The Birmingham Eccentric

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GEORGE R. AVERILL — Editor and Publisher
EDWIN C. WHITNEY — Managing Editor
PAUL NEAL AVERILL — Business Manager
ARTHUR N. WINGERDEN — Advertising Manager
CLAUDE E. WALKER — Production Manager

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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.

Only Hard Work Can Keep You At The Top

Experts and top-notchers in any line of human endeavor seldom attain such heights without a tremendous amount of perspiration with their inspiration. When they reach the Olympian heights they have very hard work ahead to remain there.

Take, for instance, the case of Frank Bacon, late star of the stage. In "Typing Tips" we read:

At twenty-one minutes after nine, Frank Bacon, matchless star of the unusual stage play, "Lightnin'," said the same thing, in apparently the same way, and received resounding applause—not just ordinary applause, but a thunder of applause which became the talk of the town and brought back packed houses month after month—EVERY NIGHT FOR SIX YEARS!

Why?

One morning while the play was running in Chicago, a friend called Frank Bacon on the phone and invited him to play golf.

"Can't make it today," Bacon regretted. "We have rehearsal today."

"Rehearsal!" his friend exclaimed. "Are you crazy?"

"No—just vigilant," said Bacon.

"But you have given more than two thousand performances of 'Lightnin'!"

"All the more reason for vigilance. The only way to keep the public interested in 'Lightnin'' is to give a letter perfect performance every time the curtain rises."

A Democrat's Modern Version Of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address

A few weeks ago we published in this column an editorial titled: "As Thomas Jefferson Would Have Parodied Lincoln's Gettysburg Address." Perhaps you recall that it was critical of the drift of the Democratic Party of today under the socialistic leadership of President Roosevelt. Well, another Michigan scribe, Scarth Inglis, of the Galesburg Argus, read it and decided to write one titled: "As Abraham Lincoln Today Would Have Written The Gettysburg Address." The fact that Mr. Inglis is a loyal Michigan Democrat may be responsible for the theme of his editorial—even though he did honestly disagree with some of the acts of the recent Comstock administration in Michigan.

Anyway, Mr. Inglis, who is a high-minded man, is entitled to his rebuttal, so here it is:

"Four years ago a group of patriotic citizens brought forth on this continent a reborn Democratic Party, conceived in economic liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are equal.

"Now we are engaged in a great national election, testing whether that party or any party so conceived in so dedicated can long endure against the vested interests who wax fat on special privilege. We meet on the great battlefield of that war against freedom and equality. We have come to dedicate our vote that those who fought for others shall not have fought in vain, and that this nation might live not nine tenths slave and one tenth free. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

"But in a larger sense we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow the effort for the common man that has been made.

"The brave men of the past four years who struggled against poverty, unemployment and selfishness have consecrated it far above our pobr power to add or detract. The world will little note or long remember what the tories said here; but it will never forget what we do here against dishonesty in high places.

"It is for us the living rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work of driving the money changers from the temple which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us: that from these honored four years we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion: that we here highly resolve that those who suffered by the causes of the depression shall not have suffered in vain: that this nation, under God, shall keep this new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, and for the people (not just for a few rich as in the past) shall not perish from the earth."

Comstock Has Courage

Politics does make a portion of the world dizzy. To think that the time would come when former Governor William A. Comstock would "walk out" on his Democratic Party and then receive an invitation from a Republican Governor to join the latter group! But we do admire Comstock's loyalty to his personal duty as a citizen. When he no longer could tolerate the policies of President Roosevelt and Jim Farley, Comstock bravely told the people of Michigan just how he felt. Would that there were more politicians of the Comstock type in both major parties.

Grand Rapids Realtors Would Shift Tax Debt

A movement has been launched in Grand Rapids to repeal all forms of real estate taxation in Michigan, and to inaugurate a system of graduated income taxes to meet the cost of every type of local and state government costs, including the operation of the public schools.

The Grand Rapids Real Estate Association is behind the plan, and seeks to enlist the support of every realtor in Michigan to bring about this most revolutionary reform.

Well, if human beings want to increase the woe and misery now manifest; if they want to bring more bewilderment and confusion to our economic system, we can't think of anything that will help do it any more than the elimination of tax support from real estate.

The Grand Rapids real estate boys assert that the tremendous taxes of the past few years "have broken down real estate values," and that "no longer can real estate support the terrific cost of government."

Do the Grand Rapids realtors remember how, during the boom days of the late Twenties, they got behind every road, sewer, school, and other public improvement in their area? Did they not then expect real estate to pay for the improvements they asked for, and got? Did they not expect this rising debt to be paid from the added value the improvements would bring to real estate?

Or did they ever expect that a major portion of the improvements they bonded for, or acquired through special assessment methods, were installed only because they, as realtors, were riding on the high tide of speculation in land?

Oakland County knows something about burdensome taxation—much of which has been placed on the tax rolls because of speculation in real estate. It is to be hoped that Oakland County will remember its present bonded debt, and refuse to add more to it.

We'll wager that, as it is, of the Grand Rapids boys really know anything fundamental about tax relief. All they are doing now is to get excited about a debt that real estate saddled upon itself, and now wants to evade.

This newspaper trusts that the people of Michigan will not "fall" for the Grand Rapids plan of lifting taxation from real estate—for, if real estate ever is exempted, it will be used on a wholesale basis for greater speculation purposes than in the past; and everybody knows that the inherent gambling desires of most folks will lead them to another economic slaughter.

What Michigan realtors need to do is to see that, in the frenzy of rising prosperity, they do not encourage another era of land boom, with its attendant burden of taxation. The only way to protect the improved lot, with its modest home, is to prevent it from having to pay a tax burden that some speculators in real estate seek to shift when the crash comes.

Empty Praise

999 times out of a thousand, if you were to seat six politicians of the same Party, from six different sections of the United States, around a banquet table, you would find each of them unstintingly eulogistic of the others. You would listen to each one, as he rose to his full height and vast oratorical expanse, use some portion of his time to canonize the others; especially would the out-of-staters lay wreaths and hahs about the person of the "home boy." You would hear the out-of-staters tell some whoppers about the "home boy"—especially if you knew the "home boy" yourself.

Even Presidential candidates, when visiting the several States for purposes of speech-making, will praise the local so-and-so who is running for office. It really is an unwritten law that politicians of one Party must praise others in the same Party, unless, of course, a primary election is on and then it's every man for himself and the people take the hindmost.

Politics Changes People

The present wide breach between President Roosevelt and "Al" Smith is animated evidence that, in the realm of politics, friendship is often not a lasting thing. That is why your informed newspaperman should not allow his mere party loyalty to transcend his sense of citizen patriotism. We know chaps who will admire "Al" Smith's opposition to Roosevelt, but who will yet blindly follow the wrong steps of some leader in their own party. Principle, and not mere personality, should guide us in our estimate and support of public officials.

Practical Paragraphs

By John Edwin Price

"HE THINKS HE KNOWS IT ALL"

How often in the store, on the street, or in the club room we hear this said. It is often said by those who are peeved because someone didn't agree with them. In fact they say it because they think that *they* are absolutely right and the other fellow entirely wrong. In other words *they* think *they* know it all and are sore because the world doesn't at once recognize their superior viewpoint, judgment or knowledge.

It is easy to think "He Thinks He Knows It All" after an opponent has given us a good argument. May it not be our inner resentment of the fact that the other fellow *actually* is better informed on that point than we are?

Of course a strong man will stand firmly for his present convictions until he sees his error. On the other hand knowing from experience how further facts and light have in the past often changed our opinions we can save "face" by not being too bitterly positive that we are right in any one instance.

By this we do not infer that some viewpoints are not forever right and others forever wrong. However we do believe that no man is always right. Moreover circumstances alter cases and what might hold true in one relationship may not in another.

It is manifestly unfair to hurl the epithet "He thinks he knows it all" against a man who is reading at every opportunity and listening to other's opinions. His actions prove he is not conceited but is forever willing to learn if perchance by seeking and listening he can find a better thought than the one he now holds.

However if you find a strongly opinionated man who does not even keep posted on the facts of the various movements of the times and who will never listen courteously to the other side then can you say with justice—and with pity—"He Thinks He Knows It All."

The more a fairly modest man studies and reads and listens the more he realizes how little is what he knows compared to what he might learn. Goethe, the greatest mind Germany produced, was ever seeking new knowledge and died with a prayer on his lips "More Light."

The truly great have admitted that they could learn something from every man they ever met.

My Country, 'Tis of Thee

By THEODORE H. MILLINGTON

Dear Reader:

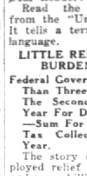
Read the following reprint from the "United States News." It tells a terrible story in plain language.

LITTLE RELIEF FROM THE BURDEN OF RELIEF

Federal Government Spends More Than Three Billion Dollars For The Second Successive Fiscal Year For Direct Aid to Jobless —Sum For 1936 Exceeds Total Tax Collections For Normal Year.

The story of America's unemployed relief bill is one of more and more billions of dollars.

Five years ago it was an unknown item in the corporation-like statements of the Federal Budget.



T. H. MILLINGTON

For the twelve-month period ending this June 30 the unemployed relief bill will probably top the three billion dollar mark for the second year in a row.

And at least that same amount — official estimates indicate — will be required for another year of warring against unemployment.

The pictogram reveals the history of relief as it has traveled through the pathless realm of the Treasury—with Federal dollars acting as mile-posts.

Nonrepayable Outlays

These billions of dollars have flowed out to every nook and cranny of the United States. On the Treasury's books they are listed as "nonrepayable." Not included in these figures are millions of dollars for loans.

They have gone for direct relief, work relief, power lines, groceries, lumber, iron, steel—and a thousand and one other items. The dollars are gone.

But the "snowballs" do not tell the whole story of Uncle Sam's relief expenditures.

Measured by old standards, the best relief bill of the New Deal was enlarging. For the twelve month period ending July 1, 1934, $2,338,000,000 was spent in an attempt to stem the tide of distress attendant upon mass unemployment. During that first year of Federal relief, the CWA topped direct relief by almost $100,000,000. Public works had yet to make their appearance as a major role.

The Civil Works Administration was created to put millions of unemployed to work. A "force" account of hundreds of thousands of young men from every corner of the nation was set up. And back of it all was the "dole"—America's first experience with direct relief on a grand scale.

New Devices Necessary

These measures were not enough. The unemployment problem assumed disturbing proportions. For the year beginning July 1, 1934, new devices were used in an attempt to route the problem from a dead end.

More than $4,800,000,000 was pumped into direct relief channels. Dollars and men were the threads running through the CCC and PWA program.

THE COST OF RELIEF

"Nonrepayable" Costs of direct and work relief by fiscal years:

(000 Omitted)

	1934	1935	1936
FERA	$ 267,000	$1,814,000	$ 528,000
CWA	868,000	11,000	500
CCC	332,000	488,000	503,400
Drought relief		81,000	4,200
PWA	404,000	847,000	980,700
RFA			5,000
WPA			1,000,000
BA			22,400
	$2,338,000	$3,188,000	$3,044,200

*Includes funds spent by the Federal Surplus Relief Corporation.

When that year ended—total "non-repayable" dollars soared to a record height of $3,188,000,000—or more than total tax collections in the so-called normal year of 1929.

And still the measures employed were not enough. Policies changed.

The Federal Government decided to "quit this business of relief." Both the CCC and PWA continued to expand. The Work Program started where direct relief left off.

Will the relief "snowball" thaw with warmer weather?

The forecast now according to budget estimates places WPA's cost at $1,000,000,000 for the twelve months ending this June 30. It may not be enough. President Roosevelt has indicated as much.

The Present Outlook

But assuming that it is and that other expenditures are essentially as budgeted.

In that event unemployment relief will have cost the nation a total of $3,044,000,000 this year. The sum overshadows the net profit earned by all corporations during 1933.

If this sum were to be paid with individual taxes alone, it would require a tax that took the equal of every cent of 1934 incomes over $5,000 a year.

Putting it another way—miscellaneous tax collections—those other than income, tariff or processing taxes—would have to be more than double their 1934 amount to cover present expenditures for relief of the unemployed.

If the people had spent that money building homes instead of lending it to the Government to give away to idle men, there would have been few idle. The country would have had the homes, and there would have been no taxes levied in the future to pay these Government debts. So, as a people, we have left to the next generation a shortage of homes and a tax burden that will limit future building.

What a comment on a great people's loss of economic common sense!

FATHER'S DAY

Now we have a day for father.
Father buys the steak and hash.
People used to say, "Why bother?"
Now we have a day for father.
Father didn't like a pother.
Though he furnished all the cash.—
Now we have a day for father.
Father buys the steak and hash.

—Beatrice McDonald

THE OTHER CHAP SAYS - - -

TOWNSEND PLAN

The Republican-Tribune has no suggestions to make relative to Tuesday's special election. We expect to see Mr. Main elected but even so we cannot subscribe to the economic theory upon which he is basing his campaign, viz., the Townsend Plan. We feel that the President's New Deal spending is a national hazard; now to go along with the Townsend financial fantasy is in our opinion, editorial and party cowardice. We have seen greenbacks, Coin Harveyism, Bryanism, free silver, Ku Klux Klan and prohibition movements come and go. The Townsend Plan will shortly take its place in this list of emotional failures. We regret the tragic deceitfulness that some politicians are using to win elections. The Republican-Tribune advocated old age security long before the Townsend Plan was conceived and we shall continue to support as effectively as we can such an old age pension, in such amount and privileges as the country can afford to pay without bringing ruin down upon us all. We have no personal feeling whatever in this matter but we still believe that the welfare of the citizen can only be sustained as the security and comfort of the individual is related to the welfare and contentment of the whole people.—Murl H. DeFoe in Charlotte Republican-Tribune.

LET THE PEOPLE KNOW

"If I were a school superintendent or board member I would insist that complete school reports be printed. I am not in sympathy with the view that such reports are merely asked by newspapers as a method of securing business. It is a matter of service to the public and keeping people informed. The hundreds of news items carried by the newspapers of the state show in a substantial way the unselfish service they perform."—Eugene B. Elliott, Superintendent of Public Instruction in Lansing address recently.

CHAIRMAN RE-ELECTED

It is in keeping with the record of the liquor commission that Chairman McDonald should have been re-elected after a period of confident prediction that he would be replaced, and that he retains his office with the approval and blessing of the governor, with whom he has been at feud ever several months. The result is called an expression of confidence in the chairman, but it seems to be less than one due to considerations of political expediency. It has been remarked that McDonald's colleagues have shared in the actions of the commission that have been most under fire and that if they repudiated him they would, in effect, repudiate themselves. There is no doubt, also, that Republican leaders have urged that the line up of the commission be left unchanged, on the theory that the political effects would be less serious than those that might ensue if McDonald were set down.

The commission will probably be less in the light the next few months than it has latterly been. Public interest in its activities was greatly quickened by the effort of the governor, largely unsuccessful, to give direction to its policy. As the governor lately announced that he had washed his hands of the entire business it may be assumed that he will occasion no more controversy over its rulings, and will be content with hoping for the best.

But what has already happened makes certain that the work of the commission, along with the results that have been yielded by the state's liquor law, will be one of the issues of the next election, with the Democrats seeking to make political capital by heavy attacks on the governor's appointees.—Frank J. Russell in Iron Mountain News.

PEDDLER

The next time a peddler raps at your door greet him with a smile, and these questions: "Do you pay taxes to support our schools, public schools, and other public institutions?" . . . "Do you support or contribute to our churches?" . . . "Do you contribute anything to worthy community projects?" . . . "Are you a member of the Chamber of Commerce?" . . . "Do you spend the majority of the money you make here, like our business men are doing?" . . . "Are you eligible to vote here?" . . . If the peddler stays long enough to hear all of your questions and if he fails to say that he is one of our community builders, you have your strongest point for refusing to listen to his sales line. A pleasant good day will send him on his way."—Augusta Gazette.

SUE THE GOVERNMENT

Editor J. E. McMullen says that a drunk driver who is arrested and fined should bring action against the government for placing booze within his reach and making it perfectly legal for him to partake.

It would be fun to see somebody try out such action, but, of course, there is where the fine distinction between liberty and license comes in. Many confuse the former for the latter, and many do not seem to know when they overstep the line. The only solution to the liquor problem at present, as we see it, is to educate youth as to the dangers.—Frank Bryce in Grand Ledger Independent.

IN THE VALLEY OF PLENTY

Recently many cities which have voted—by a vote of their citizens—for a 15 mill tax limitation, have sobbed sorrowfully on the shoulder of the state. They say they cannot operate their schools—they must have more money.

The municipal officials who come to the capitol with such tales either overlook, or are not capable of absorbing, the facts. The people of those municipalities voted for the fifteen mill amendment, not because they wanted to spend more money—BUT BECAUSE THEY WANTED TO HOLD THESE VERY OFFICIALS DOWN TO THE REVENUE THEY COULD AFFORD TO PAY.

The city officials, not accustomed to going lean at the barrel of plenty, were dazed. Their only thought was—we cannot have less pork in the barrel, we must get money from somewhere, to replenish the larder.

So they came to Lansing!

If the Lord is with the taxpayers, instead of the glutted public officials who do not know the meaning of the word retrenchment, those gentlemen will never get anything.

Another delegation wanted to divert sales tax money to keep backwoods township highways clear of snow. It undoubtedly would be a nice thing to give the backwoodsmen who have gone to town with teams, if and when they went, a smooth, motor road. But it would mean spending $1,000 a mile for one and one-half families. Nice? Yes. But if that theory is to be carried out, the state should provide a heated garage for every citizen, a couple of chickens in every pot.

The Digest repeats what it has said so many times:

"The way to reduce taxes is to spend less money."—Michigan State Digest.

A GREAT ADVENTURE

The first chapter in one of the greatest scientific feats of our time was accomplished last week when the great disc of glass for the new 200-inch reflecting telescope to be erected near San Diego, Cal., was removed from the annealing furnace to be packed for shipment to California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, where it will be ground to form. More than five years will probably elapse before this important stage is completed. Then, if everything is successful, this telescope will push the explored boundaries of space many million light years outward. What is the practical importance of this? Simply additional information concerning the universe in which we live. Perhaps something more immediately practical may result. But if not, this telescope will still justify all of the time, effort and money which has been expended on it. It is interesting to note, too, that only on rare occasions will a human eye look directly through the magnifying lens. Observation will be done by cameras and sensitive photographic films which retain for future reference every detail that they see.—Dick Cook in Hastings Banner.

THE NEW CATALOG WILL BE OUT SOON

Happenings of Long Ago

FIFTY YEARS AGO

The Sonthfield young man who does not join the club dances because else has no club, can be satisfied by calling on the manager, F. W. Sherman, who will club him to his heart's content.

The entertainment at the M. E. church last Monday night was well attended, and the views were really fine, and the elocutionist, Mr. Thompson, acquitted himself with credit.

Mrs. Frances H. Burnett, the novelist, has written a serial story for St. Nicholas, called "Little Lord Fauntleroy," the hero of which is a boy-character, who is as new as he is delightful. Born in America, the child of a younger son of an English earl, his father dies when he is a little fellow, and by the death of his uncles, he becomes heir to the earldom. Besides, this number is more than interesting in every department, and every child should read it and older ones too.

The Bohemian oat dodge has had its day. But now comes another cute swindle, the legitimate offspring of the former. An oily tongued agent appears who has a wonderful variety of clover seed for sale, which he will dispose of on the Bohemian oat plan. Farmer bites, gives his order, which turns up on the bank in the shape of a good note which he has to pay. The only safe way for our farmers to do is to not sign any papers at all.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

Birmingham voters will go to the polls Monday to elect three village commissioners, a village clerk and two members of the library board.

Roller skating seems to have revived all of a sudden, and it is a brave and a person without nerves, who can hear a grinder coming behind them, and not take to the tall timber until all danger has passed.

Women, if you are not property owners and tax payers see that some bit of property is placed in your name at once, so that you may vote for sewers. If the deed of your home is not a joint deed, have it made so right off.

News from Ed. Holloway reaches us that he is safe with his mother at High Tree Cottage, Leintwardine, Herefordshire. Eng., and making them all sit up and take notice of the returned Englishman, made over into a first class Yankee. Ed sailed over on the R. M. S. Mauretania, and had a fine time. Good berth, fine meals and daily news from the U. S. and England, from a paper printed daily, and from news by wireless. Among his many relatives, his sisters and his cousins and his aunts besides mother, the lad is in clover above his head. Leintwardine is a country village where his mother lives, of about 1,000 population, but as Ed says no telephone in town, and when he tells of a 'phone they don't know whether he is talking of a locomotive or a wheelbarrow.

FIVE YEARS AGO

Taxpayers in a last minute hush Friday and Saturday, swelled the total tax receipts in the Bloomfield Township offices to $716,402.11, of which $280,436.26 was received on Friday, Mrs. R. Margaret Thomas treasurer, reports. The amount of state, county and township taxes to be collected this year is $1,310,781. Possible means of lowering operating expenses of the local schools were considered at the meeting of the school board Monday night, but no figures on present expenses and possible savings will be required before any definite consideration is given to specific ways and means, according to Leigh Lynch, president of the board.

Eleven volumes of tax rolls containing approximately 86,000 descriptions of Oakland County property on which taxes for 1928 are listed as delinquent, have been filed with Burton P. Daugherty Oakland County Clerk, by Auditor General O. B. Fuller, and will be published in the Birmingham Eccentric for five weeks, beginning with the issue of March 12.

WABEEK STATE BANK

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