The Birmingham Eccentric

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THURSDAY, JUNE 22, 1933

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 as shall be deemed necessary to the style of the paper and as is required by laws of the state. Because of a mechanical objection 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.

Delinquency In Taxes

A community service of inestimable value was done at a meeting of public officials and interested citizens here some time ago by Lee A. White when he insisted on enforcement of the state law which makes it mandatory for municipal treasurers to seize the personal property of deliberate "tax strikers." It now becomes the duty of every citizen interested in the well-being of local government to make certain that Mr. White's words do not go unheeded by the tax collecting agents for whom they were intended.

"The solution of our school and other civic problems does not lie," as the speaker said, "in trying to squeeze out of impoverished and distressed citizens, tax monies which they do not possess." Everyone knows that there is an appallingly large number of perfectly honest and sincere property owners who want to pay their taxes, but who are absolutely unable to do so under present conditions. There is no intention of forcing this class further into distress by attaching their personal effects.

"But neither," to quote Mr. White again, "does it (the solution) lie in permitting those who are competent to meet their taxes to wage war against society by going on a 'tax strike'."

Most people who believe their taxes are too high are probably right, but refusing to pay them on this ground is not the honest, courageous manner of protest. There are other ways open in this democratic government of ours—ways which are both honest and effective.

Our tax collectors have too long winked at this form of nose-thumbing at government. The fault is not all that of the tax collectors, however, for their attitude has been only a reflection of the attitude of the general public, or that portion of the general public which does pay its taxes when it can. It has been a weak, uncritical attitude which has confused pity with soft-heartedness, and which has allowed indifference and misplaced sympathy for an undeserving class of people to imperil the necessary operations of government.

The long-neglected property seizure law should be brought down off the shelf and put into immediate use. City, township and county treasurers are bound to do it by the written requirements of their office, and all conscientious taxpayers should feel constrained to make them do it as a protection for themselves.

"Old (Republican) Wine"—

We have observed recent activities among Michigan Republicans, in what they term a "progressive" movement. This activity seeks to impress the mass of people that new leaders and new ideas and ideals will dominate the future Republican Party of this State. Well, after listening a bit, talking to some of them a bit, and otherwise watching for "new wine for the new bottles," we have thus far come to this conclusion: Most of this so-called "progressive" activity is just another label affixed to "an old bottle, with the same old stuff in it." What Michigan taxpayers probably will need is another party, recruited from both Democrats and Republicans—unless a miracle takes place before the fall of 1934.

HERE'S A SUGGESTION for the Senate Committee that is investigating American private bankers: "Pick and peck away, Pecora,—there's gold in them thar Morgans!"

Coming Back To Earth

One of the delights of a trip through life is to meet a scintillatingly intelligent man or woman. There are too few of them on earth. Most of us are required, willingly or lazily, to live in a very narrow world; our outlook upon the universe may often be focused through small field glasses at a football game, but too seldom is it focused through a large observatory telescope, where the stars and the celestial planets may inspire and life us to regeneration of spirit and purpose.

Such an interesting human being is Chase Salmon Osborne, former Governor of Michigan, whose more than 75 years of wandering observations of people and things has made him a remarkable character. He used to be a newspaperman at the Soo; he still maintains a summer home there, but spends his winters in Georgia, at what he calls 'Possum Poke in 'Possum Lane, Poulan, Worth County. We visited him there several years ago—took some motion pictures of him and his tri-cornered Napoleonic hat as Floyd J. Miller, Royal Oak publisher, looked on.

A few days ago Mr. Osborne talked to the seniors of Brenau College, in Gainsville, Georgia. What he said may interest and help you in these trying days of this Economic Regeneration. Speaketh he:

"Sweet potatoes and black-eyed peas and cane syrup and cornbread and greens from one's own garden; and milk from one's own cows, are still as tasteful and as nourishing as food ever was. Labor still can produce them. There is life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness still to be had on thousands upon thousands of acres in the United States. It remains entirely possible for every man or woman to be comfortable and happy in this country if they know enough to spend a little less than they earn.

"It became epidemic for some to despise work of the hands and desire only professional careers. It began to be considered more honorable to be a poor doctor or a shyster lawyer or a slipshod teacher than to be a first-class carpenter or a successful farmer. I have never understood why it has been interpreted as a curse that men shall earn their bread by the sweat of the brow. There is work some place, somehow for every idle hand. It may require a geographic redistribution, a backing out of the maelstroms of the cities into the poetry and plenty of the country.

"There is nothing the matter with the world. What is wrong with the people on the earth at this moment is the result of living beyond their means, for purposes of war or pleasure. If great numbers of people in America no longer are to make a living in the cities that is not catastrophe. The country shall come into its own again, that is all.

"Perhaps the painful lesson of the last years shall have been worth while. Maybe men will not soon again mortgage their homes and their farms to buy cars and join golf clubs when rambling in the woods and hunting and fishing costs less and is a thousand times as enjoyable, improving and healthful."

Soldiers Are Mars' Sons

You see many, many pictures of soldiers of various European countries, each bearing arms as they stage this or that celebration. Those soldiers and their muskets can mean only one thing: DEATH. The numbers of those Men o' Mars is ever on the increase in Europe. Those soldiers will, like driven cattle, be rushed into some conflict if SELFISHNESS and HATE become uncontrolled in some portion of some nation's affairs. "How long, Oh, Lord, how long?"

Will Repeal Come To Pass?

When 22 more States ratify the repeal of the 18th Amendment, bringing the total to the required 36, your Uncle Sam no longer will be required to consider John Barley Corn as an outlaw. For a while John will dwell with us in a sort of peace; he will then become loud and noisy and, as citizens again band together to make him obedient, he will rebel and eventually be banished by law. That is, unless human beings are able to be temperate in their acquaintance with John. And you can hardly expect moderation and temperance from today's human nature, can you?

National Sins

Generally speaking, the person who commits a deep wrong finds it easier to repeat the offense than he did to commit the original sin. The same thing is true of a government. Repudiation at Washington of the gold obligation of contracts is a dangerous precedent for a nation to indulge in, for it takes your monetary system out of the hands of a control that is regulated by Mother Nature, and places it in the fickle and selfish hands of human nature. However, we live in a world of constant shift and change, and each of us must endure what comes his way, until he is able to overcome the things he finds are barriers to happiness.

THE OTHER CHAP SAYS SOMETHING—

NEW POLITICAL PARTY IN THE MAKING:

Wherever political wiseacres congregate, one outstanding matter is now under discussion—the possibility of Pres. Roosevelt and thousands of others swept into power with him forming a new party. There is no doubt in evidence that such a deal is in the making, particularly in the tardy methods of explaining republican postmaster, with democrats. The wise ones, like Pres. Roosevelt and his leading cohorts appreciate the fact that nobody won a political victory last November—it was put over by the independent voter who is all fed-up and heartsick of both the old parties, and who will gladly follow anybody who can furnish a refreshing change, which Roosevelt has hopes of doing.—Joe Bass in Holly Herald.

In this connection I want to say that while the press and the public have been condemning the Michigan legislature, the entire blame for this situation doesn't lie at the door of that body. There is utter helplessness expressed in executive circles, in both the chief executive's office and in the office of the other elected officers as well. No one seems to know what to do and how to get at it to learn what to do and how to do it. Planning is like a mired animal floundering about trying to get out but working itself deeper in all the time.—Tom Conlin in Crystal Falls Diamond Drill.

COLD-BLOODED FINANCIERS

The House of Morgan has been more powerful than the government itself. This was established in the years immediately preceding the World War when the financial overlords advanced money to foreign powers when and as they pleased, and, when it looked as though they picked the wrong side to win, they forced this Nation to declare a "state of war," not for democracy as was claimed, but to save their dollars. Even the idealistic President Wilson could not withstand the bombardment.

Financiers are a cold-blooded lot. Life is, with them, entirely a dollars and cents proposition in which sentiment, patriotism or any of the finer things of life play no part. If the depression can have reduced them to a position of importance less than that of the government itself, something constructive will have been gained.—Joe Sturgeon in Delta Reporter.

Just read a hint that Gov. Comstock might not choose to run for a second term, but would choose to run for United States Senator against Arthur H. Vandenberg. Michigan cannot afford to lose Senator Vandenberg, neither can Michigan afford to be represented in the United States Senate by Gov. Comstock. Promotion is primarily for men who have made good on their job, and Gov. Comstock could scarcely be credited with having done that.—Bill Berkdy in Cassopolis Vigilant.

HOW TO RUIN A BOY

If a boy has a heritage of good health, good common sense and a taste for the better things of life he has no need of an inheritance of cash. In fact, in so many cases the money actually brings about the ruination of young men and boys. Money is a handicap to a normal boy. He can have more fun without it than he can with it.

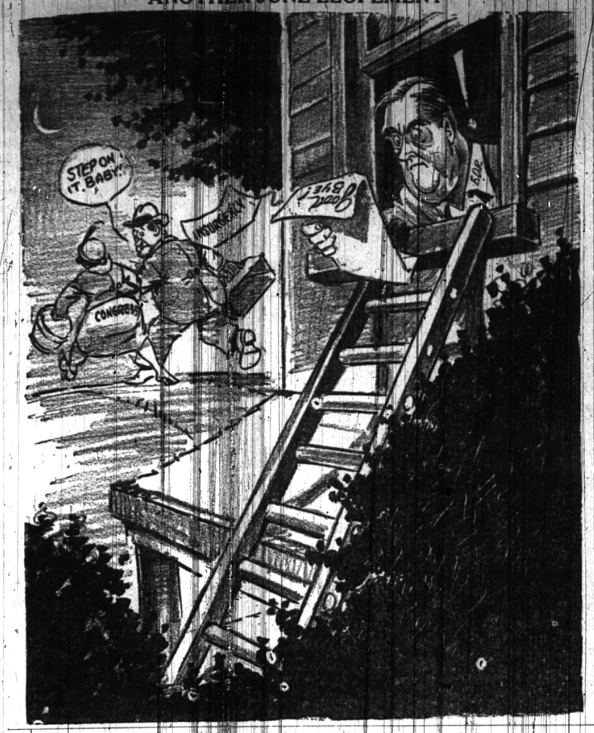
Good advice for parents is not to create too much wealth for coming generations. Instead of aiding them to enjoy life the parents may actually be forcing their descendents to languish in prison cells. Children should be willed something of importance—good examples, health, character, willingness to work and other things that matter. Money, beyond enough to pay for necessities, is of so little value.—V. J. Brown in Ingham County News.

Ferdinand Pecora, counsel for the senate banking committee, is a sort of black cat omen for the big business men of these United States. The last to fall into his hands is the famous house of Morgan.

Pecora announced yesterday that J. P. Morgan and all other members of the banking firm bearing his name will be summoned before a senate hearing.

J. P. had better begin thinking up his answers now . . . for Pecora knows all the questions.—George T. Breen in Iron River Reporter.

ANOTHER JUNE ELOPEMENT



A Study In Focus

By MAURICE C. CLARK

We have penetrated the inner secrets of the atom; we have read the mystery of the stars and established schedules for storm and gale; sound, light and energy have become schoolboy playtoys; five millions of our people wear the cap of learning, and the gown of wisdom and asses' ears. Despite education advancement, the average Adamson is as pitifully, terribly, heartlessly ignorant as he forefolk.

We still deal with effects instead of causes, pander to superficialities, coddle trivialities and disregard the seat of all might—pride and spirit.

We have invented uses for the last hair and drop of blood—for every bone, sinew and organ of swine and cattle; we boast of stockyard economies, but throw complete fellow-creatures into the garbage pail of ostracism for one repellent blemish or a single legal dereliction. We conserve forests and waterfalls, chips of wood and drips of acid, but callously destroy the utility of human beings, without estimating the potential forces which a broader and saner system of economics could harness and apply to productive tasks.

* * *

The codling worm can completely spoil the apple, and the heaviest rust infestation always leaves a few perfect grains of wheat. There's a random streak of generosity in the meanest man and an occasional mean impulse in the best. We're apt to find all things in all soils and souls—if we seek for them. Gold lies deep in one character and freely crops out of another.

If we were equally as earnest in the research and reclamation of a backslider as we are in the disclosure and condemnation of his eccentricities, park benches should soon cease to be outcast bedrooms—half as many jails would suffice for justice, and the daughters of the Scarlet Diana would fade from the streets.

We smugly bestow alms and delude ourselves with the satisfaction of charity. We are superlavish with endowments and handouts, but miserly stinters with the much more needed coin of encouragement. We put the blasted limb from a blighted oak to prolong its growth, but we compel the bearer of a blasted name to wear the smirch to perdition.

* * *

Philanthropy is attacking infection and epidemic at the root, thriftily furnishing the pennies of prevention to forestall squanderous tons of cure. But institutional activities seldom concern themselves with the personal equation and the individual case.

The greater fortunes are not substitutes for greater understanding. And that is the one cylinder in social mechanics which oftenest misses.

ParaLaffs

Right

A writer says that golfers are rarely moved by scenery. On some links the committee would be content if the scenery were moved more rarely by golfers.—Punch.

It Isn't

England is reported to be sinking to sea-level at the rate of nine inches every century. It isn't without good cause that so many people practice swimming the channel.—Detroit News.

FROM THE ECCENTRIC COLUMNS —of Long Ago

Bits Of News Gleaned From Old Files Of The Eccentric—The Items That Make Up The Historical Background Of The Birmingham Of Today.

FIFTY YEARS AGO

A hard-working girl lost a five dollar bill on Friday last and anyone finding the same will confer a favor upon a deserving and industrious young lady by leaving it at this office.

Whitehead, "ye senior" editor, laments the loss of his best plug hat. The last seen of it, it was traveling South and now nobody cares for Whitehead's great loss.

New Smith of Big Beaver runs a very neat meat market and barber shop combined, also has for sale temperance drinks, and can dish up a good dish of ice cream and at the same time keep you interested by his conversational powers. We've been there—check out, for dumbo on the fourth.

Rumor has it that one of our loafing young men is studying medicine in Franklin.

Dry goods, white goods, silk mitts, silk fichus, ribbons, parasols and handkerchiefs this week at Lorson's.

They say the Erie canal has started off from its regular base and is now located on Daines street in this village.

John Rainey will leave the Muskegon base ball nine and accept a position in the Toledo club at $75 per month and expenses.

Clark Satterlee came near being killed last week by the falling of a scaffold and the sudden descent of a shingle on Clark's cranium.

Lorenzo Shadbolt will build a fine saloon his lot opposite Gylden Simpson's. Good. We would like to see Lorenzo have a snug house of his own.

Mrs. Beattie's ice cream parlors are the center of attraction now-a-days. It is a fact confessed by everyone, that the ice cream is the best ever sold in Birmingham. Try it.

—o—

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

A jolly party who spent the week-end at St. Clair Flats, was composed of 10 Birmingham young ladies as follows:—Misses Jane Robinson, Marion Robinson, Grace Bristole, Zoe Spencer, Flora Cartwright, Ruth Edgar, Catherine Lewis, Marion Porter, Miss Myers and Miss Crittenden.

Salvationists were in town Monday evening. The two men sang strong and loud if not harmonious at all times.

Lost! Between William Herbison's and Birmingham, a heavy back comb set with amethysts. Finder will please leave at this office and make a school-maam's sad heart rejoice.

Ray Blakeslee is the happy owner of a new auto. When you hear the biggest chug, chug, chugging and the loudest toot, toot, toot, the loudest you ever heard, that is Roy and his auto coming, clear the track and watch him go.

Mrs. Loren Riggs, of Fenton, in company with Mrs. Retta Barr made this office a pleasant call, Wednesday. Mrs. Riggs once upon a time was one of our most popular teachers, and we all knew her then as Miss Ethel Traphagen.

Perhaps no young man in Birmingham has progressed faster in his chosen work than Mr. Will Grimm, who began work at the power house a number of years ago to learn at engineering. He rapidly rose to assistant engineer and very recently was appointed as Chief Engineer of the entire plant here.

FIVE YEARS AGO

Plans for one of the largest downtown improvement programs in the history of Birmingham is being considered by the Village Commission today and hearings are scheduled for July when residents of the village will express their opinions on the matter.

C. B. Evans was the guest of honor of the Birmingham Exchange Club at the meeting Tuesday noon at the Lone Pine Inn during his brief visit to Birmingham on his return from London, Eng.

Urging the 55 graduates of Baldwin High School to cultivate the habit of dreaming great dreams and then working for their realization, Rev. Edgar DeWitt Jones, pastor of the Woodward Avenue Methodist Church of Detroit, declared at the commencement exercises Friday night in the High School Auditorium that all great men were dreamers in youth.

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.

LEE EXPLAINS VOTE

To the Editor:

In order that there may be no misunderstanding in regard to my vote on the conference report of the joint committee of the House and Senate on House Bill 184, file No. 185, the bill providing for a retail sales tax to take the place of the state property tax, and on which conference report I voted "no," I am giving you my reason for not concurring and my "no" vote as follows:

"Mr. Speaker and gentlemen of the House:

"I voted 'no' on concurring in the conference report on House Bill No. 184, file No. 185, because it made no adequate provision for the maintenance of our public schools. I am heartily in accordance with the principle of the retail sales tax, but we must raise adequate funds through state sources to assist our public schools that they may be kept open throughout the year and that our children may receive the proper education.

"It had been clearly understood that the schools were to receive a minimum of fifteen million dollars from the sales tax, but when the conference report came out no provision whatever was made for our public schools and I believe that if a 3 per cent sales tax would not allow the state government to adequately support them, that the retail sales tax should be 4½ per cent for at least the next year, until we know just what revenue could be derived from the above source. The conference committee report that a 3 per cent tax would raise thirty million dollars, therefore a 4½ per cent tax would raise forty-five million dolars as a minimum, and that would allow an appropriation of fifteen million dollars for our school system. I fully believe that the public schools should receive at least twenty-five million dollars each year."

MELVIN H. LEE,
State Representative.

ALL OF US

By Marshal Maslin

LIFE'S A GRAB BAG, and in all manner of things, surprises, treasures may be found.

Into its great confusion you thrust a seeking hand and draw forth wonders.

You find anger, fear, jealousy, peace, love, triumph and hunger.

Here's creeping envy and upright courage, dear delight and stalwart duty.

Here's disaster with a double face, and scowling revenge, and clutching avarice.

Here are all things. Tenderness, joy, worry and agony. Grief, glory, wit and charm. Ugliness, hunger, awe and boredom. Jealousy, gratitude and passion. Eagerness, shyness, irony and illusion. Cruelty, desire, defiance and caprice. Anger, splendor, generosity and conceit. Contempt, despair, gloom and betrayal. Here, too, are toil and rewards, boredom and thirst, patience and envy. Here are hope and faith, understandings and homeliness, love and friendship. And terror and truth, pity and regret, lust and sweetness.

Here are logic, madness, luck, loyalty, laughter, meanness, melody, obedience, sleep, confidence, oblivion, dreams, suspicion, ferment, scars, fertility, weariness, vanity, warmth, restlessness, worry, achievement, longing and challenge.

Marshall Maslin

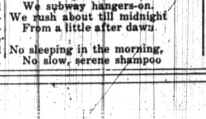
* * *

These are not words. These are our sticks and stones. These are the materials of our building. Out of these, little by little, patiently, stumbling and falling and getting up again, we build our dream of what a life might be into something that we and other people may see and judge. Thus we show forth our character to the world and no man is poor who has these at his command.

Jest For the Fun of It

Treasured Wife

Crystal Gazer: I see—I see buried treasure—



Client: Yes—never mind that. It's probably my husband's first wife. I know all about her.

—o—

No Parking

We're always in a hurry,
We subway hangers-on.
We rush about till midnight
From a little after dawn.

No sleeping in the morning,
No slow, serene shampoo
With finger waves and manicure
At half past two.

We have no lien on leisure,
We have no time for beauty,
For facials and massage are incompatible with duty.

And how we hate the women
Who've time enough for naps,
Who sit at Wednesday matinees
With candy in their laps.

While we must keep on scrambling
To get to work and play,
Though our idea of Heaven
Is to loiter in the hay.

—Margaret Fishback in "Life"

—o—

Famous Firms Through & Through

A Statement from

The BIRMINGHAM NATIONAL BANK

WE, THE Officers, Directors and Stockholders of The Birmingham National Bank, wish to take this opportunity to thank the citizens of this community for the hearty welcome which they extend us on our opening day and during the days which followed. We are gratified to know that our efforts in bringing to this community a new bank, in which the United States Government is a partner—assuring unquestioned solidity, have been so heartily accepted.

THE Directors, Officers and Personnel of The Birmingham National Bank will continue to exert every effort to justify that confidence which has been displayed by the people of this community.

The BIRMINGHAM NATIONAL BANK

BIRMINGHAM, MICHIGAN