The Birmingham Eccentric

(Founded in 1878)

Published every Thursday, at Birmingham, Mich., in The Eccentric Building, 220-222 North Woodward Avenue

Telephones 11, 12, and 13

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Entered as Second Class Matter in the U. S. Postoffice at Birmingham, Michigan

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

(In Oakland County)		(Outside Oakland County)	
One Year	$2.00	One Year	$2.50
Six Months	1.00	Six Months	1.50
Three Months	.50	Three Months	1.00

All newspaper and advertising copy must be in the Eccentric office by Wednesday noon to obtain insertion for that week.

The Eccentric is a member of:
National Editorial Association, Michigan Press Association, University Press Club, and Oakland County Weekly Press Association

THURSDAY, MAY 17, 1934

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 Wednesdays. The right is reserved, however, to make such superficial changes in the work submitted as are necessary to 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 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.

Local Parking Problems

Efforts on the part of the local police department to regulate automobile traffic in a safe and sane manner are always laudable. But when some phase of this effort menaces the well-being of a group of Birmingham merchants, together with bringing inconvenience to the shopping public, some deep consideration of it should be given before it is applied.

That is why we suggest to our City Commission that the proposed plan to abandon angle parking on Woodward avenue be held in abeyance at this time. Local merchants are asked to pay plenty of taxes to support government, and they can continue this support only when local stores are easily accessible to the motoring public. Every physical barrier placed in the way of pleasant and convenient shopping accessibility in Birmingham, or any other community, discourages the tendency of people to remain loyal to their home-town merchants, and thus drives them to other centers of trade.

Woodward avenue, while it is a trunk line highway, is not, and should not be construed, to be a mere speedway for through traffic. The placing of more adequate traffic signs on Woodward avenue and other heavily travelled streets, together with proper and effective policing, will contribute greatly toward safety and efficiency of transportation, both passenger and freight.

It will be recalled that only three or four years ago a move was instituted by our City officials to eliminate parking on one side of Maple avenue; that plan was abandoned because it was believed that both shoppers and merchants would suffer. The same is true of the present proposal to abandon angle parking on Woodward avenue.

Let's have co-operation in the handling of local traffic conditions, with equal consideration shown those who are struggling along to do their part in the maintenance of good government.

Saps And Saps

The cow, or milk tree, is a native of South America, and gets its name because whenever its bark is cut, white sap flows forth. The bull, or hokum tree, is a native of North America, and is generally found in political circles; it has a thick hide, and when placed on a rostrum with its mouth open, gushes forth great quantities of sap, also.

"Comstockianism"

Governor Comstock, when he was sworn into office, solemnly promised to uphold the laws of the State, and by the same token he most certainly assumed the intention of maintaining the high dignity of his office. On more than one occasion, he has failed to do either. His latest escapade, that of pardoning the son of Samuel T. Metzger, within three hours after said son was sentenced to 60 days in jail for beating an aged man, has brought down much criticism—even members of the Governor's own Party registering disgust. Governor Comstock has done so many damfool things since he went to Lansing, that one wonders how such a personality could ever reach such high place. The answer is, of course, that "Bill" Comstock, personally, is a nice, neighborly sort of chap, would readily "gives his shirt" to a friend,—and Michigan electors felt sort of nice and neighborly in the campaign of 1932. Alas, and even alack! and also whatthehell!

Reckless 18-Year-Olds At The Wheel

Spring days are here again, and youth, perched jauntily behind the steering wheel of a new streamlined model, is on the loose.

Probably nothing in the world will ever make Eighteen-Year-Olds apply safety as the general rule while driving an automobile, and probably Birmingham, with more than its proportionate share of high-geared cars and uninhibited youngsters, will always have its full share of careless tearing around corners and racing down highways and byways.

There are some things that have a sobering effect, however, even upon youth at the wheel. One of these, obviously, is death or serious injury in an accident, but that comes too late and is just the thing that should be avoided by the use of more easily controlled expedients. One of the latter—and the best by all odds—is the exercise of a little parental authority. If this won't work—or if the parents won't make it work—there is still another remedy, and that lies with the police department.

A few stiff fines assessed against some of the more ambitious of Birmingham's budding Barney Oldfields would do nobody any harm, and, on the contrary, would do a lot of good by painlessly thinning the ranks of the city's young reckless drivers and making the streets a bit more safe not only for themselves but for their less sprightly elders,—not to overlook the protection that must be provided for little children.

GOVERNOR COMSTOCK may have three or four opponents for his job when the primary election is held this fall. It is now reported that he may get a lacing as he counts the votes that will be stacked against him.

Brucker Should Wait

If former Governor Wilber M. Brucker makes an effort to "come back" at this year's election, he'll certainly be doing his bit to "gum up" the Republican Party. Mr. Brucker had his trial in Lansing; he tried —in a political way—to make good, and failed. He is young, and by waiting and watching and THINKING he may again qualify for high honors. But right now he ought to be a good soldier in the ranks, carrying a spear, if need be, and thus revealing a belated personal gratitude for the chance the Republican Party gave him in 1930.

Your Vacation

It is just as necessary that human being annually take vacations, as that they sleep each night. Have you planned your coming vacation? Are you happy in the anticipation that always precedes the realization? Are you getting the same fun out of it that you do when you read the seed catalogue each Spring, in wonderful anticipation of what Nature will do to make your garden? Vacations are periods when you may get away from the routine of your life; they are times when your mind and spirit may be allowed to enter new realms of this world. Happy vacations, folks, and may they occur often!

Laying Down Our Swords

Efforts to substitute reason for the insanity of international bloodshed, part of which were symbolized in the League of Nations, are being abandoned by many nations. Now comes President Roosevelt with the announcement that the United States, if he can avoid it, will not join any League dominated by Europeans. Mr. Roosevelt, as an alternative, suggests that all nations begin an honest and systematic abandonment of their armies and navies. An excellent suggestion, but not as yet practical.

Too much innate human selfishness and greed, which finds one outlet in an imperialistic desire to conquer foreign markets, plus the ceaseless political lobbying of those who profit from the maintenance of armies and navies, (and from war) will prevent an honest abandonment of the tools of war. In the early days of mankind you could not induce the hairy citizens of the earth to throw away their clubs, either.

As yet it seems easier for people to hate, than love, one another—at least as groups and nations. But that doesn't mean that each of us cannot conquer our individual quotas of selfishness, greed, and hate, and thus "build for ourselves some corner in this great world where we may unbosom and be kind."

No Get 'um "Jack"—eh Bill?

Political News Note for 1934: Governor William A. Comstock and some of his Democratic office-holders at Lansing suffered defeat April 30 when their bond issue, amounting to nearly 38 millions of dollars, was defeated by a five to one vote. Michigan's taxpayers thus reveal their feelings upon the subject of further taxation—and also serve notice that they are not overflowing with confidence in the type of "political" statesmanship(?) that emanates from the State's Capital.

GOVERNOR WILLIAM A. COMSTOCK, in his campaign speeches, argued for less taxation, for greater economy in State government. Mr. Comstock is stacking up about as successful in his political life as he has been in his private economic affairs; you may recall that when he entered his job at Lansing January 1, 1933, he openly admitted that he was "broke."

MEN AND WOMEN who were foes of prohibition, and worked hard to effect repeal, are now prophesying the return of prohibition, unless the handling of liquors and beer today is better regulated. Well, the pendulum of public opinion is swinging back again, isn't it? Will the liquor interests EVER learn that they, too, must honestly seek to regulate the traffic?

OHIO'S GOVERNOR GEORGE WHITE became so disgusted with the Legislature last week that he forced it to adjourn. It had been in session 147 days and was unable to pass needed statutes to aid the schools or relieve distressed municipalities. Such conduct on the part of a State Legislature sounds familiar in Michigan, too.

SOME PAY WE HOPE President Roosevelt will explain why he is willing to give billions of dollars through CWA and PWA, and yet refuses to relieve victims of closed banks who left their funds on deposit because their government allowed the banks to remain open.

All of Us

By Marshall Maslin

HERE IN THIS dark corner under the house, shut away from the sunshine and the clear, sweet air, something green is growing. A trailer from a vine that grows outside. . . . I take it in my hands and study it carelessly. It is green, but the green is pale. It is tender and snaps easily in the fingers. There are no buds on it. No broad leaves grow here. No bud will ever come to blooming beauty on this pale branch.

Marshall Maslin

What is it doing here? Why did it creep through that small crack in the wall and take up the adventure of life in this dank and gloomy corner? What impulse, obscure and perverted, led this child of the bright sunlight to turn from its fair environment to this meager experience of living in the dark?

O, foolish branch of green! benighted twig! Outside your wiser brother sways in the breeze of spring, battles the storm, struggles against countless small enemies, challenges the world and conquers or dies. . . . Here you crawl upon the earth in this windless space, unchallenged and unchallenging, achieving at best but a pitiful victory. You are within drawn, and all the vital struggle comes to nothing. Sterile and frugal, timid and retreating, here you are, defeated thing, and you know not the sunrise and you know not the sunset, and you know nothing of the agony or ecstasy of living.

I have such a green branch growing palely in the dark. And I have seen men and women who have shut themselves away from life into such a dank and feeble desolation. Known people who thought the wide world too harsh for their gentle souls and have found a small opening into the darkness of themselves and have crawled in and shut the door and lived in whimpering, peevish loneliness all the rest of their days. I have known them, I have wondered and I have been more mystified by them than ever I have been by any pale green thoughtless branch that wanders out of the bright outdoors into the darkness of a cellar. . . . The green thing knows no better. Can any lost man or woman make so weak a defense of failure to be wise?

Birmingham Business Leaders

No. 18

G. Dewey Kimball

G. Dewey Kimball, popular local undertaker, is one of the rare species which came dangerously close to extinction in 1932, but which of late seems to be regaining at least a part of its vigor and popularity. In short, he is a Republican still holding public office.

Dewey was elected Oakland County coroner in 1930, and was one of the few members of his party to stand successfully for re-election in 1932. Thus for more than three years he has been in charge of the coroner's work in the southern portion of the county.

He has been a funeral director for 11 years, starting in Cincinnati immediately after graduation from the Cincinnati College of Embalming. From there he went to Detroit, and from Detroit he came to Birmingham in September, 1928.

A friend encouraged him to enter the profession after he had grown up and attended school in Orion, to where he had moved with his family from Ionia County when he was a child.

Dewey's job during the World War was that of driving army trucks from assembly plants in the Middle West to the East Coast—and no soft job either, he recalls, when you couldn't travel more than 14 miles an hour, and when your truck was 27th in the convoy and the dust from the 26 ahead was flying in your face.

Dewey is a member of the American Legion, Knights of Pythias and Masonic Lodges, Birmingham Lions Club and Methodist Episcopal Church. Also, he is secretary of the Cloverleaf Funeral Directors' Association which draws its membership from Oakland, Livingston, Genessee and Schiawasse Counties.

His only recreation—outside of golf, which he doesn't play very often nor very well—is horseback riding. That's the sport, he says—and sets aside a few hours every week to keep proving it to himself.

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

Mrs. Hiram Hood took her departure for an extended visit in Washington, D. C., last week. She will visit other points in the South, and eventually bring up at Chatauqua, N. Y., where she will be joined by Mr. Hood, and pass the lively summer season at that delightful resort.

John Pound calls attention to his new ad. He has lately returned after a two week's absence in New York City, which is the hub of fashionable dry goods trade of this country. His goods are now all in, and it will repay the ladies to look through the Beehive, and they are cordially invited to do so before making spring purchases in dress goods and carpets, in Detroit or elsewhere in this city.

Mrs. A. H. Whitehead of Lansing, and Mrs. Alice Whitehead of Pontiac, were the welcome guests of the families of J. A. Bigelow and ye senior editor, over Sunday. Their two bonnie little daughters accompanied them and made their mothers doubly welcome.

The township board of Bloomfield met at the clerk's office on Monday last, and accepted the resignation of Julian Leet, township treasurer. McAllister Randall was then appointed to fill the vacancy. Fenn Weston and John Bodine were appointed as a board of review for the reviewing of the assessment roll of the township.

One thousand dozen lemons at ten cents per dozen. An extra roasted coffee 12-½ cents per pound. Fresh cask prunes 7 cents per pound at Corsons.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

J. Ren. Bell was the happy winner of the gold medal contest last week at the Southfield Covenanter Church.

You don't need to go three or four miles out of town for a lot. Select one right in town.

Mrs. Tibbils fell just outside the door Sunday morning, spraining her knee quite badly. It is very painful and the good lady is confined to her bed.

As we go to press, O. E. Shattuck informs us that the toll gat that floated in on the recent tide, has been left by the receding waters resting peacefully on both anchors on the main line across from Woodward to Holmes Grove.

George Hulbert slaughtered an old landmark in the shape of an oak tree on Mrs. Houghton's land in this village, once owned by Thomas Trollope, who 50 years ago said it was a very old tree. Lightning struck it recently and split it apart. It measured four and one-half feet across the stump.

Friday evening, following the New England supper at the Baptist church, there will be a missionary entertainment given by one of the young people's classes of the Sunday School. The girls will dress in costumes to represent foreign countries and give you some idea of the need of the Gospel in other lands. The entertainment is free. Everybody welcome.

FIVE YEARS AGO

A portable inhalator to be used in cases of gas asphyxiation, electrical shock and drowning is added to the equipment of the Birmingham Fire Department. The cost, which amounted to $225, was provided in the 1929 budget.

Petitions asking the annexation of a large tract of land west of Bloomfield Hills Village to the village, is being prepared by the attorney today at the request of the Commission. The land involved is immediately west of the village limits and north of Quarton road, extending to the Pontiac township line.

Letters are being circulated today by the Birmingham Board of Education inviting officials, organization members and villagers to attend a meeting May 20 at the Baldwin High School for the discussion of the Barnum School project.

The police department will have two new automobiles instead of one, it was decided by the Commission Monday night on recommendation of the manager and the police commission. Originally it was decided to purchase one large speed car.

Dr. Harry M. Crooks, president of Alma College at Alma, Mich., will give the commencement address at the graduation exercises of Baldwin High School to be held June 14.

Not Available

Mrs. Smith—I wonder, Mrs. Jones, if I could borrow your eggbeater?

Mrs. Jones—I'm sorry, Mrs. Smith, but he doesn't get home from work till five o'clock.—Cleveland News.

Not Like Dad

"Are you going to be like your father when you grow up?" asked the minister of Bobbie.

"You bet I'm not," retorted the boy. "I'm going to be a rich man, so every time my kids ask me for a quarter I won't have to tell them I'm broke."—Cincinnati Enquirer.

THE OTHER CHAP SAYS SOMETHING

COMSTOCK BLUNDERS AGAIN

Governor Comstock has a positive genius for committing blunders.

As long as these happened in the handling of his own affairs, the public was not greatly concerned. But since he has been the governor of the people of the State of Michigan, it has been different.

This latest event, the pardoning of Thomas R. Metzger, is a very strange proceeding for the governor.

If there were any great principle involved, and Governor Comstock had taken a bold stand in its defense, one could at least have admired his courage. But there seemed to be no principle, except that the man pardoned was the son of a prominent and wealthy Democrat politician.

If the governor meant this as a gesture of friendship for his associate, Sam Metzger, he overlooked the fact that at the same time he slapped the people of the State of Michigan smack in the face. He gave greater reason for the often unreasoning cry that there is one justice for the poor and one for the rich; only in this case it was indicated that there is one justice for the ordinary man and another for the man with a strong political pull at Lansing.

A youngish man beats an elderly man in an argument over a 67 cent bill. Narrowly does the beaten man escape losing his sight. A fearless judge fines the assailant and gives him a jail sentence. But the governor steps in and pardons him before he serves an hour in a cell.

What a high-minded procedure for the governor of a great state, pledged to the support of the laws and the suppression of crime! —F. J. Miller in Royal Oak Daily Tribune.

CRASHING IDOLS

It hurts to have one's idol wrecked and cast in the dump heap with all of the other worthless junk, but then we have not considered Father Coughlin and his radio broadcast an idol, still we have had a lot of respect for what we thought was his courage in throwing the harpoons into the big boys, and because none of them have ever attempted to defend themselves in the legal way it looked as though there was much truth to his claims, but now that some of the ramifications of his mind are opened by the discovery that his secretary was making very extensive investments in silver while the radio priest was battling to make silver stand up as a base metal in our scheme of values. It all looks as though the biggest and the best of them can be inveigled into shady practices in quest of the almighty sheckle.—Al Weber in Cheboygan Observer.

Jest For the Fun of It

On A Journey

Mary: Please, madam, I've knocked the marble clock off the sideboard.

Madam: Good heavens! Has it stopped?

Mary: No, madam. It's gone straight through to the basement.

—o—

The Spiritual Type

I cannot steal. I cannot lie.
Indeed, my sins amount to nought,
Though candidly, the reason why
Is, I'm afraid of getting caught.
—Margaret Fishback in "Life"

—o—

Learned Nothing New

She: I don't think that English course did you any good. You still end every sentence with a proposition.

—Northwestern Purple Parrot

—o—

The Catch

"Watch studyin'?"
"Soc'ology."
"Hard?"
"N'yrs."
"How many cuts y' flowed?"
"Never calls za roll."
"Outside readin and writtin'?"
"Nope."
"Called on often?"
"Once a week."
"Thought there was a string to it."

—o—

Getting In Bad

Jenkins (to new acquaintance): I wonder if that fat old girl is really trying to flirt with me?

Wilkins: I can easily find out by asking her—she is my wife.

—o—

Running Low On 'Em

Employer (to tardy office boy):

What's your excuse for being late this time?

The Boy: Stop me if you've heard this one.

—o—

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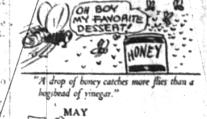

"A drop of honey catches more flies than a hogshead of vinegar."

MAY

14—Lewis & Clark start famous exploration trip, 1804.

15—First regular air mail service in U. S., 1918.

16—"Peek-a-boo" shirt waists first appear, 1900.

17—First Wild West show visits New York city, 1883.

18—California becomes a province of Mexico, 1822.

19—Henry VIII's wife, Anne Boleyn, loses head, 1536.

20—United States gives Cuba its full freedom, 1903.

One Minute Pulpit

For the transgression of a land many are the princes thereof: but by a man of understanding and knowledge the state thereof shall be prolonged.—Proverbs 2842.

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