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 Tuesday 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, JANUARY 16, 1936

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.

A Few People Really Change Our Customs

A great deal of the hullabaloo in government is precipitated by a comparatively few people within that government. That is to say, only a handful of a nation's populace is actively engaged in the front-line phases of economic and social transitions. The only exception to this is, of course, then active revolution engages a country—then many are forced to take up arms.

But in a peace-time, evolutionary movement, such as has been going on in the United States since 1929, a mere handful of men and women, of business and professional blocs and groups, is engaged in changing the customs and laws of a people.

To most people, they are interested in public questions during their formations only when spectacular showmanship attends them; election campaigns, Senate debates, or public speeches before important groups, are means of attracting the people's attention to a public issue.

Most people leave the running of their governments and vast business affairs to others; they are like a passenger list going abroad, engaged only in the scenery and good times to be had—leaving the navigating and engineering problems up to the ship's crew.

Even in a democracy the old axiom is true: "What's everybody's business is too often nobody's business."

Governor Fitzgerald Should Know The Value Of Money

Every incumbent political party claims for itself a "balanced budget." When the Democrats are in office, and claim to have operated the State within its allowance, the Republicans yell and shout about "Democratic extravagance, high taxes," etc., etc.

When the Republicans are in office—as they are today in Michigan—they, too, claim efficiency and economy in the operation of government; also, the "outs," meaning the Democrats, yell and shout "extravagance, high taxes," etc., etc.

Governor Fitzgerald has repeatedly stated of late that his administration is operating within budgetary allowances. He is vigorous in his opposition to a policy of "spending ourselves into false prosperity," and in this he ought to win the support of every serious-minded citizen.

Personally, this newspaper is strongly opposed to a number of the Fitzgerald policies; but if his claim that he is living within a legitimate income cannot be disproved, then we hereby offer him our humble thanks and appreciation.

Governor Fitzgerald has always been a comparatively poor man, and he really knows something of the value of money. This character value, reflected in the policies of his present high office, are of inestimable value today when so many people still believe that you can have your cake and also eat it.

Periodic Auto Inspection

Society should demand, and get, periodic motor inspection of automobiles. Modern motor cars are veritable flying bullets; good brakes, decent tires, capable drivers, are essential to a maximum of safety on the modern highways. Society should see that it is protected against those accidents that may arise from faulty human and mechanical features of a fast-moving motor car. Society demands, and gets, expert inspection of steamboats, land and marine boilers, scales, weights and measures, public health, and many other things useful to human life. Why not motor cars and drivers?

An Honest Face

A hotel guest was telling the clerk at the desk the difficulty he had encountered endeavoring to cash an out-of-town bank cashier's check. He said: "I showed them my car operator's license and duplicated its signature. Still they wouldn't cash it." The clerk said: "Paper identification doesn't mean a thing. A crook always has plenty of identification credit cards from hotels, business stationery and what not."

At this point another guest entered the conversation. He said: "Pardon the intrusion but I'd like to ask a question: What does a hotel manager judge a man by? I have been cashing checks at small banks and hotels for years."

"Yes," said the clerk, "I never saw you before but I'd cash your check." "But what do you go by?" persisted the guest.

"What you are is pretty clearly written on your face," said the clerk.

Of course there are many exceptions but it still appears to be true in the main that a man's thought and life write themselves on his face.

SEARCHING PARTIES are generally sent out to find those who are lost. That's why the Church sends out missionaries to convert the heathen in far-away lands—too often forgetting the heathen who dwell at home and often occupy front pews. (There is also a growing need for the formation of searching parties by the laity to locate some of the preachers who have strayed away from the simple Gospel they were intended to teach.)

As Thomas Jefferson Might Have Written The Gettysburg Address

(NOTE: *The modern Democratic Party began its honorable and historic existence in 1828 when Andrew Jackson was successfully elected to the Presidency. The party was a direct growth of the policies and influence of Thomas Jefferson, who so rigorously opposed centralized and bureaucratic government. The following is my notion of how Jefferson would have parodied Lincoln's immortal address, were the sage of Monticello alive to gaze upon his Party's condition today*—GEORGE R. AVERILL.)

Fivescore and eight years ago our Party leaders brought forth on this continent a Democratic Party, conceived in economic liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are equal insofar as they have a right to the fruits of their labors.

Now we are engaged in a great national election, testing whether our great Party, or any other Party so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure as a militant voice in a free country. We are met on a great battlefield in the war of Democracy versus Bureaucracy. We have come to dedicate a portion of this election year in a final effort to throw off the yokes of Bureaucracy that the Braintrust has sought to fasten upon us, so that our great and honorable Democratic Party may continue to live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But, in the fullest sense, it seems impossible for us today to dedicate—(we cannot consecrate)—to hallow this alien New Deal ground. The brave men of our Party, living and dead, who have struggled in the name of Jeffersonian and Jacksonian Democracy, have consecrated the native free soil of our great Party far beyond our power to add or detract: they would not consider planting the seed of true Democracy in the planned economy fields of the Franklin D. Roosevelt program—for well they would know that at least every third row would be plowed under.

If we, who truly represent the Democratic principles of myself, Andrew Jackson, Grover Cleveland, Woodrow Wilson, Al Smith, and the solemn Covenant and Platform of our great Party in the campaign of 1932, do not change the trend of our Party during this next four years of federal administration of government, the world will little note nor long remember what we say here—even though it may have great cause to recollect what we stand for.

It is for us, the living members of our great Party, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work for which our illustrious former leaders have fought and so far nobly advanced before the Braintrust was swept into office and our Party's sacred platform repudiated.

It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from the labors and sacrifices of our Party's loyal leaders we take increased devotion to that democratic cause for which they gave their last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these leaders shall not have lived in vain; that this nation, under the true principles of the Democratic Party of Jackson and myself, shall have a new birth of freedom from Bureaucracy; and that democratic government of the people, by the people, and for the people shall not perish from the sacred tenets of our Democratic Platform.

THE AVERAGE MAN and woman is not interested to a serious extent with the problems of the collective group—be they of local, state, national, or international kind. The average person is interested in the immediate problems of getting a living and having some fun. That's why the collective problems of human beings are seldom solved.

OF COURSE MAN wants economic security! He needs it just as much as he needs moral security through religion. But merely to raise our hands and cry for it will not bring it to us. Economic truth is like moral truth—you have to work for it along with your praying for it.

"IF FIRST YOU don't succeed, try, try again." Perhaps, now that the U. S. Supreme Court has handed out its seventh adverse decision to the New Deal, the New Dealers may vaguely glimpse the fact that they've been trying to put over illegal legislation.

IF THE STATE of Michigan, through its official Liquor Control Commission, cannot handle the liquor situation properly, how can it be handled any better by turning it over to private traffickers in the stuff?

Practical Paragraphs

By John Edwin Price

A LIFE OF CRIME FROM AGE TEN.

The recent account of the Boston prison break carried the following sentence:

"Prison records disclosed three of the convicts, who may face charges of murder for the death of Richards, started their criminal careers between the ages of ten and fourteen."

It would be interesting to know what sinister forces or lack of good influences cheated these one-time boys out of a normal, wholesome chance at life.

For anyone who knows human personality knows of a surety that before those boys were twenty they had many moments of self examination. Many times they felt the contrasting difference between their lives and the lives of clean-living boys they knew or read about. They knew moments of utter loneliness, of bitterness against evil environments or lack of opportunity.

Think of your boy condemned by conditions attending his birth or upbringing which he could neither avert nor control being forced to eke out an existence, a life-long existence hunted or caged.

What are the remedies? Their name is legion. Slum-clearance is one way, day school classes in character development would be another. The Christmas season reminds us of what judges of juvenile courts often point out namely, that seldom does a boy appear before them who has invested so much as three years in a church school.

When religious teaching gets a foothold in a boy's make up it usually crowds foreign ideas out.

The next time this writer feels like laying a-bed Sunday morning he's going to get up and get to church lest some boy takes a wrong steer from an apparently good citizen and neglects his religious training.

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.

Editor, The Eccentric

Dear Sir: Here are my New Year's resolutions, thought out during my "quiet time," Tuesday, December 31, 1935, the last day of the old year:

Resolved: (1) That I will search within me for everything which happens without; (2) That, with God beside me, I will do my best by all human beings; (3) That through 1936 I will make many contacts; (4) that I will keep a helpful attitude toward all people in my home; (5) that I will be keen to sense all situations with absolute love, honesty, purity and unselfishness; (6) that my religion will start in the morning with a smile and a pleasant greeting; (7) that I will be—in fact, live these resolutions that they will become a part of me and reflect in my daily life.

I think of (1) and (3) as personal, (4) and (6) in the home (2) and (5) reaching out to the community, and (7) results of the combined six, or character building.

"We are meant to live, more for others than for ourselves,—God's way of deserving happiness and getting it." I like the thoughts you give forth in the "views." I find them very workable thoughts.

A short time ago I read "One Increasing Purpose" and last night I finished "Magnificent Obsession." I have loaned my "A Fortune to Share" to at least 75 people to read. That book has acted like a hypo to me. The mind can assimilate it and it can be used in every day life. At least I have found it true.

ANONYMOUS.

Los Angeles, Cal.
Dec. 15, 1935

Birmingham Eccentric,
Birmingham, Mich.

Dear Sir:

Through some old time friends in Birmingham I have received a copy of your esteemed publication, "The Birmingham Eccentric" of Dec. 5, '35, and have read it with interest, but regret to find that you, a 1935 editor, should be so far back in the "Horse and Buggy" days when you discuss the Townsend Recovery Plan.

It appears to those who have studied the Plan, that only three classes of people oppose the passage of the McGroarty Bill:

Class 1. Bankers—Loan Shark—and Mortgage Cos. who are growing rich by foreclosing and robbing people of their home, and operating their Employment Offices.

Class 2. Political cran-warmers and "Bureaucrats" who have been appointed by thousands—to hold them in line for the Dictator.

Take for instance Rex Tugwell's staff; reports from Washington show that 12,000 persons are employed to distribute $200,000 in relief work per month—while the salaries of the distributers amounted to $1,750,000 or almost six times as much as that received by those on relief.

Class 3. Those who are so densely ignorant of what the McGroarty Bill means that they are not know what they are talking about. Those are not all ignorant men—but—they have not studied the provisions and objects of the bill, and many of our newspapers are so completely "controlled" that they dare not print the truth for their readers.

Four million graduates of our grammar schools cannot find work and are being driven into crime while about two per cent of the people own and control eighty per cent of the wealth of the country.

More than three billion dollars of out tax money goes to national, state, county and city charities, which would be reduced at least eighty per cent by the Townsend Plan; in fact we are now paying three times what the plan would cost and we are getting nothing from it in permanent improvement.

Your idea of having the "Plan" investigated by reliable economists is a very good one—only—you are rather late thinking of it.

The Wall St. bankers and the opponents of the plan in Washington, I am told, had the very best men money could buy, trying to pick flaws in the system—but they failed. Now all they can do is lie about it.

If you want to give a correct account of what is being done in the Townsend matter, and I believe you would for your own sake—don't quote Jim Farley—for he won't be in Washington next year.

I could hand you plenty of reading matter that might be of great interest to you but I know you are a busy man, so I am just sending a few clippings in the hope you may find time to read them.

With a copy of the revised McGroarty Bill I am enclosing reports from Dow-Jones, the best known statisticians in the United States, also from Robert R. Doane, director of research of American Business Surveys, New York City, who testified before the Ways and Means committee of the present Congress that business under the operation of the Townsend Plan would increase from twenty per cent to twenty-five per cent a month.

In the article by H. B. M. Miller, the operation and cost of the Townsend Plan is shown so clearly that a ten year boy could see how he would begin to pay off the national debt.

Opponents of the bill tell you that the poor people are the ones who will be hit by the tax. This is absolutely false as the tax is paid on the money spent and it is altogether likely that the rich men will spend more than the poor man and of course his proportion of the tax will be greater.

This is why Big Business is making such a fight against this bill that seems fair to everybody and appears to be our only hope of recovery.

One old fellow who has been making a brave fight to keep going said: "What do I care for five cents on the dollar? I would have the dollar to pay it on."

Now Mr. Editor, if you will be honest with yourself and with your readers, you will take the trouble to study the pension bill, and I believe you have enough good old fashioned "American Manhood" to tell the truth when you realize your responsibility.

I am sending a copy of this national letter along with clippings to your absentees, and I thank you for your kindness to Birmingham and I hope to visit them later.

Wishing you and "The Birmingham Eccentric" prosperity and all the good business that is sure to come with the Townsend Recovery Plan.

Sincerely yours,
J. E. HARRISON,
1052 Leighton Ave.,
Los Angeles, Cal.

Jots 'n Jest

Pineapples are about 80 per cent water, but try to convince a Chicagoan of the truth of this statement.

New York court declares that a wife cannot be prosecuted for loosing her husband's pockets, which make zippers with lock and have an appropriate masculine scent.

If a judge turns that notorious gang leader over to the penitentiary warden, he might be heard to say, "Guilty from me to you."

Now that Congress is back in session, farmers should prepare for high winds.

Africa leads the world in production of gold, which information is no news to Mussolini.

Tribute To A Doctor

Not sacrifice it is, this spending of
His strength, his self, his utmost,
innate skill,
But just a glorious task that
claims his will.
And heart and soul—a very work
of love—
Mending day by day
Poor broken clay.

This is not sacrifice. A heart attune
To beauty could not gaze on beauty marred
While yearning to restore the
broken scarred
Imperfect thing. This is to earth
his boon—
Healing day by day
Poor broken clay.

For sacrifice is that great something lost
Which one would keep forever-more; and he
In his great passion for humanity
Has held fast to that thing he
treasured most—
Mending healing day by day
Poor broken clay.

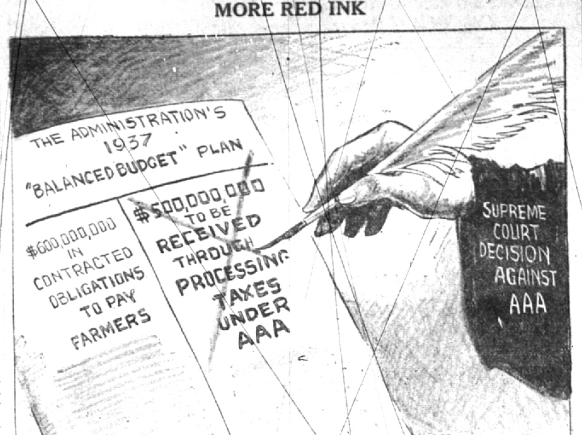
—BEATRICE McDONALD.

Wasted Lings

Tour—White man glad to see old man. White man hopes big chief willing help him this morning.

Indian (smiling)—Hey, Jake, come here and listen to this boys. He's great.

MORE RED INK



Happenings 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

The Franklin Cornet Band is disbanding.

Peter McKay is the happy parent of a fine baby girl.

Saturday was a blizzard like day, and completely killed all traffic in our village.

The rumor that Joe Ramey washes his feet in the Gulf of Mexico—perhaps.

Miss Cora Brown is now assistant clerk in the postoffice, and a fine one, too, we understand—she is to be sure.

The club dance at National Hall was largely attended last Friday evening, and a most enjoyable affair was had, but the great worry is, "Who is the club?"

The Oxford Globe says "the robins were singing gleefully last week." Mild be awful tough old robins or else Oxford is a good deal nearer the place that Bob Ingersoll don't believe in than Birmingham.

In a recent issue a correspondent from Southfield sent in the followings: "Alex Neil and wife have agreed to disagree." We are now informed that the statement was erroneous—they have agreed to nothing of the kind—they can't.

The band concert at Frank Gorman's in Franklin last week was a perfect crush, and the boys made a good stake out of it. Everything passed off lively and all unite in saying that they were never better treated anywhere any better, and had a most enjoyable hour.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

You don't have to go to war to be patriotic. Improve your locality, uphold your town, enlarge its interests, and lend a hand to progress, and you are a patriot—a lover of your country—as truly as a soldier who shoulders his musket.

The first real active benefactor to the children of our village is Dr. George B. Clark, D. O., who has built for his children, a toboggan slide and a skating rink. Being generous, broad gauged and jubilee spirited, he invites all the children to come, slide, skate and enjoy his generous hospitality. As soon as the privilege is used and abused all children are welcome to come and enjoy themselves.

James B. Hunt has a wad of wild cat money, big enough to choke a big red cow. Say, if it would only go now, Jim would be as rich as George H. Tomlinson claims that if "Time is money." Ed. Georgeo is a multi-millionaire. Mr. Hunt has money originating at Utica, Jackson, Lapeer, Monroe, Detroit and many other places too numerous to mention. Utica Money is backed by the Shelby & Detroit Plank Road Co., which is not yet running. The Bank of Pontiac bills are not yet a legal tender. They were signed 70 or 80 years ago, by Sherman Stevens, R. H. Heywood and Daniel LeRoy. Say that money was circulating around about 57 years ago—maybe more.

FIVE YEARS AGO

A public hearing on the proposed $25,000 budget for Bloomfield Hills Village will be held Saturday, Jan. 31 from 9 A. m. until 5 p. m. in the Bloomfield Hills postoffice at which time taxpayers of the community are expected to discuss the proposed budget which has been increased by $20,000 this year.

Upon the request of Commissioner Lawrence Hulbert, a detailed report of the proposed alterations in the police department is being prepared this week by James W. Parry, village manager, Chief John P. Hackett and Harold H. Corson, village engineer. For submission to the village commission next Monday night.

To refinance the $100,000 in school bonds for payment April 10, the School Board will advertise about Feb. 1 for bids on a new issue of bonds, probably maturing over a period of 15 years, to replace those now falling due, since no tax money have been paid into the school fund since last April. The Board expects to receive $15,000 this week from Bloomfield township taxes, however.

The first of a series of public meetings on the proposed zoning ordinance for the village will be held at the Municipal Building tomorrow night when members of the Plan Commission, James W. Parry, village manager, and R. J. Coryell, township supervisor, will discuss the proposed zoning with residents living in the district west of River Rouge and south of Maple avenue and west of Quarton Lake and north of Maple avenue.

During the last months of 1930 arrests by Oakland County deputies declined and the number of calls answered dropped decidedly, Sheriff Frank Schram reports, the average number of prisoners in the county jail being reduced from 200 to 150 during December.

Hard Lines

"Why so gloomy?"

"Ah! These desperate times get my goat."

"Hitch! You still get a salary and are not on the welfare."

"I know it, but we are riding around in an old '29 model, and that's almost as tough as being on the welfare."—Cincinnati Enquirer.

My Country, 'Tis of Thee

By THEODORE H. MILLINGTON

DISCORD

(Old Song)

Once there lived side by side
Two little maids,
Used to dress just alike,
Hair down in braids.
One day a quarrel came,
Hot words were said.
"You can't play in my yard," said one,
And the other said:
"I don't want to play in your yard,
I don't like you any more!"
"You'll be sorry when you see me
Sliding down our cellar door!"
"You can't holler down our rain-barrel!"
"You can't climb our apple tree!"
"I don't want to play in your yard
If you wont be good to me!"
Just as a childish quarrel put an end to a happy play-time, and two little girls nursed a grievance, scarcely knowing how the quarrel started, so has petty nationalism and selfish nation sufficiency put an end to mutual confidence between nations.

Freedom Perishes

Likewise, the stubbornness of group interests in some European countries opened the door to dictatorship. Intolerance of differences in views and interests leads to confusion; and confusion prolonged is evidence that the ability for self-government is waning. It is the dictator's opportunity.

The outstanding characteristics of economic and political conditions in the United States today are **confusion and mutual distrust.** The President's message to Congress (?) on "The State of the Union" was no doubt a good partisan stump speech, but unfortunately it accentuated class conflict, promising one class something for nothing at the expense of other classes, and made "confusion worse confounded."

Statesmanship or Bombast?

A statesman should recognize that, just as in olden times all roads led to Rome, so sincere men, though of different opinions, nevertheless may have the welfare of the United States at heart. It is paramount at this time that cool-headed statesmanship should seek agreement rather than discord. If the President's slogan uttered toward the end of his speech, "We shall advance!" were not so sophomorically bombastic as to be devoid of force, it might have been uttered as a threat directed toward opposition to his views—for example, toward the Supreme Court. It was, however, ridiculous—most ridiculous because it gave no direction to the proposed advance, he had suggested no new legislation and made no recommendations for changing the Constitution. He evidently he thinks he is going somewhere, like the man in the limerick:

"There was a young man named McBride
Who often at funerals was spied.
When asked who was dead,
He cheerfully said,
'I don't know, I'm just out for the ride'."

A bewildered people awaited the President's plan for composing conflicting interests in a masterful synthesis. That would have been statesmanship. But he fired a shrapnel of further distrust and confusion. From that wreck of shattered hopes and confidence, what spectre will arise to haunt him? It was Mr. Roosevelt's great moment, but he failed to seize it.

So What?

For three years now the President has tried to establish a new tangled kind of government. The Supreme Court "No Trespass" signs confront him everywhere. As a driver of the Government Machine he has turned the wrong corners more often than any other driver we have ever had. He either can't or wont read the traffic code or the road signs, but persists in traffic violations and **brags about it.** So we would better get a new driver before he wrecks the machine.

The machine is ours, you know, although he seems to think he owns it.

From the lowest depth there is a path to the loftiest height.—Carlyle.

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