

The Birmingham Eccentric

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NOTE: The Eccentric is pleased to publish stories of events which have news value and which are written by persons who are interested in the welfare of the city.

By way of introduction, your guest editor, the first of several who will cavort about in this space of erudition, enthusiasm, inspiration and kindly impulses is:

M. H. DeFoe, a one term state senator, mentioned to complete the record rather than any attempt at self glorification.

By this time you are saying, what's wrong with this person? Any rating between saint and one of Governor Comstock's political 'simps' is okay with me, so let's get going.

In the first place you folks in Birmingham, according to out-state reckonings, are residents of the so-called metropolitan area, a term Detroit proper seldom hears except from advertising solicitors or when the big city is seeking some political consideration out at Lansing.

But forgetting Detroit for a spell, you folks in Birmingham are actually something on your own account. In addition to the perennial excellence of your home newspaper no one can visit Cranbrook School and the magnificent Christ Church across the street without a feeling of reverential respect and admiration for George G. Booth.

On one of the writer's many pleasant visits to Birmingham, Mr. Averill took me out to visit the grave of the elder Booth, father of this generation of fine newspaper leadership, and I joined in the deep seated sincerity and pride that Mr. Averill felt and unconsciously displayed as he stood by the Booth family lot and told me of the personal worth and noble character of this man whose useful and meaningful life suggested the "holy seed" in Isaiah's vision of the Lord's glory.

It might interest Eccentric readers to know that after leaving the "area" on M16 you can't buy legal—keep in mind always that I use the word legal—hour by the glass anywhere along the route until Grand Rapids is reached on the other side of the State. Lansing has on M16 "and our various "hops" turned down the sale by glass rotation, in fact, our

nearest point to an open saloon—which is the correct definition of any place where liquor is sold by the glass—is Jackson, 35 long and satisfactory miles away. It is a strange thing, the way many of our larger lower Michigan cities are enjoying the glass method of distribution of hard liquor. We predict as soon as it is possible to do so legally, that two thirds of the area of the Lower Peninsula will be dry. All of which bears out the old adage that the people want a thing only until it is denied them.

Returning to this politically important metropolitan area, we are not much farther away from Olympia hockey or Beantown Park baseball than Birmingham followers of these sports. It is a common thing for our people driving via Lansing to get inside the city limits of Detroit in under two hours. The other Sunday—a delightful Sunday in late January—we was home in 2 hours and 15 minutes after the final play in that sparkling hockey match played by the Red Wings and Toronto Maple Leafs before a sell-out crowd. Lily Pons, in person at the Hill Auditorium in Ann Arbor last week, proved to be only 90 minutes from our front steps which is only a few miles from the benefit of Birmingham folks who think it must be a hardship to be so far out on the fringe of this new civilization. We up-staters feel about Detroit—precisely the same as your residence in Birmingham conclusively proves.

This back and forth glass shift in prohibition sentiment, is interesting to those of us who have seen prohibition come and go. For example, State Representative John Goodwine—a strange name for a dry in or out of the offices—in the Sistrick district, is through letters to the newspapers, instructing his constituents in the trade terms of the industry, in order that they may appear more nonchalant in their first trip over to the liquor store at Sandusky. The good law maker goes into detail explaining the official difference between bonded and blended liquor. As well informed as your metropolitan area people are supposed to be on this subject, it might not be amiss to carry the following paragraphs from Representative Goodwine's story in last week's Deckerly Record:

In hopes of adding some dignity and mystery to the liquid which some words as "rectified," "purified," and "blended" are used, in their interpretation even chemists disagree.

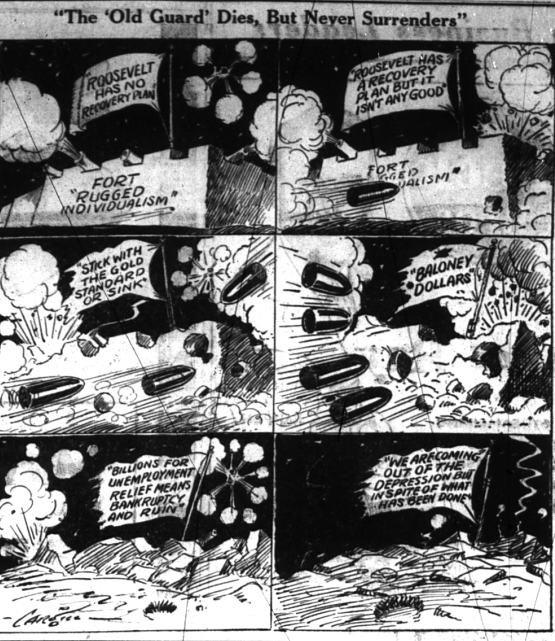
"An acidified spirit" is the trade name for pure alcohol, that is alcohol that has been freed from the still residue. It is not fit for human consumption and therefore it is rectified or purified and this purified alcohol is used as a base for the so-called blends of whiskey. Some chemist content the word "blend" on a whiskey label is a deceptive term, and that "blended" should mean a mixture of like substance made up of two or more whiskeys.

Based entirely on past recollections, we presume that this department of The Eccentric will be supporting one of the Republican candidates for Governor. One of the candidates—and perhaps the only one, so it looks to me—is Mr. Frank D. Fitzgerald of Grand Lodge, present secretary of state. He is the son of my home county, Mr. Fitzgerald is a "career" man in the best sense; he knows fully as well as any other single person in Michigan the functions and requirements of all governmental departments.

In this connection it is well for the Republicans to remember that they are now members of the minority party. The Democrats, being in control, are now feeling the hazards and handicaps of power. On the other hand, the Republican candidates at this time in Michigan are: President Roosevelt, who was in the morning with the same case that he did in the fall of '32. His recovery program is going to be a success or a failure. Every decent American worthy of the name is helping it and hoping for the President's success. But he does not take away the psychological fact that the hand between these two points in time is the working program is against the party in power. If the recovery program goes over as President Roosevelt and the country prayerfully hope, he will in 1936 carry Vermont as easily as he will Texas. If the program, for any reason, fails, the Republicans or Socialists will win the '36 campaign without a word being said until Labor Day prior to the 1936 November election. People are in no mood for political fly-speeking and beyond that it would be asinine. The "breaks" will decide the '36 national contest and petty criticism either way is just plain ignorance.

In the state situation it is not dissimilar. Democratic Governor Comstock is calling another special session and both branches of the Legislature are as far as the public is concerned in control of his party. He is a witless, and properly, the credit for all good legislation by the Legislature is to be given to the legislature and by the Legislature is to be given to the legislature and by the Legislature is to be given to the legislature.

So will some smart fellow please explain to me why so many income tax reports made out for the most part by accountants and trained experts are usually wrong? Why is it that the government is usually on the short end of these adjustments? It is certainly a strange set of facts and makes ordinary folks wonder if government bookkeeping generally is in such a state of confusion.



ALL OF US —By Marshall Maslin

LOTS of things I don't know. Hundreds of things I guess at, but don't understand. Thousands of things I wonder about, but can't quite explain. . . I don't exactly know:

Why, when one child in a family is being particularly "difficult," his brother or his sister will be particularly good.

Why people will confide secrets to new friends that they wouldn't think of telling to the family.

Why a man will boast of knowledge of human nature, but wouldn't think of boasting of his courage.

Why we like to remember the mischief we did when we were children, but we avoid all reference to the times when we were good little boys.

Why it's fun eating scraps of food at midnight in the kitchen after guests have gone home.

Why you can save pins, rubber bands, nails and things that should be thrown away, but can't save any money.

Why we're peevish when we're tired.

Why an egg, a seed, the ocean and a new moon seem mysterious.

Why older people criticize younger people for doing just what older people did when they were younger.

Why people take risks with their lives with automobiles that they wouldn't take on mountain tops.

Why we imagine childhood as the happiest time of life, when we know we've been happier many times, and longer, since we grew up.

Why we will defend our prejudices more hotly than we will our solidly arrived at knowledge.

Why we haven't more sense.

Why we ask questions that can never, never, never be answered.

The Other Chap Says Something—

COMPANIONSHIP OF ANY MAN As we viewed 100 boys escorted by a man seated about the table at the church the other night we thought of a scout story related to us by Supt. Page. It seems that a high official of the Boy Scouts was in a city presenting a medal for heroism to a scout for saving the life of a child.

There are many good movies and many good radio programs that are not so much good because we have heard of them, but because we have seen that they are smart to be sophisticated. But I don't think that sophisticated criticism crops out in our own family.

A man's home is his castle. It should be a place where his children and manners prevail. It has always been the keystone of character, and it will possess those who are tributes if parents do their duty.

Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, with the psalm of joy doors. —Proverbs 8:34.

One Minute Pulpit

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FROM THE ECCENTRIC COLUMNS —of Long Ago

FIFTY YEARS AGO On Thursday last our senior editor, Alverton Whitehead, received the appointment of postmaster. . . attending the banquet at the Cadillac Hotel, Detroit, given to Auditor, Bob Evans. Fighting Bob won a host of friends by his speech delivered during his recent visit in the metropolis.

A 15-member Board of Directors is in office today at the Birmingham Community House to replace the former five-member board following the election of Mr. Hickson, John Powell, and Saturday and Sunday with his cousin, John Powell. The cousins have not seen each other in 10 years.

A budget of \$28,400 stands approved of the Village of Bloomfield Hills today after some of the Commission Tuesday night. This new budget for 1933 exceeds that for 1928 by \$5,400. It was approved by the Commission after being submitted by William Story, Royal Oak, to get an extension on the local option.

Where, oh where, have our screwdrivers? If we can't have screwdrivers, the former Birmingham Community House to replace the former five-member board following the election of Mr. Hickson, John Powell, and Saturday and Sunday with his cousin, John Powell. The cousins have not seen each other in 10 years.

Jest For the Fun of It

One Good Point "Willie," said the Sunday School teacher severely, "you shouldn't talk like that to your playmate. Have you ever thought of hearing coils of fire on his head?" "I haven't," said Willie, "but it's a great idea." —TJ-Bits

How's your new boarding house? "The rooms are just tolerable, the food is so-so—but the gossip is simply great." —Fleming Firms Fish & Chips

Poems That Live

SONNET When I have fears that I may cease to be Before high piled books, in charactery, Hold like a garnish the full-orbed moon in the sky, When I behold, upon the night's starry face, Huge cloudy symbols of a high romance, And think that I may never live To tracing love—then on the shore Of the wide world I stand alone, And think—Till love and fame to nothingness do sink. —John Keats

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