

The Birmingham Eccentric

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The Stars And Man's Doubt

Men have been pleased to puzzle themselves over the question of other habitable worlds. Astronomers tell us that, with the possible exception of Mars, no visible star or planet can support life as it exists on this earth.

But, what do the astronomers know? The extent of the vast spaces between the Milky Way are, at yet, unexplored, and measured by distance incomprehensible to the mind of man. Imagine, a light-year, the distance that light, travelling 186,176 miles per second, moves in a calendar year, some 6,000,000,000,000 miles, which is the unit used to measure stellar space.

Think of distant stars, larger than our sun, so far away that light takes a million years to come to us. Around them, conjectures astronomy, may revolve innumerable habitable planets.

Certainly, myriads of stars exist, scattered through space so vast that man is proud of wild guesses to estimate its extent and considers himself wise to have discovered it at all.

The marvel of the celestial universe is not what astronomy, with wonderful ingenuity, have found out, nor what they do not know but that men, in their hearts, have foolishly said, "There is no God."

The Voters' Responsibility

The people of the United States are about to engage in their most responsible duty, the selection of a President of the United States for four years.

The Chief Executive of the United States has a tremendous responsibility and powers that, at times, are staggering. The man who holds the high office should be a great man, a patriot and a wise servant of his people.

The two parties have held their conventions, written their platforms and named their candidates. It is now up to the people of the United States to study the issues, understand the situation and select the best man. It is our faith in democracy that makes us believe they will be equal to the task and we say this regardless of whether the people of the nation select Mr. Roosevelt or Mr. Landon.

There will be subtle efforts during the campaign to divert the public from some issues and strenuous efforts to appeal to blind partisanship, selfishness and sectional prejudice. Some of these attempts will come from each side. It is up to the average voter to see through subterfuges, look behind curtains and understand what is going on.

The success of the American system of government is predicted upon the belief that the voters, as a mass, are able to comprehend the issues in a campaign and that, unwayed and guided by moved by false patriotism, they will be able to select the best man for the presidency. Let us hope that the year 1936 will demonstrate the truth of this assumption.

The Newspaper's Job

There are people—few, it is to be hoped—who read to read newspapers. There are many who read current news with a sense of distance and protest. Sometimes they say in a tone of disapproval that too much space is given to crime and to unfortunate occurrences.

Every good newspaper welcome criticism and tries to learn from its critics. Every issue of every good newspaper should be read by the end of every man to bring to the readers that which a normal reading public wants to know.

Stories of crime have to be printed because they are news and because for its own protection society should be informed of happenings that menace peace and security. If such news can be given more display in the newspapers it is because the shock of outward events gives temporary stimulus to public interest.

Those who are disturbed by accounts of occasional reading occurrences should consider how exceptional they are in the course of the general life of the community. Think of all the millions of decent, law-abiding folks who go about their normal activities by day and are safe and undisturbed in their homes at night.

The recognition of the newspapers given this great majority of humanity is in those numerous big departments that never mention crime or abnormality. Here are found literary reviews and discussions; reports and criticisms of entertainments; accounts of social affairs; helpful information for homemakers; among other the endorsement of many community progress facts for those pursuing special lines of study; news of political and economic affairs, and the efforts trained specialists to help normal people in their various interests and activities.

Glance through the newspaper when inclined to be pessimistic and see how predominant is the space given to interests that are normal and constructive.—Royal Oak Daily Tribune.

YEARS AGO if a school boy got a whipping at school he knew he would get another at home; now, if he gets a whipping at school his old man wants to go to school and clean out the organization.

"Do you hear that . . ." is the symbol of more than one blasted friendship—for in those words most of the world's gossip gets its dangerous start.

Judge McGaffey Praises Type Of Halloween Party Here

You taxpayers in Birmingham will be glad to know that Oakland County's Judge of Probate, Hon. Dan A. McGaffey, thinks highly of the type of Halloween Party proposed again this year, and for which the City Commission recently appropriated \$50.00 to help defray expenses. Here is a letter recently received from Judge McGaffey, and reads as follows: Mr. George Averill, Editor, Birmingham Eccentric, Birmingham, Michigan.

I note that the Birmingham City Commission voted to appropriate a sum not to exceed \$50.00 to help you defray the expense of the school's Annual Halloween Festival to be held this Fall.

I personally attended the Festival of 1935. I am sure that you and your staff will be glad to see a year ago, when they had that big "Best Boy" because that Wiley Bell and Charlie Stan, and the other fellows, worked so hard to make a success. In looking at the happy faces of all the youngsters there that night and then thinking back one year, there was no comparing them with the faces of the boys who had to be locked up in jail after the Halloween celebration. I think there is not a mother of one of those boys who would not be willing to pay \$50.00 each rather than to have happen again what occurred the year before.

This is an outstanding example of what can be accomplished if we will cooperate with the youths and not try to embarrass and overpower them. It was very plain that night how they could be led, while just the year before they had to be stampeded.

I am sure that you are calling this to your attention, George, because you know I am confronted with this problem every day, and to see how beautifully Birmingham came through last year, and is planning to come through this year, will pay back to the taxpayers of Birmingham, Michigan, the largest dividend that was ever returned to them.

Thanking you for the fine cooperation you have always shown in these problems, I beg to remain Yours very truly, DAN A. MCGAFFEY, Judge of Probate.

A Touch Of Fall In The Air
Presently we shall be saying, "There is a touch of fall in the air," who so lately proclaimed it summer, and who welcomed spring not long before. A touch of fall! If one reflects on the phrase it is seen that we hold it in affection, and may not speak it without fondness. The seasons might be comrades of ours, returning from far parts. We are as near to fall as we are to friendships. And each is more actual than the year itself. For the year is but a means by which we measure time, that has no existence save for us—whereas the seasons are actual, vital, and discernible. How else would it be possible for us to realize the presence of fall, the autumnal intimacy and charm of the waning year?

A touch of fall in the air! This means that frequently the stubble will be silvered, and wild geese will be heard in the night; the trees will dress themselves as for a carnival, and rain will walk madly abroad. The last aster will bend their heads to the rain, and twilight will vend their garden at an earlier hour. And yet, say what you will, there is something most gracious and kindly in the manner of the late rains. They restore lost April to us before ever the winter is here, and they stand as patrons of the budding of the buds of April. It is a second springtime. There is nothing desolate in the manner and presence of fall.

Then there's the sun that is the season's own, and the mellowness of it, as though it, too, had caught the spirit of harvest. It is a golden, but more full, than sun, and in the new-washed air it contrives a tinting reserved for that time only, intimate, goodly, and imbued with a curious happy wistfulness. It is not true that spring alone persuades us to look toward the horizon and that the world hangs in a vague, misty uncertainty. For there is fall also, which we must not forget, and which restores us to the horizon in each of its years toward the season.

Yes, we shall soon be saying, "There is a touch of fall in the air." Now the apples are ruddy, and fall toward evening, if you listen, you will hear crickets. The year is a fact, but the seasons—when the seasons are old, familiar friends of ours.—Christian Science Monitor.

CANADIANISM: Being the mother and father of quotations, and not being allowed to raise them.

Practical Paragraphs

By John Edwin Price

PEOPLE WILL SPEND IF—SAYS ALVAN MACAULEY

"The way to induce people to spend more of their money, and thus accelerate business activity and reduce unemployment, is to give them the confidence that they will get their money back, according to Alvan Macauley, president of the Packard Motor Car Company."

"Business men," he writes in the Rotarian Magazine, "who sell bread or meat or soap or shoes have as a group come through the depression and are ready to meet the public with steady employment for their forces. People even in lean years of uncertainty want these staples more than they want money. Business men who sell less essential articles have a less consistent record."

"It seems sufficient to the United States, and likewise of the world, that it will entirely emerge from depressed conditions when manufacturers and merchants are offering for sale things which they direct to the general public that the desire for these things overcomes the inordinate prudence which long guided every income-earner to such that they would be sold against any possible personal catastrophe. Depression and unemployment cannot until then be completely shaken off."

"So it naturally turns up to you and me and to the entire class of individuals who manage industries and businesses, and urges the principle that a direct challenge to our ability to our ingenuity, to our qualifications as business men. If we can offer for sale things that people want more than they want to give us their cash reserves to buy them, we shall pull us all out of our troubles, re-employ our men, resume our dividend payments, and prosper ourselves more."

"In almost every industry are one or two concerns who have their ingenuity in the hands of men who have devised something folks are buying. In every country are some concerns which are running far better than most. Therefore, it seems safe generally that any of us can do it. We need only apply ourselves to the task."

My Country, 'Tis of Thee

T. H. Millington

Smart Politics
As a smart politician, the Secretary Act has no equal for satanic ingenuity. In the guise of sympathy for an aged, it robs the younger workers, who are holding up before their eyes the phantom paradise of old age security for their parents, now, and for themselves later.

By the end of 1940 the workers and their employers, together with the U. S. treasury about two billion dollars for the same purpose. For whom they are led to believe that their sacrifices are intended, not collecting any more. The law requires no payment to be made until 1942, and besides this postponement of benefit payments, the law stipulates that the money paid into the fund must be invested in government bonds at not less than 3% interest. In other words, the Roosevelt administration gets votes for passing the Social Security Act. Yet, although it is intended, it gets during the next four years two billion dollars for old age pensions, it will never have to pay out a cent to the aged during its administration.

But here is President Roosevelt's "ghastly joke."

It being against the custom to give a pension a third term, Mr. Roosevelt will be provided by this law with two billion dollars in interest. I. O. U.'s in the Pension Fund and his successors will have to levy additional taxes to begin paying pensions in 1942.

Two billion extra for bondholders, the rest for the U. S. treasury in the name of HUMAN SYMPATHY. For being generous, President Roosevelt has no equal.

The Dog and His Fleas
The Communists are supporting Roosevelt is not denied by the Communists. It is openly avowed. Roosevelt does not have to invite them or favor them. They object to defeat Landon, and that to end Roosevelt's term.

A presidential candidate cannot help it when communists and other rats are something laughable in their political ends. In that respect he is much like a dog and his fleas, but if the fleas find a dog a good host they just hop on.

The dog scratches, bites and scratches to remove these disturbing adherents.—Candidate Roosevelt is doing this to the Communists in his speech at Syracuse Tuesday and repudiated them last night. The dog and his fleas, they are riding right along just the same.

Currency Stabilization
Did you ever see such voluminous press-agitating for Mr. Roosevelt as is getting out of the treasury, insensate, five million dollars in gold used to buy English pound sterling at Saturday bargains.

The important event, Saturday was the announcement of the "four-point" stabilization agreement which, if carried to successful conclusion, would stabilize the dollar and restore our exports, bring about world currency stabilization and end the loss of our exportation.

It has taken a strong plank out of the whole world currency stabilization agreement which would enable the European countries now of the gold standard to return to it at about the same level.

The side-show of Morganthau buying English pounds was just an opportunity for Morganthau to justify Secretary Morganthau's full-time praise of the President's wonderful support of the dollar.

While this was the first time that our one billion, eight hundred million dollars Stabilization Fund has been put to actual stabilization use, yet an ordinary man, (if he had his gold) could hardly find time to buy one million English pounds sterling when offered at a bargain.

In relation to the size of our nearly two billion Stabilization Fund, the London and Paris monetary transactions, Russia selling one million pounds sterling at a bargain, and the S. P. buying one billion dollars to buy same is of no more importance or significance as selling and buying a bag of peanuts. Secretary Morganthau's bombastic bluff of tendering the whole two billion Stabilization Fund to buy one million English pounds sterling was just an opportunity for Morganthau to justify Secretary Morganthau's full-time praise of the President's wonderful support of the dollar.

"I have my fingers crossed when thinking of the next few years."

John Nance Garner, Vice-President: "I am the Administration's fifth wheel, of what you might call the spare tire."

Aggrey A. Wallace, Secretary of Agriculture: "We've got to do common sense at times."

William Lemke, Union Party presidential nominee: "Harry Long was the greatest Democrat this country has produced in the last twenty years."



WASHINGTON LETTER

Farm Tenancy Problem Given Attention of Both Candidates

By SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

WASHINGTON—Comment in Washington gives political significance to identical letters sent by President Roosevelt to Senator John H. Rankin of Alabama and Representative Marvin Jones of Texas, chairman of the Agricultural Committee of the House of Representatives.

The letters closed with the request that you would arrange to meet me in December, when we can complete our recommendations to Congress for legislation designed to bring about improvements in the farm tenancy situation.

That a senator from the southeast and a representative from the southwest have been called to a conference on the farm tenancy problem is not interpreted as evidence of sectional regional favoritism. The author of a bill submitted to Congress in 1935 which carried an appropriation of \$1,000,000 to be loaned to farm tenants who wanted to own the farms they worked, James Long, has been interested in such a plan.

The Public Affairs Committee, made up of heads of some of the nation's most prominent research institutions, has this to say in its Southern Regional Study: "Share tenancy and a vicious crop system are so deeply rooted in the south's agricultural life that approximately 60 per cent of the region's farm operators must pay rent of one-third, one-fourth, and one-half of their products for the right to cultivate the land; and credit charges of approximately 25 per cent for their family living while growing a crop."

"Cotton tenancy as it has developed in the regions is ruinous to both land and man, if it is not checked."

Joseph Daniels, U. S. Ambassador to Mexico: "Mexico is eating up the bread of Europeans."

William E. Borah, U. S. Senator from Idaho: "The last twenty-five years in this country have seen greater changes in the old set-up of human affairs than the two hundred and fifty years preceding."

E. P. Armstrong, British chemist: "Life is so complex that we have forgotten how entirely food is its foundation and mainstay."

RANDOM REMARKS

Adolph Menjou, moving picture actor: "The motion picture industry needs brains."

Charles M. Schwab, steel magnate: "Industry is like a three-legged dog, the legs being capital, labor, and management. If you take away any one without the stool collapsing."

John L. Lewis, labor leader: "A judicial authority is being created in this country."

George Bernard Shaw, British author: "The educated man is a greater nuisance than the uneducated one."

Roger W. Babson, financier: "I have my fingers crossed when thinking of the next few years."

John Nance Garner, Vice-President: "I am the Administration's fifth wheel, of what you might call the spare tire."

Aggrey A. Wallace, Secretary of Agriculture: "We've got to do common sense at times."

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Habbennings of Long Ago

FIFTY YEARS AGO

Ice famine in Birmingham, Parks and Hanna now import their ice from Detroit in carloads. A terrific thunder storm at Reed City on Friday last, did about \$100,000 damage. The mill dam of Morris and Martin, formerly at this place, was washed out.

We learn from a Pontiac paper that Moses K. Baker visited Boston last week. It would be double for the old original has been home all the time.

W. H. Opdyke has been visiting the home of his youth for the past week. John still loves Pety Hill, notwithstanding his grand business success at Farwell.

Hanging over your neighbor's gate with some other man's daughter is a good scheme, when darkness shrouds both parties, but it doesn't work so well beneath the glare of a street lamp.

And this is the way the Pontiac Gazette speaks of a picnic by our best young ladies at Orchard Lake, recently. It says "A lot of Birmingham pussy cats held a picnic at Orchard Lake September 28."

A man from these parts rose up from his seat in the National Hotel on the other day and remarked that a stroke of lightning knocked him clean out of bed the other night, and just as he was getting consciousness, another stroke came along and knocked him back out again. A traveling man leaned back against the office desk, unbuttoned his coat and displayed a gold watch. The inscription "I am something of a liar myself," and the man from the rural districts was mad.

Twenty-five years ago

Will Gray is the proud owner of an air fashion, first place crane and an old shogmaker's hammer dug up out of the tearing down of Danes & Bell's old factory shop.

Four generations of the Blakes in family have lived in the back of Lodge No. 41, F. & M. M. Scriba Blakeslee, a charter member, George Blakeslee, Frank Blakeslee and Roy Blakeslee.

Down at the auto show we saw a very handsome Whittney-Ford machine with a placard on it reading "Sold to Oscar Everett, of Birmingham, Michigan, for \$1,000."

More than twenty million Americans own automobiles.

More than twenty million have savings accounts.

More than forty million have savings policies.

No nation on earth can match this record.

Who made it all possible? The politicians? They'd like to have you think so. Often they try to create that impression.

But the credit doesn't belong to them.

It belongs to the American people themselves. It was they who achieved it—through long years of work and resourcefulness and insistence on the right to direct their own labor, their own lives, their own government.

That is something to remember when politicians imply that the American worker and earner is no longer capable of running his own affairs.

It is something to remember when they propose that we reject the American way of doing things in favor of methods suggested by representatives in Europe, where, under dictators or other political leaders, a bureaucratic central government plans and directs each individual life and labor.

It is something to remember when they say in effect: "We'll do all the directing, while you do all the work"—then everybody will be happy. But, under such conditions, would everybody be happy? The records of nations which have carried that sort of its ultimate condition don't show so. They show instead a tragic picture of turmoil and personal liberty and loss of all personal liberty.

There stands the conundrum: On one side a free country with a higher record of individual well-being and a greater measure of personal liberty than any nation on earth; on the other, regulated autocracy with liberty and religion and opportunity in chains.

Which do the American people prefer? The choice is ours to make.

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