The Birmingham Eccentric

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THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 1933

NOTE: The Eccentric is pleased to publish stories of events which have local value and which are written by persons not members of the editorial staff of the paper. All copy must be in the office before noon on Wednesdays. The right is reserved, however, to make such superficial changes in the wording as are necessary to the style of the paper, and as are required by laws of the state. Because of a difference in the composition room, headlines written by persons other than members of the staff cannot be used. Any erroneous reflection upon the character, standing or reputation of any person, firm or corporation which may appear in the columns of The Eccentric will be gladly corrected upon being brought to the attention of the publisher.

Birmingham's City Charter

For a good many weeks nine Birmingham citizens have been engaged in the task of writing a charter for the new City of Birmingham, the completion of which was announced last week. These men believe that the charter they offer for the approval of Birmingham people is, fundamentally and in most of its details, a good one—one that will serve as a guide and protection for the future development of this fine community.

These nine men do not declare that the document they have written, much of it in co-operation with the suggestions and objections of interested citizens, is perfect, or that it will guarantee immunity from municipal mistakes that future city officials may make. But they do feel confident in expressing the opinion that this charter, which will be voted on April 3, is suited to the needs of Birmingham, both for the immediate present and the better future. A careful reading of it will reveal this one, of many, important phases: the proposed charter seeks to curb reckless or ill-timed expenditure of tax funds, especially via the so-called "special assessment" route. (Projects started by this method in "boom times," and later made into general obligation bonds, have combined to over-burden the taxpayers in every area in or adjacent to large cities.)

Within a few weeks The Eccentric will present the final draft of the new charter. With the exception of a few minor changes, it is substantially in the same form it was when published some time ago. Upon its adoption it will become the "constitution" under which Birmingham will operate in the future; as time goes on, amendments that seem to fit changing conditions may be submitted to the electorate, thus continuing the usefulness and guiding influence of the fundamental phases of the original document.

Until every section of the new charter the nine charter commissioners have not agreed; considerable argument and debate have been projected on many occasions while the document was being drafted, the opinion of the majority finally holding. On the whole, however, the nine framers of the charter have agreed that their efforts thus far are for the best interests of Birmingham, and so have concluded their activities and now submit the result of their labors to the final court—that of the public.

MR. MUSSOLINI, not to be outdone by Premier Mussolini in catastrysmic out-bursts, is again rumbling, soon is expected to belch forth in a torrent of smoke, fire, and molten lava.

PLANS TO BUILD a swimming pool on White House grounds for President-elect Roosevelt are being made in Washington. We'll wager that Mr. Roosevelt will find his task, after March 4, filled with deeper water than may be found in a shallow pool.

A SHREWD CHAP has said that "a hypocrite is he who periodically pays the devil his dues—and tips the minister with his change."

Pay High Officials Decent Wages

Efforts to reduce the salaries of state or national officials to a scale far below what is a living wage, ought to be defeated. In theory, it may appear to be the correct thing to set a high public official's salary at a low scale, on the belief that the office, and not the money it pays, should attract the proper candidate. In some cases this may be true, but in so few of them that they are the exception.

Right now a move has been gathering momentum in Washington to reduce the wages paid to Senators and Representatives. In our opinion, that is false economy. The demands of such offices upon incumbents is, to say the least, expensive in a strictly material sense. These men who represent the several States in the nation's Capitol ought to be kept as far as possible from pecuniary wants; they ought to be placed where the temptation to betray their public trust to some greedy, grasping "special interest" may not become possible.

Decent recompense in actual wages ought to be extended to every public official whose position has a considerable bearing upon the general human welfare—and especially in Washington. Some men are honest in any extremity; others are only so when they are protected from becoming dishonest; while some are dishonest in nearly every act they perform. Trying to pauperize high public officials is like trying to save money on your property by decreasing the insurance coverage. Alas, though, when the fires of flame or selfishness start burning!

Uses Of Our University

Phil Pack, editor of an athletics news service that comes each week from the University of Michigan, ought to be more careful of the words he uses in describing affairs at Ann Arbor. Last week he sent out this important statement: "Examinations, the bane of the student's life, lie just ahead of Michigan athletes, as a consequence of which competition will be a missing factor until February 10 . . . ."

Webster defines the word "bane" as "that which destroys life; esp., deadly poison. Destruction, murder, death. Any cause of ruin, or of lasting injury; harm; woe."

We suggest that learned educators on Michigan's most expensive campus pay more attention to the "stuff" that comes from their halls of learning. While it may be possible that Mr. Pack's use of the word "bane" was thoughtlessly projected into his copy, it does reveal a certain attitude of mind that one hardly expects from an institution of higher learning.

Athletics has come to play a large part in campus life, but it is not the most important part of student life. Society operates and maintains its schools and colleges for the training of the mind first, and the training of the body second; so let us hope that future references to examinations will not list them as baneful, but rather will emphasize them as times when mind and intellect rule over body and matter.

The Same Forty Centuries Ago

Forty centuries ago an Egyptian wrote upon his scroll an analysis of the times which sounds's great deal like it might have been written last week.

It went as follows:

"A few lawless men are depriving the land of sovereignty. The laws are cast out and men walk upon them in public. The lawbreaker is lord of wealth; the rich man has lost all. Scanty is gold; craftsmen are without work; the reaper of the harvest gets nothing, while he who plowed not profits. The land is depleted. There are more rulers than ever. I show thee a land turned upside down."

"A few lawless men . . ."

"The laws are cast out . . ."

"Craftsmen are without work . . ."

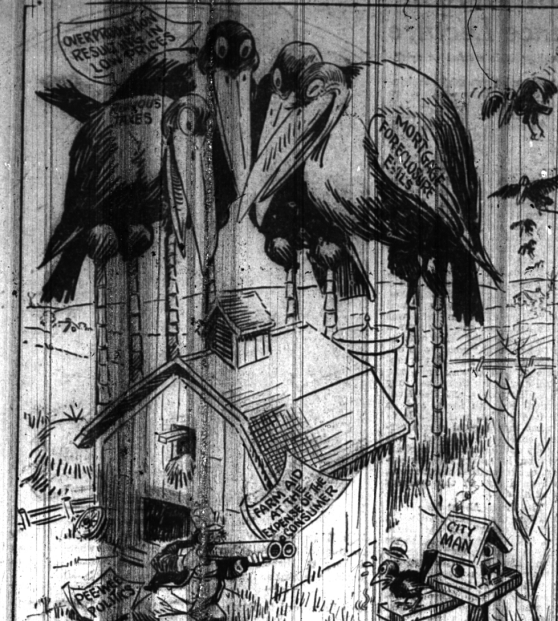
"The reaper of the harvest gets nothing while he who plowed not profits."

"There are more rulers than ever."

Forty centuries is a long time. But practically all of the above is pat to the present. And here we are all of us thinking that we are in the midst of something that never happened before.

There have been tough times before and there will be tough times again. And all of us will be unprepared for them after any period of good times, and we will be just as sure to wish we had been more careful during the days of prosperity.—The Medford Star News.

Surely There's Bigger Game, If He'd Only Look For It!



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 are to be limited to 500 words, and must be in the office by Tuesday noon for publication the following Thursday.

DISABLED VETERANS

To the Editor:

In view of the adverse criticisms from some sources concerning disabled veterans' legislation, I take the opportunity of sending you an article taken from the Michigan Legionnaire, which, if you see it to publish in your estimable paper, will prove very interesting and enlightening to your readers, I am sure. The article follows:

Hundreds of thousands of dollars that now are coming annually into Michigan will be withheld from the channels of business, and instead the burden of higher local and state taxes will occur if organized groups succeed in stopping various benefits now existing under law for disabled veterans, according to Louis A. Johnson, national commander of the American Legion.

In a statement recently issued, the national commander said in part as follows: "The Chamber of Commerce of the United States, through its (legitimate, or illegitimate?) stepdaughter, 'Nel', as the American Legion has come to know the National Economy League, are seeking through misrepresentation to unduly alarm the country regarding the cost of caring for disabled veterans.

"The opposition of this group to the care of the disabled has been traced to the fact that out of their huge profits they pay a large share of the federal income tax, and if the care of the disabled is curtailed their taxes can be reduced because the burden can then be shifted to the 'little fellow' or local tax payer, few of whom pay or know very much about any federal income tax. In the year of our greatest prosperity, 1928, this group of opponents paid a total federal income tax of $98,000,000, leaving them an average net income of $129,000 each out of more than six billion dollars.

"If their scheme should succeed it is easy enough to understand that Michigan would immediately have several thousand disabled veterans thrown upon the mercy of the local communities. Many of these disabled men would have no means of support, and instead of spending federal payments for groceries, medicine, clothing, etc., would be objects of charity.

"Therefore the channels of trade in the communities of Michigan would lose that income now coming to them, and in addition, the local taxes for the upkeep of local hospitals, county farms and other institutions would increased. This does not take into consideration the human misery involved, nor the fact that it is cheaper in 'cure' rather than 'curse'.

"The payment by the federal government for Michigan veterans, and the number of Michigan veterans receiving it for the 12 months ending June 30, 1932, follow: compensation, 16,252 veterans, amount $5,206,802; disability allowance, 10,795, amount $2,134,011; death compensation, 2,564, $956,117; emergency officers retirement pay, 111, $203,106; military and naval insurance (term), 4,583, $3,836,112; adjusted service and dependent pay, $98,004; adjusted service certificates, matured by death, $88,026; pension, 117,013, $9,371,583; veterans remaining in hospital, 1,325; administration, $1,416,448; hospital and domiciliary facilities and services, $241,730; TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS $24,349,042."

PETER D. ARISTOS, D. C.
528 Oakland avenue.

THE OTHER CHAP SAYS SOMETHING—

THE CENTURY OF PROGRESS

Beware of the so-called Century of Progress exposition to be staged in Chicago this summer. The exposition itself may be on the up and up but warnings are already being sent out regarding a score of concessions which are operating racket built around them. Companies are selling parking space there at four miles from the grounds, concerns are selling admission tickets at an inflated rate, the admission has not even been fixed as yet, Racketeers are rampant and tours but people have been formed to take their guard. There are subscription and popularity contests which are already under suspicion.

Instead of being broadcast regarding the century of progress it leads one to believe that the great est progress made in and around Chicago has been in skin games. What have you expect? When Chicago as a city is responsible for attracting visitors from Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Ohio, Pennsylvania and the Dominion of Canada it is no wonder that it is infested with rackets.

Investigate thoroughly any proposition made regarding the Century of Progress. It will be good advice to follow.—Burt J. Brown in Ingham County News.

THE PERSONAL TAX

Assessing officers of Oakland County have been notified to pay more attention this year to the assessing of personal taxes. The difficulty in the past has been that the only means the tax has to pay for it is it does not collect the money. The difficulty has always been experienced by the citizens of townships in collecting personal taxes and it would require a considerable force to attempt to carry out the instructions given recently by the attorney general and the tax resulting would scarcely pay for the effort. It has been declared by some that the instructions to gather more personal tax is just an attempt to evade the passing of a sales tax which is the correcting method of obtaining state taxes.

There are about 15 ways of avoiding the paying of a personal tax and it is one of the most difficult taxes there is to collect.—Rochester Clarion.

MAXIMS FOR THOSE WHO TALK TOO EASILY

The faults of commission are far more serious than those of omission; regrets are seldom for what you have left unsaid.

The chatterer reveals every corner of his shallow mind; one who keeps silent can not take his depth plumbed.

Don't pretend to know more than you do. To say you have read a book and then seemingly to understand nothing of what you have read, proves you a half-wit. Only the very small mind hesitates to say 'I don't know.'

Above all, stop and think what you are saying. This is really the first, last, and only rule. If you stop' you can't chatter or expound or flounder ceaselessly, and if you 'think' you will find a topic and a manner of presenting your topic so that your neighbor will be interested rather than long suffering. Remember also that the sympathetic, not the critic listener is the delight of delights. The person who looks glad to see you, who is seemingly enthralled with your conversation, who looks at you with a kindling of the face, and gives you spontaneous and undivided attention is the one to whom the palm for the art of conversation would undoubtedly be awarded.—Lapeer County Press.

THE CHALLENGE TO LIBERTY

By
NICHOLAS MURRAY BUTLER

Addressing, as President, a Meeting of the Pilgrim Society

Make no mistake about it. What is being challenged is liberty. Liberty is challenged in the name of compulsion. The compulsion may be that of the dictator or of the Communist State. But it is compulsion that is at open war with liberty and has challenged liberty to battle.

Liberty is the assurance that every man may do what he believes is his duty in spite of majorities or customs and opinions. Liberty involves the right to be wrong. Liberty is attested always and everywhere by the treatment of minorities. The reason that minorities are such a problem in half a dozen lands is that it is liberty struggling to find expression against the dominant forces of compulsion.

If we are to protect liberty, if we are to give a satisfactory accounting of our stewardship of liberty, we must see that we use it as to answer its critics and its enemies.

LEST WE FORGET

In 1910 the general tax levied in Michigan was $34,879,009,000; in 1930 it was $264,611,569,00. Public revenues in Michigan in 1910 amounted to $41,606,240.00. In twenty years they increased 750 per cent bringing the amount to $353,828,691.00 in 1930. Of this total 74.78 per cent was raised by general property taxes compared with an average of 34.7 per cent for the other forty-eight states. Draw your own conclusions, and if you have any comment to make we will be glad to print it.—Frank Bryce in Grand Ledge Independent.

FROM THE ECCENTRIC COLUMNS —of Long Ago

Bits Of News' Items and Items From Old Files Of The Eccentric—The Items Printed Make Up The Historical Background Of Birmingham Of Today.

FIFTY YEARS AGO

Did you get a valentine?

Whip found. It is at this office. Call, get and pay charges.

In our report of the play at Library Hall we carelessly omitted the part of Clarence Hunter, which was taken by our enterprising young dentist, D. M. Johnson, in a manner that won more than his share of the general praise.

The following new books have been added to the Ladies' Library: "Old Creole Days," "Ben Hur," "Boys of '61," "The Building of the Nation," "James Boys," "Madam Dolphine," "Old Plantation Days."

The Hubbard place on Pierce street, 100 rods south of the postoffice, containing about five acres of land with good house and barn, is offered for sale or rent. Ten dollars per month in advance, will rent it for two years. For particulars call on or address Whitehead & Mitchell.

Miss Mattie Irving, recognizing the fact that a great many would attend a parlor entertainment at some public place when they would not at a private residence, has with a great deal of courage and energy secured participants to a program that will please everybody. Home and foreign talent have been secured and a full and crowded house should reward this plucky manager. All are cordially invited. Admission only 15 cents. Doors open at 7 o'clock. Trouble begins at 7:45. Come on!

Fred King, who lives on the other side of Bloomfield Corners, took a load to the city recently, and while his team was at the hotel barn one of them got loose and ate a quantity of wheat from a wagon on the barn floor, and was consequently very sick. So much indeed that Fred said he would take a dollar for it. Dr. Pearsall was called and the consequence was Fred was driving his horse last week and avers that it would have been under the daisies if Fred hadn't been for Dr. Pearsall.

A surprise party for Frank and Flora Bassett was held at Dan's in Southfield last week Friday night.

Miss Lessie Rainey will play a violin solo at the Brainerd mission society entertainment to-morrow (Friday) evening.

ECONOMY—If you are in want of tallow, and have no beef to kill, you will do well to call on Dr. Pearsall. He has three cows of milk, one frog, a live crow and sewed up the rest.

—o—

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

A word to the y y's—sufficient. 85c blankets for 56c, 11-10 blankets for 79c at Levin Bros.

Messrs. Louis Erwin and Stanley Webber, two venturesome Birmingham boys, are located on jobs for the Great Santa Fe Railway at Ratoon, New Mexico. Here's success.

An exchange says that this cold weather is providing a panza to the saloons, as men seek out work are spending money that should go to pay the grocer and the coal man. We in this town are glad to say that many of our young men are expending their evenings at the library. Give your people a chance.

The Lowry children have ran away one day last week going to school. They were tipped out at Adams', on the Town Line, without being injured and the horse ran clear to the village and hung into Shain's drug store, finally by the side of his new seed windower.—Birmingham Herald.

The "Big Shots" Say:—

C. C. Dill, U. S. senator from Washington:

"The only way to learn whether this beverage (3.2 per cent beer) is not intoxicating is to test it by having men drink it."

Jno. C. Ketchum, Republican congressman from Michigan:

"The three most important problems in this country today are farm prices, farm mortgages and farm taxes."

Alfred E. Smith, on 59th birthday:

"I only commenced to work when I was fifty."

Phillip C. Wright, American economist:

"Out of a total falling-off on imports of $696,000,000 during the calendar years of 1929 and 1930, $636,000,000 may be fairly attributed to the tariff."

Kikuchi Motoyama, outstanding Japanese journalist, who died last week:

"In this main issues regarding the Manchurian question, the whole nation is in perfect accord, regardless of political parties or philosophical schools."

Jest For the Fun of It

Danger Ahead

"Willie, don't go too near that lion's cage. Can't you see the paint's wet?"

—o—

No Wonder!

"How long is it since you have been in a golden country?"

"Twenty years, your honor."

"And where have you been since then?"

"In prison!"

—o—

In Europe

Diner, in Middle European restaurant: "Hurry up, waiter, I'm hungry enough to eat a horse."

Waiter (under breath): "You've come to the right place, sir."

—o—

That's True!

"You must find collecting a rotten job. Nobody likes to see you."

"On the contrary, they all ask me to call again."

—o—

Famous Firms

Hither & Yon

Thanksgiving

I thank whatever Gods There Be
For certain tastes they've given
me.
I find a ham-and-cheese on rye,
As succulent as pheasant pie.
A glass five-cent chocolate bar
Goes just as far as caviar.
A talking picture does as well
As Lawrence Tibbett's golden
voice.
2 Rooms and Kitchenette have
Who needs a pent house in the
sky?
Who needs a thousand other
things
That stretch a purse's golden
strings?
Although contented with my state,
I confess my loving, educate.
The simple soul that dwells in me
To suffer some prosperity.
But since I'm neither great nor
rich,
Complacently I'll fill my niche.
And for the tastes I can afford—
I thank Thee, Lord. I thank Thee,
Lord!

—Arthur L. Lippman in "Life"

—o—

Slim Diet

"Something's preying on my mind," said the flea, as he started in on the fat man.

"It must be pretty hungry."

IN COMMEMORATION of a great name we offer our tribute to the inspiration of the man who bore it—WASHINGTON. It was his influence that shaped our country to the great ends it has accomplished—his wisdom that directed its people into paths that have led to increasing power. In the light of such stamina, such foresight as was his, this country cannot fail to rise to ever greater heights and glory.

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 22,
WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY—A Legal Holiday

The FIRST NATIONAL BANK
BIRMINGHAM
Strong Enough To Protect All . . .