

The Birmingham Eccentric

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NOTE: The Eccentric is pleased to publish articles of general interest which have news value and which are written by persons not connected with the editorial staff of the Eccentric. The right is reserved, however, to make such editorial changes in the work submitted as may be necessary for the style of the paper and as are required by laws of the state. Because of a mechanical situation in the composing room, headlines written by those other than members of the staff cannot be used. Any corrections or alterations must be made in the Eccentric office by Wednesday noon to obtain insertion for that week.

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Those Good Goodfellows

A notable example of co-operative community effort will culminate next Monday in the distribution by the Birmingham Goodfellows Club of Christmas gifts to more than 100 needy boys and girls.

In the past, the burden of the Goodfellows' fine work has rested heavily, if not solely, on the backs of the firemen. This year, of necessity, the firemen have taken a less active part, and the result has been the enlisting of the efforts of a much larger circle of groups and individuals in what should be an undertaking of genuine community-wide scope.

Manual training and domestic science students in the public schools have made 150 new toys, repaired nearly 200 others, and dressed 100 dolls. Generous-minded women of the community have dressed 150 additional dolls. These gifts, together with others of clothing, fruit and candy, are to be distributed by volunteer workers in trucks loaded for the occasion.

As we search through the documents of scripture, we are caused to realize that a poor infant, born into the world in a lowly stable, because there was no room in the inn for Mary and Joseph, really was our Lord. Roundings, without material wealth, most truly exemplified the promise that "... he who humbly himself shall be exalted."

In our world of today we have just emerged from a period of extreme material prosperity. More people are spending more money to spend, more entertainment and amusement in the country and in the city, more assurance than any civilization within the memory of mankind. Truly, if mere material wealth mean happiness and contentment, then the world of the past decade should have been supremely happy and contented. But was it? No! A million billion times no!

For from its summit of physical wealth it toppled like the tower of Babel, because of greed, of licentiousness, of lust, of vain foolishness.

And so, in the midst of the valley of a world depressed, recognizing that mere material wealth is "vanity of vanities," we approach this Christmas season with the necessity, and also the greater desire, of putting to use the first verse of David's 121 Psalm: "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help."

If Christmas means anything to the world, it ought to mean that human life, unless it exemplify those lofty attributes of Jesus Christ in men and women, is as bereft of real security and safety as a house built upon sands. Christmas, then, becomes to us a perennial reminder of the words of the prophet Isaiah: "Walked with mankind upon the slopes of Judea, and still walks with men wherever Love holds sway."

Christmas is ours each year as a time when we are given the privilege of viewing our neighbor as ourself, and renewing our pledge to "do unto others as we would have them to do unto us."

In the springtime, with a little sunshine, some warm rains, and some human hopes, but bursts into leaf and blossom, the lifeless brown grass transforms itself into verdant green, and beautiful life again covers the earth and the hills. So, too, may Christmas bring into our lives the warm sunshine and rain of kindness and tolerance, of sacrifice, of devotion to all good and true things; under these beneficent influences our hearts will flower into new patterns of joy and happiness, and once again Christ will walk with men and women, boys and girls. The earth will be renewed.

Such, in a measure, is the message of each Christmas to a yearning, groping, groping humanity. Blessed, indeed, are those who, upon the perpetual altar of brotherly love, place their offerings to the memory of Jesus of Nazareth. Their days shall be long, their merry Christmases to you all! and God bless you.

Written by G. R. A. for Christmas of 1931 and re-published by request.

Thank You, Mrs. Yaw!

That she is interested in this community, along with her parents, was manifested last week when Mrs. William B. Yaw, daughter of Senator and Mrs. James Couzens, offered to furnish funds with which to light Birmingham's community Christmas tree—the immense hundred-year-old pine in the civic center. In behalf of this community, thank you, Mrs. Yaw! Your generous, voluntary response to make the tree lighting possible will bring much pleasure to thousands who will never cease.

Your Frozen Assets

For the fourth time since it closed in June of 1931, depositors in the former First State Savings Bank are receiving a five per cent dividend, making a total of 20 per cent paid out thus far. Well, getting 20 per cent of your money from a bank in three years would have been unimaginable five years ago to most people; but in the light of the past two years, every dollar you can get from a closed bank seems like finding a gold mine. We hope that Her Parsly, receiver, will be able to spread more similarly glad news in the near future—and he and his aides undoubtedly join in the wish.

If you want to see a thrilling bit of winter sport, reminiscent of the skating rink of youth spent on the ice, go down to Detroit and see the Red Wings in action. Boy! that's clean, fast sport.

"I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes"

ONCE AGAIN, in the cycle of endless time, the Christian world embraces the opportunity to commemorate the nativity of its Saviour. In many ways, some of them material, some of them intellectual, and some of them spiritual, men and women seek to make December 25 each year bring something fine and regenerative into their lives.

Whether it be in the palace of a king or the hovel of a peasant; in the crowded city mart or the thinly settled rural area; in the factory on the farm; on land or sea or in the air; in the forest or upon the desolate desert; whether the skin be white or black, wherever human hearts yearn for better human relations, there is enthroned the leavening spirit of the lowly Nazarene.

God, the Creator of the Universe, roused mankind from a partially depraved state of thinking when He raised him to the consciousness, in the persons of the Three Wise Men, to follow the Star of Bethlehem. Soon the entire neighborhood of Bethlehem was interested in the Manger Babe, and from thence on the minds of men and women became aware of the uplifting, sustaining influence of His life and His teachings upon the world in which we live.

Joseph Christ, as all know, was the name of the Bethlehem Babe, grown to manhood. In every way, as told by history, Jesus lived the normal life of the normal Jewish lad. He was blessed, of course, with a Virgin Mother; the boy was nurtured, too, under the wonderfully kind protection of a fine foster-father, Joseph. His babyhood and His youth must have been His vigorous soul-building and character-forming influence. His early manhood must have been attended by mental and spiritual stimuli that were but the fore-runner of the attributes of self-sacrifice, humility, devotion, loyalty, love, and the myriad other qualities that have endeared Him to the consciousness of mankind.

Today, as we reverence Jesus' name, and at the same time honor the name of a Common Father for giving the world Love through the Man of Galilee, we agree that without the record of the history of Jesus' life and teachings, as revealed in the Bible and other sacred writings, this world of ours would, indeed, be a barren pilgrimage.

We are made mindful, as we concentrate upon the life and teachings of the Christ of the world, that the influence of our life can re-make our world, can re-fashion the entire pattern of human existence.

As we search through the documents of scripture, we are caused to realize that a poor infant, born into the world in a lowly stable, because there was no room in the inn for Mary and Joseph, really was our Lord. Roundings, without material wealth, most truly exemplified the promise that "... he who humbly himself shall be exalted."

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Fire Hazards In Lansing

Governor Comstock is reported to have said that he would not even go into the cafeteria of the ill-fated Kerns Hotel at Lansing, because of its great fire hazard. Yes, at Lansing, Michigan, with the Michigan, with supreme authority over the State fire marshal, Mr. Comstock never did an official thing to have the Kerns Hotel made safer for those who patronized it. Comstock's statement is an indictment against Comstock—a situation that will hardly bring the general and fun-loving Governor from a good night's rest.

NACARA FALLS has a staunch friend in President Roosevelt, who declares himself in favor of preserving its present grandeur. The President would rather have it remain as a power to stimulate the bliss of newlyweds, than to have it harnessed to some hydro-electric project. Evidently, the President knows the difference between love's brilliant glow and mere electrical sparks.

Birmingham Business Leaders

No. 48



MY PAL. HARRY MUST HAVE BEEN POPULAR WHEN HE WAS A BUGLER WITH THE CLEVELAND GREYS. THIS IS A HECK OF A JOB - WORKING WHEN EVERYBODY IS HAVIN' FUN! MANAGED A DANCE HALL FOR 2 YEARS IN FREMONT OHIO.

Automatic Oil Burner Company. That firm sent him to Birmingham as its Oakland County manager the following year, and he has been there ever since. He was branch manager for the Kelvina Corporation about two years, and recently entered the oil burner sales and servicing business for himself.

One of Harry's proudest records is that as a Rotarian he has a perfect attendance record since 1921. The record carries through three clubs—Detroit, Fremont and Birmingham. Harry is a past-president of the Birmingham club, and one of its star golfers. Golf and bridge are now his substitutes for the bugling he used to do for the Cleveland Greys, a widely known military-social organization of which he was a member for several years.

The Other Chap Says Something—

THERE IS POLITICS IN EVERY BUSINESS. The more one studies the unemployment of the country and the maldistribution of food, clothing and reasonable luxuries, the more one must be impressed that it is not the lack of work that needs to be done that is the trouble, but that the man who is to do it is not there. Take Clinton County as an example. There is plenty of work that needs to be done in this county. There are hundreds of miles of farm fences that need to be replaced or repaired. There are thousands of buildings which need repairs and paint. There are miles of drains that need to be cleaned. There are acres and acres of food weeds which should not be allowed to go to seed. Every village and town has the same conditions as regards its homes and business buildings. Streets need cleaning and the same old job is waiting to be done. Sufficient funds to pay for this work and sufficient confidence in the future are two barriers — perhaps the last is the greatest. The banks of the country are full of idle money. Where in our country? What has become of that American spirit we have bragged so much about? Are we going to see? Have we lost our nerve? Schuyler L. Marshall in Clinton County Republican-News.

A RIFT OCCURS

A slight misunderstanding seems to have arisen between Governor-elect Frank D. Fitzgerald and members of the existing Council of State. The breach should not be allowed to widen. Governor Fitzgerald and members of the Council are men of mature judgment who, we believe, will gladly forego private desires for public good. Manifestly it is with such spirit that problems affecting the public well during these troublesome times should be met and solved.

The governor-elect has stated on many occasions that he will not hesitate to point out any individual or individuals found deliberately trying to hamstring his efforts to provide tax relief for the people of Michigan. There can be no particular objection to such a statement, but it would seem the simpler plan in the long run for everybody concerned if minor differences are speedily adjusted. What the rank and file of the people really desire

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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 300 words, and must be in the office by Tuesday noon for publication the following Thursday.

IN DEFENSE OF MISSOURI (Editor's Note: The following letter relating to an editorial comment published in The Eccentric recently on a statement reported to have been made by all college men and women of moral life at the University of Missouri is at low ebb.) Reports that a University of Missouri co-ed declared the morals of her Alma Mater to be at a "low ebb" have served to show persons familiar with the situation that journalistic ethics frequently reach a correspondingly low ebb. In a speech on undergraduate morals at a Baptist student convention at Memphis, Tenn., Miss Louise Luckey, a graduate student at the University of Missouri, declared that she had seen campus examples with which to illustrate her points. Miss Luckey did not intend to single out Missouri in particular as having a low moral standard. She was speaking on campus life in general and, quite naturally, she took her illustrations from the campus with which she was most familiar.

To university authorities investigating the matter, Miss Luckey said, "I was trying to present social conditions as they are in general, but have lived here almost all of my life, and am so familiar with conditions on this campus than any other, and therefore I drew upon it for my illustrations." The journalist, however, ignored the real point of Miss Luckey's speech, as they so often do, and seized upon her illustrations with the result that the University of Missouri is being "press-ganged" as having a particularly low moral standard. Miss Luckey took her illustrations from the Missouri campus because its moral standards are typical of those of other university campuses, not because its standards are unusually low. When compared to similar campuses Missouri does not deserve the reputation which she has recently acquired for a result of the distorted publicity given to Miss Luckey's speech.

MARY ELISABETH OLSON, Columbus, Mo.

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 Lost, a lantern, fireman please leave at the postoffice and oblige the owner. Dan O'Leary of Detroit thinks he can manage the Detroit B. C. another season, so that it can head the procession in the National League. Joe Stockwell—you know Joe—meets the dull season in a characteristic way. He just knucks the packing out of prices and tells about it in a new ad this week. This week we have on exhibition a very pretty idea worked in Kensington on royal purple plush, with old gold border, the work of a true artist of our village. Frank Sherman caught a fish picker on the pond last Monday and as he threw him out on the ice he was heard to remark: "Gee Whiz! Five pounds! O yam, yam." Mr. Ed Ford is the champion story teller, or else the champion wood cutter, for he says that one day last week, he and his partner cut from one tree 7 1/2 cords of four foot wood and one cord of stove wood. Anyone that beats this record can have a new hat—by buying it.

Plans to occupy the new Community House Feb. 1, are announced by Mrs. Charles Shain, chairman of the board of directors. The present condition of the building and delay in receiving mill work due to labor troubles in Milwaukee, indicate, however, that the formal opening, or housing-warming, together with the annual meeting, scheduled for the night of Feb. 6, may be postponed for several weeks. The dedication ceremony date is April 23.

Five carriers, five clerks and two trucks have been added to the personnel and equipment of the Birmingham postoffice to take care of the large seasonal mail, according to James W. Cobb, postmaster. Alvin J. U. is only nine days left before Jan. 1, when the 1935 license tags must be displayed on all motor vehicles. Chief of Police Otto A. Tuttle announces that so far, only 124 have been sold, and urges villagers be more prompt in starting them.

While C. J. Hupp and wife are outing the south this winter, their Detroit home will be lived in, looked after, and enjoyed by Mr. and Mrs. Knox Poppy in the interim.

After last week Monday was a very cold day, Conductor Frank Deer of the J. I. W. very very hard and spent a lonesome half hour while his car sped on to Bloomfield Hills, and he stood shivering in the cold at the Grand Truck crossing in Pontiac. Frank got off to throw the targets, and before he boarded the car again, someone pulled the bell rope and the motorman did not notice that he was alone until Bloomfield Hills was reached. The car was backed to Frank and the first man to greet him was a passenger who had given him a \$5 bill, just as he got off the car to turn the switches.

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A trip back home is best of all...

As Christmas nears, thoughts turn to home and happy family gatherings. It is not always possible to go, however. Sometimes the distance is too great; sometimes business interferes. But even if you cannot be there in person, you can be there by telephone. Aid hearing their voices is next best to seeing those we love.

Note the low STATION-TO-STATION long distance rates shown. For rates to other points, ask the long distance operator.

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