

The Birmingham Eccentric

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THURSDAY, APRIL 26, 1934

NOTE: The Eccentric is pleased to publish stories of events which have local value and which are written by persons not connected with the editorial staff of the paper. All copy must be received before 10 o'clock on Wednesday.

We Shall Vote "No" If you are qualified through ownership of real or personal property upon which you pay taxes, you will be allowed to vote next Monday, April 30, on this question:

"Shall act upon forty of the public acts of Michigan (special session of nineteen hundred thirty-four), authorizing the state to expend thirty-seven million, eight hundred twenty-four thousand, four hundred fifty-eight dollars and forty-two cents (\$37,874,458.42) to relieve unemployment by the construction of hospitals to properly house and care for the mentally afflicted persons in the state; to construct and equip armories for the use of the department of Michigan; and in the construction of highway grade crossings and separations, and the construction and improvement of highways and bridges, be approved?"

If you approve this issue, and it carries throughout the entire State, you will be privileged to pay additional taxes in the future in order to retire this enormous fund. Make no mistake about that: YOU, as a taxpayer, will foot the bill. So much for that phase of the question.

This huge bond issue has been projected by the Democratic administration in Lansing with, as we view the matter, two distinct purposes; one of them is altogether fine and altruistic, in that it seeks to relieve unemployment by expending the money on various projects for the State's sick and mentally afflicted. The other purpose is not so altruistic for, as we agree with thousands of others on this point, it relates to the furtherance of mere political activity by the Democrats who will have, on the eve of a coming election, millions of dollars with which to sway and swing voters. This is bad government for the whole people.

There is no reason to debate the necessity of Michigan providing for its unemployed. By the same token, there is no question but that the taxpayers of Michigan are also entitled to relief from further unnecessary taxation; the passage of this immense bond issue will saddle upon Michigan taxpayers a \$10,000,000 additional debt, (providing the federal government comes through with the estimated eight millions to match our own money), and this thirty million, added to the existing State debt of eighty millions, will bring the total to \$110,000,000.00. That's a helluva lotta money, Mr. and Mrs. Taxpayer.

Combined with the obligations of the various municipalities of Michigan, which amount to something like \$685,000,000, the sum of 110 millions more will make it nearly eight hundred millions of dollars, an average debt per person amounting to \$165.00, or about \$700.00 per family.

This newspaper regrets that Governor Comstock failed to separate the three major items for which this money is to be spent, so that the people could decide what seemed most imperative. The items are, in round figures, \$17,500,000 for new State hospitals and remodeling of existing institutions; \$18,000,000 for new highways, separations, bridges, etc.; (Highway Commissioner Van Wageningen was elected on a platform of "a road holiday"); and the remaining \$2,265,500 to be spent on armories.

In view of the mess that has bathed official Lansing ever since January 1, 1933; and because even Secretary of the Interior Ickes refused to approve Lansing's handling of certain public works programs, we cannot warm up to the passage of the coming \$39,000,000 bond issue.

Frankly, if the issue were about half of what it is, and designed for State institutions and armories, we would recommend its passage. But as it now stands, with its dual and extravagant purpose, we shall cast our vote against it when we go to the polls next Monday, April 30.

You Are Wrong, Mr. Seed Speaking against the McLeod Bill to pay off bank deposits, editor Charles S. Seed, of the nearby Rochester Clarion, makes this erroneous statement: "The argument usually made by depositors is that the government should have supervised the banks and prevented the losses, but at no time did the government supervisors of the government have the power to control completely the lending or investing policies of the banks which resulted in the losses."

Editor Seed's complacent dismissal of the government's responsibility in the matter, as it pertains both to State and National banks, is silly. If he will read the laws regulating banks he will discover that both the State and National governments had the right and the power to withdraw the charter from any bank whose conduct was drifting it toward bankruptcy or any other form of insolvency. In spite of their possession of this power and its attendant legal and moral obligation to enforce it, both State and National bank examiners allowed unworthily conducted state and national banking institutions to continue accepting innocent, but trusting, people's money. It is because of this fact that the McLeod Bill is entitled to decent consideration.

President Roosevelt's new book, "On Our Way," is like so many of the road directions one may get on an automobile tour; it's full of "this and that," but is unable to reveal the "when and where."

A Waste Of Money

During the past 14 years two millions of dollars have been put in auditing the books of the Michigan Bell Telephone Co., at the request of Michigan's Public Utilities Commission. Now the State again demands some more expensive auditing. The Telephone Co. quite rightly asks: "Why do you want another audit when no substantial practical use has been made of the results of Commission auditing of anything so developed?" We believe that the Public Utilities Commission should have been able, during 14 years of effort, to arrive at some disposition of the case; or than merely providing some fat salaries for auditors, we cannot see where the audit helps the people of Michigan, in whose behalf the Utilities Commission is supposed to act. We do not presume to know the scientific and technical background of the present telephone rate structure in Michigan; but if it is too high or too low that fact ought to be established after 14 years of auditing. It's about time the Utilities Commission ceased playing politics and began determining policies.

Kissing In Public

Two Rhode Island college professors did not like the picture in Time recently that showed President and Mrs. Roosevelt kissing in a taxicab, following her return from Puerto Rico. The profits felt that "it's all right to show a general kissing war, but not the President and the First Lady, and to top a position like a world famous position—to be thus shown in any magazine." Prof!—college professors are not learned men at all. What we need are more pictures of great men and women performing the ordinary decencies of matrimony, so that the general public could be sure that the kissing one's mate is a fond kind of greeting, is correct and proper. (Wonder if those professors are married or single.)

Dearlly Won, Easily Lost

It would be well if the American people would ponder this statement by Stanley Baldwin, one of the greatest of contemporary British statesmen: "The freedom did not drop down like manna from Heaven." On the contrary the liberties which we, in this country as well as the people of Mr. Baldwin's land, enjoy, were won at the cost of hundreds of thousands of lives on innumerable battlefields.

We accept certain rights as the commonplace heritage of all Americans, giving little heed to their history or their value. To appreciate at what cost they were won, we must go far back into history; to the rebellion of the serfs and the slaves, the revolts against feudalism, the relentless reestablishment of crown absolutism by King John in the Boston Tea Party, the American War of Independence, the French Reign of Terror, etc., etc.

There was a day when a man's life was the property of his sovereign to be taken at will. There was a day when only the few ruled, all others were vassals. When bloods were shed, struggle, fought wherever man aspired to liberty, the rights which freemen today enjoy were gained. Our ancestors who bled to win them were appreciative. Who who came by these privileges through inheritance, undervalue them.

But we have seen recently in Italy, Germany, and Russia how suddenly the fruits of great manly freedom may be snatched away. In Italy, Germany and Russia today there are secret groups of patriots contriving and conspiring to win back the rights of free speech and free press. This country, in which these dearly won privileges still endure, should take heed. Rights may be lost in a single day, by the stroke of a dictator's pen, that can be regained only by long years of seditious strife.—Grand Rapids Herald.

By THIS TIME FATHER COUGHLIN probably knows more of national politics than he did when he vertiginously rose to the top of Mr. Democracy a year ago. At that time he was seen as a useful tool by those in charge of federal affairs, and he was projected into the banking situation, as well as anti-A. Smith. But we presume that Mr. Coughlin is now a sadder but wiser man—for he certainly has been "let down" by the powers that be in our Nation's Capitol.

SPAKING OF CONTEMPT OF COURT, what agency has been perfected to enforce contempt of the celebrated World Court?

All of Us

"HOW'S EVERYTHING?" says he to me, passing swiftly by. "Right," says I to him, hurrying on my way. "And pause, And grin to myself. And wonder at my own casual arrogance."

How do I really know how "everything" is? How do I possibly and justly answer such a question, which is so big, so wide, so deep—and I am but one human being, needs generally and inevitably a questioner, "I can't answer him the next time he asks me that." Or I'll hold him by the lapels of his coat and try to tell him what he seeks to know.

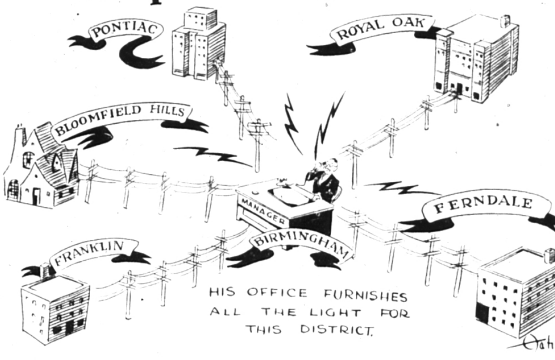
There are snows on Chimborazo, and diamonds greater than any has ever seen in a dry creek. Popovers, popovers, smoke against a blue, blue sky and a Yagui crouches in a pass through the hills and pulls slowly on his cigarette. . . . A negro laughs on a Mississippi levee; a baby reaches his hands toward golden oranges in a California grove; a fawn follows his mother daintily over the green rug of the forest, a mountain lion crouches, and a blue jay high in the green haw tree swears at a fluffy kitten. A man waits beside a doorway, searching for generous faces. There is a man with his feet on a deck. Higher still a man in an airplane goes roaring by. And higher than that, in a distant vault, a clown white cloud makes a shadow across the field. In many a plowed field with glistening furrows, weeds grow and a farmer waits for the first of May. . . . White blossoms decorate many a leafless limb. . . . Far in the north a young Eskimo looks tenderly upon a brood of chicks. . . . A Tartar glares savagely upon his enemy. . . . In the dark woods a gorilla roars and beats his breast. . . . A white bird looks at his girl. . . . An old man thinking back 50 years, sits by the bedside of his wife. . . . In a distant vault, a clown white cloud makes a shadow across the field. . . . A darkened window and steals down the street. . . . A man with his feet on a deck. Higher still a man in an airplane goes roaring by. . . . A baby in a little house falls and bumps his nose. "My friend, I'm sorry, but I haven't the least idea."

Birmingham Business Leaders

ARRIVED IN DETROIT A FEW DAYS AFTER HE GRADUATED FROM COLLEGE



Ralph W. Bricker



His office furnishes all the light for this district

In June, 1911, a young electrical engineer, just graduated from Ohio Northern University at Ada, O., followed his roommate to Detroit. The roommate already had a job out in the suburbs for a week in a vain search for work before he finally ran across an advertisement of the Detroit-Edison Company for an electrical draftsman. He got the job—and has been with Detroit-Edison ever since.

He is Ralph W. Bricker, who since September, 1929, has been the company's agent for the Bloomfield District, which includes all of Oakland County from the Right Mile road north as far as Clarkston and Davison.

From The Eccentric Columns

of Long Ago

After all, we are to have a new library building. The little fountain has been repaired and painted, and when the warm days come the water will be turned on. As though nothing could be left unharmed, the sprinkler at the depot was broken. This village improvement society has repaired and hopes everyone will help in the care of these grounds.

Cornerstone laying ceremonies for the new Birmingham Community House next Sunday will be conducted with many well-known citizens taking an active part. The program under the direction of Mrs. R. H. Mann is completed today and parking provisions have been made.

With an appropriation of \$125 made by the village for expenses in the annual Decoration Day parade here, officials of the American Legion, and members of the police committee of the Commission, today are making plans for the parade on May 30.

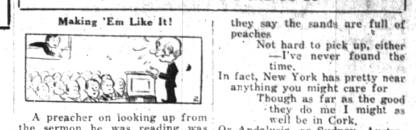
Ground will be broken today for the new clubhouses at the Birmingham Golf Club. The building, which will be a low, rambling structure of brick and stone of unusual architectural design, will be constructed and equipped at an approximate cost of \$150,000. Plans are being made for the first annual outdoor motor show under auspices of the Birmingham Auto Dealers Association.

Another last snow storm of the season spread its feathery mantle in Birmingham Wednesday night. Our main streets have been recently cleared and put in fine order. Let us take pride in their neatness and keep them so.

Answer to the chicken question: A decision of the supreme court of the State of Michigan says: "When your chickens are on your neighbor's ground they are not yours, they belong to your neighbor, they may be killed and sent to the back." Your neighbor can eat them the same as a wild goose.—A

Our people have set a good example in municipal house making by laboring hard and tending the grounds around the municipal and

Jest For the Fun of It



Why I Love New York (With a bow to Ogden Nash, but not a very low one. For I could do his stuff second to no one. And get myself in the New Yorker, and hired by Mr. Hearst. If only Mr. Nash hadn't beaten me to it by thinking of it first.)

New York is full of interesting people. None of whom I know. New York has many a lofty tower or steeple. I haven't climbed any of them, though. New York has wonderful cabarets and night clubs. And theaters no end. And you can have a marvelous time in the night clubs. Which I can't afford to attend.

New York has sights in its various prefectures. Well worth going miles to see. I've never seen them. New York has lectures. And many forms of entertainment that are free. Which I don't go to. New York has beaches. Where you can go and come back for a dime.

But it's too cold to go there in the winter, and in the summer when they say the sands are full of peaches. Not hard to pick up, either. I've never found the time. In fact, New York has pretty near anything you might care for.

Though as far as the good they do me I might as well be in Cork, Or Andalusia, or Sydney, Australia. But perhaps someday I'll have the time or the money or the inclination to enjoy them, and therefore I'm crazy about New York.—Berton Bralry in "Life."

Famous Firms Backwards & Forwards Poems That Live THE PINES AND THE SEA Beyond the low marsh-meadows and the beach, Seen through the hoary trunks of wind-pined trees, The long blue level of the ocean shines, The distant surf, with hoarse, complaining speech, Out from its sandy barrier seems to reach; And while the sun behind the woods declines, The moaning sea, with sighing boughs combined, And waves and pines make answer, each to each, O melancholy soul, whom far and near, In life, in faith, hope, the same sad undertone Pursues from thought to thought! Thou needs must have An old refrain, too much, too long thine own; 'Tis this mortality infects thine air; The mournful strain was in thyself alone.—Christopher Pearce Cray

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