helpful suggestions to be incorporated in the new document.

Birmingham takes on a new appellation, but evermore remains its fine, old spirit!

The Sun Of Truth

A few weeks ago the whole world paused to gaze upon the sun as the smaller moon came between it and the earth. If you could only get the whole world to focus its attention upon the Sun of Truth, what a transfigured earth we would have! What a millennium would come upon us! Truth is there—but not enough human thoughts view it and reflect its enduring warmth.

Our Machine Age

We live in an age that has transformed inanimate iron ore and other mineral resources, plus trees, chemicals, and the host of other earthly substances into machines of varying size and complexity—but all intended to liberate man and his mate from tiresome toil. Some day human beings will emancipate themselves from the domination of this machine by controlling its collective output for the use of (not the exploitation of) themselves.

MUCH CRITICISM is being directed against public officials in high places these trying days. 'Our officials are playing politics and forgetting the public good,' is the cry heard everywhere. Well, when enough people get to applying that cry to action, we'll have a different breed of public officials. After all, when you reflect upon government today, with an open mind, you must admit that we are getting the kind of government that we seem perfectly willing to stand for, aren't we?

T. C. HUCKLE, Cadillac newspaper man, suggests that Michigan's Legislature next January get busy and make laws that will prevent the placing of billboards along our highways. Mr. Huckle points out that billboards, when placed about Michigan, not only mar the beauty of the scenery, but by distracting the motorists' attention increase the traffic hazard.

SALE OF LIQUOR to high school youths is rumored in numerous sections of Oakland County. Recently police arrested an alleged blind pig operator in Farmington. We have been told that Pontiac contains them—and that even in Birmingham some time ago a place existed where only youngsters could "make a buy."

THE GREAT "WAR" between Culbertson and Work has been called off, and the gap of strife that separated these two authorities has been bridged with some sort of friendly truce. We hope their contract will never be sacrificed off. Now, if bridge-playing husbands and wives will quit quarrelling.

ONLY THREE PER CENT of the gasoline burned in automobiles is actually converted into usable energy. We suppose the remainder is expressed by back-seat drivers.

THE CHAP WHO SAID that "love is priceless and can't be bought" uttered these famous words before the lawyers invented the breach of promise suit.

IT WAS AN OPTIMISTIC PASTOR who announced the subject of his Sunday topic thus: "Sermon: On the Road to Hell." Everybody welcome.

THERE ARE 200 PARTS to the modern telephone—and sometimes several of them are working efficiently.

Let's Open Our Schools Cheerfully

Birmingham schools will open their arms to the youth of this area next Monday, to launch them upon another year of scholastic training. From every corner of the community, as well as from nearby territory, boys and girls will be obliged to take up the tools of learning, as modern schoolmasters and school mistresses preside over classroom and lecture hall. It is one of society's methods of transmitting its accumulated knowledge from our generation to another.

This year, more than any for many decades, the local schools will start against the tremendous handicap of a shortage of funds. Delinquent taxes, caused largely by the present suppression of business activity, plus the over-exploitation of portions of this area in the matter of real estate development, are responsible for the shadow of poverty that hangs over the ensuing administration of our public schools. That condition is the common lot of the bubble of prosperity that has floated over many sections of our country. It may give us cause to ponder the ways of our past, but it should not submerge us into the limbo of melancholy—for from it we shall (if we do not forget) come unto a brighter day!

So let's be cheerful—for the children's sakes! And that will be reflected in our own happier frame of mind.

Your Local Historic Spots

A resident of Harbor Springs, John C. Wright, author and of Indian descent, suggests that historic places in his community be singled out and properly marked; he argues that this would do much to maintain respect for the past, and to make glamorous the present. As we have driven about this great state of Michigan the same thought has often occurred to us, too. With such a wealth of historic background, why does not some state agency (already in existence, and not to be created) start a movement to interest every community in marking its landmarks and historic points of interest. As one suggestion, why should not able Grover Dillman's highway department place suitable signs on trunk line roads, each sign with its own local inscription touching the subject of interest? Tourists would be attracted by them, and even native Michiganders ought to obtain renewed enthusiasm and interest in their own richly endowed commonwealth.

Don't Envy Hollywood

Behind the make-believe smiles that come from Hollywood are untold heart-aches. Tragedy stalks across the paths of many, many of those who try to make an unreal world of bright lights and artificial playtimes. The next time you are inclined to envy the life and circumstances of some "arrived" or "ascending star" in our nation's film colony just . . . don't. Perhaps you'll never know how much better off you are, playing the precise role that life has already cast you in.

IOWA FARMERS, unable to raise food for sale at a decent profit, have started to raise the prices of their products by refusing to unload them in large cities. If they are able to keep at it long enough, they will be in a measure successful. Other peoples in other eras have tried the same methods, but human nature doesn't change over-night—and even Iowa farmers cannot graft cooperative marketing upon a manipulated economic world.

DR. E. A. CHRISTIAN, for half a century associated with the Pontiac State Hospital, recently was honored at a dinner tendered him. For 71 years he has absorbed the offerings of this planet earth, and has deported himself in a manner that proves he was rightly surnamed. Congratulations, Sir, and many more years to your span.

"CONFUSION REIGNS at polls" was one thing recently said about the special election held in Detroit. To which we would only ask: when was any election held when confusion did not reign?

WISEACRES SIZING up the next Congress, believe that it will be in the hands of the Democratic party. Well, as long as the Chief Jackass remains in New York state, we won't get too worried.

All of Us

By Marshall Maslin

You stop on the road and you look back over all the mistakes you've made, all the wrong turnings, all the foolish decisions, and you say to yourself:

"If I could only live my life over again"

If you could, you'd go to school longer, you'd study harder, you'd study law instead of English literature, or medicine instead of law.

You'd marry sooner—or later.

You wouldn't play so much—or you'd play a lot more. You'd have more real friends—and fewer careless playfellows.

You'd do a lot of things you haven't done—and some of the things you did you wouldn't do at all.

If you could only live your life over again!

You sit under a tree along the highway of life and you "wonder about things". And the more you wonder, the less you are sure. Sometimes you think that your whole life turned on one small decision you made many years ago. You had your choice, but you didn't know what you would do.

You almost ran away to sea, but you didn't go.

You almost went to China for an exporting and importing house, but you changed your mind at the last moment.

You almost did a lot of things, but you just didn't do them.

You did other things entirely and became what you are today.

You would have married somebody else, probably, but you wouldn't have had those children of yours who make you so proud. You'd have had other children, but not these particular ones.

The whole pattern of existence would be changed for you—but would you be happier than you are?

When you say to yourself: "If only I could live my life over again!" you are thinking of your mistakes, of the things you did wrong. It doesn't occur to you that very often during your life you did the Right Thing and decided wisely and brought happiness into your life.

So pick up your feet and shoulder your pack and start out again, without looking back over the mistaken years. You haven't done so badly. And you've plenty of good years ahead and many more decisions still to make. Keep going!

Marshall Maslin

From THE ECCENTRIC Columns of Long Ago

FIFTY YEARS AGO

Hon. O. Popelston has been seriously ill, but is said to be improving.

Thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Croton for a generous supply of wedding cake.

Peter Reed had stolen from his house last Sunday while absent at church, $82 in cash.

Anthony Westaby of Troy has recently received an invalid born in the shape of a ten-pound boy.

Who came last Monday afternoon.

Judge Hoyt and wife have removed from Melvin Rose's house near the depot to John Conley's dwelling on Troy street, one west of the Presbyterian church.

Everybody who can vote should remember that there is to be an entirely new registration of all voters this fall. Old or young, black or white, you must register or you can't vote.

Mr. Charles A. Wilson, an old Birmingham boy, was married last week at Holly to a most estimable young lady of the above place, named May Cassidy. The young couple have our best wishes for a prosperous voyage over the sea of matrimony.

Jack Baldwin seems to be pursued by ill luck this year. Just in the busiest part of the season, he was grievously afflicted with rheumatism and was forced to lay off several weeks, and as if to cap the climax, a dog ran against which he was shoeing, brought down his fairy tools on Jack's right hand too on the left hand side, damaging that member beyond all hopes of immediate repair. Jack grins and bears it like a little man, and enjoys life just as much as ever.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

Mrs. Mayme Taber Loop captured five premiums at the state fair. One of them on a prizing braid. Happy Hayrick!

The Cooper Tailoring and poultry line, won prizes galore at the state fair. Wicker's boy, being the exhibitor, also receives great encouragement to go ahead with his fowl business.

The carpet sweeper for which the library asked thru The Eccentric, has come thru the kindness and liberality of Mr. and Mrs. James Hunt. They still have firm faith that the student lamp will come soon.

Even lying in a hammock under a big tree, on a large cool drink, hearty like the ocean, nothing to do and all day to do it, gets tiresome after a while.

The display of flowers around the home of Alfred Black is simply beautiful and shows a good taste in arrangement. There is also a substantial vegetable garden on the side, thus combining pleasure with profit.

While in Wicker's not only, Frank G. Pearsall left his automobile in front of a business place, while he went inside. Sending on an incline it started slowly, but soon was gaining speed and ended its mad career high and dry on a brick pile, from which predicament it was successfully rescued without damage.

Not tiring some time ago to save our business men use letter heads advertising Birmingham to a resident town on all their stationery. Just suppose all business letters leaving Birmingham had this neatly printed on the back of every sheet. The wide range in lots of 500 letter heads printed at a trifling cost, would be to know, printed on the back of every letter leaving our village that this could be read, in a neat oval: "Birmingham, population, 1,200; Detroit most adjacent city; 30 cars to and from the metropolis of Michigan every forty minutes; gas; water works; free public library; the public schools with an enrollment for 1900 of 300; no diptheria has originated here and for 25 years not a case of malignant scarlet fever; an ideal place to rear a family for health and education."

FIVE YEARS AGO

A total enrollment of 2,123 at the end of the first week of school with prospects of 2,200 by tomorrow night, is announced today by Superintendent Clarence V. G. Last Friday's total is largest by 147 than the total at the end of the school's excellent initial fall of 1926, which was 1,976. The Adams School, as last year, has the largest enrollment.

Frank L. Dodge, attorney for Birmingham and Bloomfield Hills village will take office as the third circuit judge of the Sixth Judicial District comprised of Oakland County, in one week, it is announced today following his appointment by Gov. Fred W. Green.

Plans for the new municipal building to be located on the Pierce street block of the civic center and to contain the police and fire departments and the architects are progressing today and consultation between the heads of the departments and the civic officers are being held regularly.

Maps and diagrams for the proposed widening of Maple avenue from Adams to Woodward avenue will be presented to the village commission at the meeting next Monday night, it was announced at the last meeting by Village Manager James R. Perry. He has been working on the specifications.

Work of the newly organized health department made considerable progress during the past month, according to a report in the hands of the village commission today. As the result of inspections, several improvements are recommended.

THE WINNINGS OF THE WEST

The Other Chap Says Something—

SHIFTLESS POOR

A young man tells us that he has been driving through Clinton county, stopping at farm homes. He has covered the same routes before—about two years ago. He is astounded at the number of houses which were deserted two years ago and which are now housing families. Most of these families are in poor circumstances, some desperately poor. Some of them appear to be doing everything possible to make a living. Others are loafing about, having grown no gardens and who profess little interest in their own welfare or what is going on about them. Every town and village has its quota of these people. They are the moral and financial responsibility of the township, city, village or county. It may be quite necessary that an organized plan be worked out so that they may earn what they are going to demand in the way of food, fuel and supplies for the coming winter. There should be a conference of the citizens of every township in this county for that purpose.—Schuyler J. Marshall in Clinton County Republican-News.

PROFITLESS WARS

Speaking before the state convention of the American Legion at Kalamazoo recently, Senator Arthur Vandenberg outlined a plan to put an end to war profiteering.

"This formula can be summed up in two provisions," the Senator declared.

"If war should develop, the prices of commodities to be frozen at the maximum prices, by executive authority.

"Attachment by taxation of 95 per cent of all surplus earnings of every one, the funds to go into the United States Treasury for war-time usage.

"This plan will take the dollar sign off the United States flag," Senator Vandenberg declared. He paid a compliment to the Legion by saying:

"The American Legion sounded the first note in this campaign to equalize the burdens of war and to remove profiteering and I shall continue to dedicate my own actions in promoting the principal of the American Legion.

"If I can, demonetize war we shall have served two objectives—that of pursuing peace and that of being prepared for war. Money as well as manpower can be conscripted for the welfare of the nation."—Joe Sturgeon in Delta Reporter.

THE NEWSPAPERS COUNT

National advertising manager of the J. C. Penney company knows that in order to sell merchandise you must advertise.

Here is what he wrote to the manager of every store in the organization his week:

"(1) Do you want to be certain of reader interest? Then use the newspapers. Many a circular receives only a casual glance while the local newspaper with hundreds of general news items is read thoroughly from first to last page.

"(2) Do you want representation in the same 'shopping window' as the other merchants in your town use? Then use the local newspaper. Women, the purchasing agents of the home, read newspaper advertising daily, whereas many a circular is tossed into the waste basket without a glance.

"(3) Do you want fast action? Then use the newspaper. The ad that you run today, if it contains real merchandise news, will bring immediate results tomorrow. You can receive and sell out a consignment of merchandise with newspaper advertising in less time than it takes to prepare a circular.

"(4) Do you want to be recognized as a factor of importance in your community—a real home town store? If you do, use the newspaper—it undoubtedly is a strong factor in the building of good will and acceptance by the whole town as a good place to trade."—Tom Conlin in Crystal Falls Diamond Drill.

LIVING OFF THE TAXPAYER

During the past year, at least 4,500,000 men and women were on the payrolls of government, federal, state and local. A total of some $13,000,000,000 in taxes was needed to sustain these 4,500,000 people and accomplish their work.

These figures beggar the imagination, but perhaps some comparisons will make them a little clearer. The number of government employes in the country in 1931 was more than four times the number of persons employed for gain in any capacity in Wisconsin during that year. The number of government employes in the country was equivalent to one out of twelve of the whole population of the country of voting, white and native born.

The number of government employes, finally, was as large as the total industrial employment in the seven states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas and Pennsylvania.

As for the taxes, the best estimates figure them to total only a bit less than one-third of the whole national income for the year.

If this is not food for thought, in the universal depression, what is?—Milwaukee Journal.

Jest For the Fun of It

Happy Thought

I'm one of those work-a-day fellows
Who have to get up by the clock;
At six in the morning, it rolls me groaning
With a jangle that's heard for a block.

Just as others, I dream of great riches
And I dream of a pile of bricks
Kept close by my right and a new clock each night
That I'd bust every morning at six.

—A. S. W. in "Life"

Mrs. Bright: "I hear you've got a new organ in your church. Now all you need is a monkey."

Mrs. Crusty: "And all you need in yours is an organ."—Pathfinder.

—o—

Famous Firms
Modest & Retiring

—o—

Senorita—"You make love to every girl in Mexico."

Senor—"Yeah! I'm an old Spanish customer!"

—"Hot Cha"

—o—

Travel Note

I hope I'll never take a train
From any railroad station,
Attended by the members of
A family delegation
Who feel the firm conviction that
A fitting demonstration
Of grief at my departure calls
For noisy osculation!
—Arthur Lippmann in "Judge"

The "Big Shots" Say:—

William E. Borah, U. S. Senator from Idaho:

"There is only one ground on which we can consider our debts from Europe—that is opening up markets and trade."

Walter F. Waters, Commander, B. E. F.:

"I am going to tell the American people the truth about what happened down there in Washington and it isn't going to be a very pleasant thing to hear."

Sadao Araki, Japanese Minister of War:

"Japan has never engaged in war where she has not been forced to do so for the security and maintenance of peace."

Edouard Herriott, premier of France:

"Despite the most solemn agreements, we see appeals to violence and eulogies of war."

Jan Smuts, South African General:

"Many considerations point to the part of Northern Africa now included in the Sahara Desert as the cradle or original home of homo sapiens, modern man, as distinguished from earlier and extinct species of the genus homo."

Nobuyoshi Muto, Japanese General in full charge of Manchuria:

"Should anybody attempt to obstruct solution of the Manchurian question, we would be obliged to combat such interferers relentlessly, no matter who they may be."

James A. Mollison, first to fly Westward across the Atlantic:

"You can't imagine anything more discomforting than being bereft of contact with the world."

Auguste Piccard, after second ascent into stratosphere:

"In the stratosphere (10 miles up) there are no storms, no ice, no snow. The temperature is always uniform, between fifty and sixty degrees below zero, centigrade."

Amos W. W. Woodcock, director of Prohibition:

"There is practically no open sale of intoxicating liquors in the United States. I do not mean to say it is not being sold. It is, but the purchaser must seek it out."

Adolf Hitler, leader of German Nazis:

"There is a law of self-defense superior to all wretched and bourgeois prattle about law and order."

Gustav Cassel, noted Swedish economist:

"The idea that production now and then must be slowed down in order to give consumption time to come up to the level with production is sheer nonsense."

William E. Borah, U. S. Senator of Idaho:

"There is no justification for cancellation or reduction of war debts unless the program is broad enough to give reasonable assurance of economic recovery."

H. C. Bailey, British writer:

"In two centuries, the English-speaking world will not be speaking English. It will speak 'a strange compromise,' a lingo perhaps mercifully hidden by Providence from our imagination."

Henry Fairfield Osborne, president, Museum of Natural History:

"Anything which is true cannot be harmful to the body, to the mind or to the soul."

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.

CREEDS

To the Editor:

A creed is simply a concrete statement of doctrine or principles, regard to religious matters by one or more people. In politics we call them platforms. Therefore, I am a believer in creeds. Some people, even some ministers, do not believe in the apostles' creed, but I do. The following is another kind of creed, which I think is very practical. It is selected from the Christian Union Herald of Sept. 10:

"Do not keep your alabaster boxes of your love and tenderness sealed up until your friends are dead. Fill them full of sweetness; speak approving, cheerful words while they can, may hear them, and while their hearts can be thrilled and made happier by them.

"The kind things you mean to say when they are gone say them to they go. The flowers you intend sending for their coffins send to brighten and sweeten their homes before they leave them. If my friends have alabaster boxes laid away, full of fragrant perfumes and sympathy and affection which they intend to break over my dead body, I would rather they would bring them out in my weary and troubled hours, and open them that I may be refreshed and cheered by them while I need them. I would rather have a plain coffin without a flower, a funeral without an eulogy, than a life without the sweetness of love and sympathy."

JOHN McCARROLL,
431 Park Street.

LOOKS At LIFE

By EDWIN M. CLARK

We humans are a funny bunch. We maintain armies and navies at a cost of 80 per cent of our federal revenue, and despite the fact that we use them only infrequently at their purpose of blood-spilling, when we do put them into play we make up for lost time. Contrasted with such somewhat impolite conduct we send around the Red Cross and similar humane agencies to make amends.

I say we are funny. I mean frivolous. Gore-spilling has been an element of what we term civilization since the beginning of history—presumably ages prior to that. Now the world war has quite convinced the toiling masses of the world's people that conflict is positive loss even to the winners, and there is a disposition to cut it out. The boys who suffer the consequences in loss of life, pain and sorrow now see the glories of peace and good-will but as the years have found no way of co-operating to make their will politically effective. Political representation is not true to its name. Mr. Big Business has always been dominant politically.

When we, the mass, yearn for world peace we find our chronic politicians glorifying the word patriotism. That word is not of much use except when there is a scrap on, then it jingles in legislative halls with Mr. Big Money's thumb on the button. It has inflated the chests of our potential young warriors and made them ready for gore. But, happily, that word is losing its lustre. Really we should erase it from our lexicons—or give it a poorly pine. Knowledge is fading racial and nationalistic consciousness. The world's people are now visioning the the maximum of gain in undisturbed co-operative effort and permanent goodwill. They have seen proof of untimate loss in all conflict.

We are at an age verging momentous changes in civilization. But we have yet to find the way to draw legislation away from sordid material interests. Dr. Einstein has proposed that pacifists form an international association making pledges not to take up arms at any legislative declaration of war.

That plan clashes with long existing laws. I propose we keep within the law by pledging to refuse support at the ballot box of any candidate who does not pledge his vote and vote against aggressive or invasive attack.

Such a plan can be effected under any of the now existing forms of government. This strength of world-wide expression I believe some one of our now existing women's organizations can best effect. It can be effected by asking the public press to broadcast as news, and also to print a pledge that can be clipped, signed and mailed to headquarters.

It would be a world-wide referendum. Periodical results could be published to stimulate action. Here is a chance for some organization of women to begin a page of momentous history. It would be a heartfelt expression of the world's people independent of politicians.

We have no means of such an expression now. All the great nations of the earth now have representative forms of government, but they do not express the will of the toiling mass. Selfish interests now select and control the legal actions of legislators. We have a democracy only in name.

Who will attempt this?

That Will

The Chicago world's fair will show the progress of civilization for the past 50 years, we are told. That will take us from the old-fashioned six-shooter right up to the modern machine guns.—Judge.