

The Birmingham Eccentric (Founded in 1878) Published every Thursday at Birmingham, Mich. in The Eccentric Building, 121 North Main Street, Birmingham, Michigan. Telephone 12, 12 and 13.

Subscription Rates (In Oakland County) One Year \$2.00 Six Months \$1.25 Three Months \$0.75 (Outside Oakland County) One Year \$2.50 Six Months \$1.50 Three Months \$1.00

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

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1936 Note: The Eccentric is pleased to publish stories of events which have new value and which are written by persons connected with the editorial staff of the paper. All copy must be in the hands of the editor at least 48 hours before the issue is printed.

"Dear Mayor Allen: Miss Hanley Is Very Courteous" Apparently piqued and annoyed because the Eccentric last week published a detailed report of salaries paid city employees during 1935, Mayor Harry Allen took occasion Monday night at the City Board meeting to criticize a portion of the article's phraseology. The Mayor's specific criticism related to the opening paragraph of that salary report, wherein was stated: "In response to numerous requests, The Eccentric has obtained from City Clerk Irene Hanley a complete report of the annual salaries of all city employees of Birmingham during a two-week period..."

His Honor interpreted this to mean that it required "numerous requests" to Miss Hanley to obtain the information. We regret that the Mayor's long years as an interpreter of law did not suggest to him that a newspaper might have asked a clerk for such information because of "numerous requests" from taxpayers. So, to correct his understanding of the matter, we want him to know that Miss Hanley has always treated representatives of this newspaper most courteously; at our very first request for the payroll statistics, she smilingly consented to get them for us.

Besides, Mayor Allen knows that this newspaper, if it had met with opposition and resistance from a city employee in obtaining public information, would have mined no words in making it known. The Eccentric in seeking public information on matters relating to the spending of the taxpayers' money, doing so for those same taxpayers, as Mayor Allen well knows.

The editor of this newspaper has no personal axe to grind in matters affecting city government, other than the fact that he is a taxpayer himself, and also is paid by subscribers to get them local news. Mr. Allen undoubtedly loves his city, and that must include many of its citizens. The fact that, under his administration, costs of local government have risen to unparalleled heights, should not cause any sane citizen to feel that the city necessarily has been in keeping with his disposition toward public affairs, or else he would have raised his voice against it.

"If Mayor Allen has, during his years of service to his city, come to feel that city government can operate with a drift toward the methods of a closed corporation, and public payrolls should be printed from time to time, we suggest that he rouse himself from this attitude, and realize that he is heading a public business.

We have no personal quarrel with Mayor Allen at all. We have given a great deal of time to village and city business, more than we ever could have done the best he could. That is all any man can do. We respectfully suggest, however, that His Honor reconcile himself to the necessity for periodical publication of the city payroll; in his power, more than any other member of our city government, lies the duty of seeing that the costs of local government are kept down.

The taxpayers know this, too.

Taking The Oath Of Allegiance For a number of years agitation has been in motion to compel public school teachers to take the oath to support the Constitution—this agitation was started because of certain socialistic and communistic tendencies seen in some classrooms.

It seems that the teachers are willing to take the oath, providing other groups are compelled to do so, too. That's a fair proposition. Why not compel preachers, editors, lecturers, and even writers to subscribe to the oath to support the Constitution?

Throwing Silver Dollars Well, so the old baseball master, Walter Johnson, threw a silver dollar across the Rappahannock river, at the place where George Washington is said to have done so when a boy. Instead of Walter being asked to do it, why didn't they get President Roosevelt to appoint one of his spending boys to do the throwing—surely one of them could have thrown a couple million dollars farther than the width of the Rappahannock while old Walter was merely warm'g up.

Are We Goin' To Hell Via The Garden Of Eden? Decline in individual moral responsibility is seen by a Detroit economist, who recently pointed out that our nation and the world seems going to the demitison bow-wows. He says that nations are leaning towards dictatorship, that Americans more and more are depending upon a federal paternalism for support, and that mankind's spiritual nature is starving to death in the midst of a materialistic age.

The economist is right—and wrong. It depends upon how you look at it, doesn't it? If man considers the vanishing of "rugged individualism" as an economic decline, then what will work with his brain, muscle, machinery, and very rich earth? Man won't starve long, in the midst of an available plentitude.

Individual unwillingness to measure up to the demands of free citizenship may be supplanted by a dictator or an oligarchy; personally, if our nation doesn't want equal suffrage, then perhaps we'd better get busy and create a benevolent oligarchy before some ruthless and unscrupulous dictator takes over Washington.

Man's spiritual decline may appear to be a decline—it may be only a temporary phase. It is a temporary phase, which will, we believe, be the original Garden of Eden supposed to have been created from chaos? An just think, fren's, in spite of all the intellectual gloom that is hangin' low over our world, Spring'll soon be here, bud'll burst into leaves and purple flowers, the good grass will get green, the sun'll keep on shinin', new children'll be kept a-bearin', 'n' 'gosh an' an' an' election year itself, can't all the good things of God be happenin' to the God-given earth.

Will Brucker Ever Be The Great American? The real trouble with former Governor Wilbur M. Brucker is not with his heart—he really wants to be The Great American. The trouble lies in the immediate vicinity of his voice-box; once he sets a gong it seems to keep on going—like that of a great tragedian in a Shakespearean drama. The other night, at the Lincoln Banquet in Pontiac, Mr. Brucker served as toastmaster, introducing three speakers; what he really did, though, was to make three speeches on political issues of the day. We heard many criticisms of this—he would have made a better impression had he confined his remarks to toasting—toasting the three speakers, and not burning his own fingers. But, golly, though what a great salesman he would make it on the payroll of some immense organization! He could make a fortune in less than a lifetime at it, for he has tremendous energy and good debating powers.

Farley Is A Spierler We listened to a recent speech from Topeka, Kansas, by Postmaster Farley, chairman of the Democratic National Committee. We were struck by a number of things, including his apparent illiteracy in the use of subjects, his complete approval of EVERY act of the Roosevelt administration, and his complete unwillingness to recognize any decency in the Hoover administration. Farley is an amiable fellow with certain Democratic; but he's nothing short of a brazen Tammany cat in his political maneuvering. Farley is merely a cheap political spier—side-show Barker took care in charge of the entrance to the nation's greatest political spectacle.

Silly Tax Ideas Ernest T. Conlon, able Grand Rapids politician, and now an assistant State Attorney-General assigned to advise the Sales Tax Division, thinks that a sales tax is a wonderful thing for the people. "It lifts an unnecessary burden of taxation from real estate," argues Mr. Conlon, and he points out that a former 1931 State tax of 17 millions on real estate has been removed entirely and that last year the sales tax brought 45 millions to the State government.

From the standpoint of fundamental tax principles, as they may apply to social security, Mr. Conlon is about as well posted on the subject as a first-grader would be to solve high school problems. Mr. Conlon's argument is that the direct sales tax on the products of labor is a good economic move is silly.

We do not question Mr. Conlon's sincerity about the matter—but we do question his fundamental knowledge of taxation truth. For that matter, most public officials don't know taxation truth themselves. What we need is the elimination of land speculation—there then wouldn't be so great a public debt burden placed on productive real estate.

W'D PAY A PRETTY PENNY to witness a debate between Al Smith and, say, Professor Rexford Guy Tugwell, the A-F-brain-truster. Tugwell is very, very versatile with words—mechinks he is an illustration of the belief that language too often is a device used to conceal thought.

Practical Paragraphs Discoverers usually travel far. The far countries discovered were discovered by them. Did you ever fully discover yourself? Why is it that we all become solitaires at times? Is it not because unconsciously we feel that there is a lot of ourselves with which we want to become better acquainted. A great deal before he died he had well planned out for a hundred years. Meditation will help you to realize your great possibilities.

Remnants of the Florida real estate boom—news item. "Jasper, Florida, farmer's barn almost full of sight in his back yard."

People's Column The Eccentric is pleased to receive communications for this column. All communications must be signed and signatures will be kept confidential. Communications should be limited to 250 words, and must be received at the office of the Eccentric no later than the following Thursday.

Editor, Birmingham Eccentric. Dear Sir: As a new resident in Birmingham, and though familiar with it for years, and also, as a new subscriber to your paper, I wish to express appreciation for your most interesting and enlightening publication.

I am rapidly becoming acquainted with this charming town, in great part, to your account of its rich historical and current, of Birmingham interests and activities. There are so many things I love about this city, I hardly know where to begin in enumerating them.

I already feel at home after only two weeks' residence and 'off to a bad start' with the weather, at the time, dignified and yet thoroughly modern and active atmosphere of Birmingham "lets me feel something else."

Thanking you and your paper for the part it has played for me, as a new resident here, and wishing you further success and growth. I am, Very Truly Sincerely, J. IRENE OEHM, 452 Park street.

To the Editor: Feb. 24, 1936. I hope you can find use for this letter which I offer in the interest of Birmingham and for other cities that you might publish it so that those guilty, will not in the future be enthralled. In it children should read of the fire which are not statements of fact.

I refer to the fire at 352 Glenhurst on 20th. Before the fire fighters had left the fire, they were circulating the fact that the oil burner had exploded. Ever since I have been connected with the oil burner industry, I have heard the same story but when the truth was known, the cause was something else.

I made an examination of the oil burner after the fire was out and found it in good condition and most certainly would not be if that burner had an explosion at that point. Very Truly Yours, HARRY E. HINSFETT

Jots'n Jests THAT New York man who inadvertently sent his wife an invitation to attend his wedding must lead a harem-scarum existence. About \$27.00 worth of space in the Congressional Record was wasted by Congress' inability to spell "asthina." They seem to have dramatized the word.

The Illinois supreme court ruled that the 193-year sentence meted out in a holdup murder trial is legal, but that doesn't make it possible. Remnants of the Florida real estate boom—news item. "Jasper, Florida, farmer's barn almost full of sight in his back yard."

"River, Stay 'Way from My Door" The Eccentric is pleased to receive communications for this column. All communications must be signed and signatures will be kept confidential. Communications should be limited to 250 words, and must be received at the office of the Eccentric no later than the following Thursday.

Editor, Birmingham Eccentric. Dear Sir: As a new resident in Birmingham, and though familiar with it for years, and also, as a new subscriber to your paper, I wish to express appreciation for your most interesting and enlightening publication.

I am rapidly becoming acquainted with this charming town, in great part, to your account of its rich historical and current, of Birmingham interests and activities. There are so many things I love about this city, I hardly know where to begin in enumerating them.

I already feel at home after only two weeks' residence and 'off to a bad start' with the weather, at the time, dignified and yet thoroughly modern and active atmosphere of Birmingham "lets me feel something else."

Thanking you and your paper for the part it has played for me, as a new resident here, and wishing you further success and growth. I am, Very Truly Sincerely, J. IRENE OEHM, 452 Park street.

To the Editor: Feb. 24, 1936. I hope you can find use for this letter which I offer in the interest of Birmingham and for other cities that you might publish it so that those guilty, will not in the future be enthralled. In it children should read of the fire which are not statements of fact.

I refer to the fire at 352 Glenhurst on 20th. Before the fire fighters had left the fire, they were circulating the fact that the oil burner had exploded. Ever since I have been connected with the oil burner industry, I have heard the same story but when the truth was known, the cause was something else.

I made an examination of the oil burner after the fire was out and found it in good condition and most certainly would not be if that burner had an explosion at that point. Very Truly Yours, HARRY E. HINSFETT

Jots'n Jests THAT New York man who inadvertently sent his wife an invitation to attend his wedding must lead a harem-scarum existence. About \$27.00 worth of space in the Congressional Record was wasted by Congress' inability to spell "asthina." They seem to have dramatized the word.

The Illinois supreme court ruled that the 193-year sentence meted out in a holdup murder trial is legal, but that doesn't make it possible. Remnants of the Florida real estate boom—news item. "Jasper, Florida, farmer's barn almost full of sight in his back yard."

Happenings of Long Ago FIFTY YEARS AGO Louie C. Adams gave an exhibition of fancy bicycle riding at Farmington on Tuesday evening last, to a large and appreciative audience.

J. L. Jencks of Detroit was in town Monday with as fine a span of matched trotters as pre-war have been for many moons. Jim says, "Yes, they are for sale."

The next club box comes off Friday evening, March 5, at 8:30 P. M. in the hall, and the hall is promised to surpass any previous, and everybody says the show is a good one.

Twenty-five years ago... At present there are two checks upon a runaway Congress—the Presidential veto and the fact that I am of the opinion that an amendment charging the requirement to anything more than a plain majority decision, will in effect remove both of these checks.

My Country, 'Tis of Thee... The air is full of the noise of constitution-makers, each non-sensational than professed in his efforts to "view with alarm" either the "horse-and-buggy" or the venerable document or its "sky-rocketing liberality."

Five Years Ago... Southfield Township's primary election next Monday is expected to be one of the most heated in recent years as a result of a controversy over the campaign between James Kirchoff, incumbent, and Daniel E. Hughes for nomination on the Republican ticket for highway commissioner.

WABECK STATE BANK WABECK, BLDG. BIRMINGHAM, MICH.

Directors W. M. CORNELIUS HENRY T. EWALD FRANK COUZENS GEO. B. JUDSON JAMES COUZENS LUNARD L. HEALY

"Your Bank in Birmingham" COMPLETE BANKING FACILITIES