The Birmingham Eccentric

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GEORGE R. AVERILL, Editor and Publisher
EDWIN G. 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.

Your Duty And Obligation Is To Vote Next Monday

Do you remember that next Monday, April 5, is another election day in Michigan?

At that time you, as voters of Michigan, are called forth—by the virtue of the obligations of self-government—to cast your ballot for certain elected officers of our Commonwealth; for Birmingham you are given an opportunity to elect two City Commissioners, three Library Board members, one Constable, and a local question of annexation; for Oakland County there is the proposition of a County Zoning statute.

In the news section of The Eccentric this week you will find details covering more fully all the election propositions, together with voting precincts for your particular area of the community.

As you probably know by this time, both Democrats and Republicans out in the State are contesting for your vote for the offices of Supreme Court Justices, Regents of the University of Michigan, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Member of State Board of Education, Members of State Board of Agriculture, and a State Highway Commissioner.

While in most past elections this newspaper has argued for the election of all or at least a major portion of the Republican ticket, this year we are not going into any details in the matter except for two offices; personally, we are going to vote for Eugene B. Elliott, present Superintendent of Public Instruction, a Republican; and for Murray D. "Pat" Van Wagoner, present State Highway Commissioner, a Democrat.

Not that we are unfriendly to Charles M. Ziegler, Republican contender against Mr. Van Wagoner—rather that we believe the latter has done a pretty good job in his four years at Lansing. We feel the same about Elliotz, who stands for the best in education, and has demonstrated his ability in this most important State office.

So, Folks, don't forget next Monday, April 5! If you really love your American system of government, why not reveal this love by voting when the times arrives at regular intervals—there is no substitute for it if you want to preserve self-government, is there?

The World Does Progress

In his last article in Cosmopolitan, the late Arthur Brisbane said:

"Changes come slowly, but they do come; always for the better. Once the human race was cannibalistic; every man ate his fellow, if he could catch him. The good provider was the strong man, able in time of famine to bring home the weaker man, to be eaten. Primitive peoples that were not cannibalistic died out; they fed the others. Now, except rarely among the lowest savages, cannibalism has gone.

Bodily slavery was universal. Barbarians, for centuries, had killed prisoners to be rid of them; it occurred to some "statesman" that putting them to work would be wiser. Slavery was an improvement on massacre, and until slaves of steel and iron—machinery—came to do the work of human hands, bodily slavery, as a famous Greek remarked, was necessary.

Torture of witnesses was once universal; the accused and those supposed to know the criminal were tortured. Noblemen's servants were "put to the question," to make them denounce their masters. When the French Revolution abolished judicial torture, judges complained that efficient administration of justice thereafter would become impossible; witnesses must be tortured into confessing. But torture of the accused, horrible beyond our imagining, has vanished. Read the history of Ivan the Terrible or Peter the Great, or the history of religious persecutions, if the abominable details interest you.

Cannibalism, slavery and torture have gone, but when each prevailed man believed that it must endure forever, as they now think war will last forever.

Hard To Stop

With 2,162,000 individuals on relief rolls, at a cost estimated to average $65 a month, the government some weeks ago began a policy of slashing the rolls.

The first reaction came from the governors of six States, who descended upon Washington to inform the President that their commonwealths, counties and cities were over-burdened with direct relief costs and unable to stand the added cost of providing for those to be dropped by the W. P. A.

The reduction has been postponed pending further study of the situation. Meanwhile, it appears that it will be considerably more difficult to cease taking care of the individuals on relief than it was to start paying them. Incidentally, the balanced budget will recede a bit further in the distance.

Gold, Silver, Gems And A Full Granary

We were reading the other day about a rich old potentate in India. He had an anniversary and it was celebrated. Being a notorious tightwad, he ordered that a 26-year-old automobile be decorated and repaired for the occasion. Most of the story had to do with his wealth.

This man was reputed to be worth $1,400,000,000—almost one and one-half billion dollars. His wealth, we gathered, was largely represented by stored gold, diamonds, many rare gems and, of course, sufficient shelter, food and necessities for him to live in modest comfort. When lower caste people came to see him it was a rule that they must bring money—$5.00 being the minimum.

He was called the richest man in the world—there are several such, depending upon which part of the world one is in.

Note that his wealth was represented by amazing amounts of precious metals and precious stones—he couldn't eat any of it.

Soon after reading this account we heard a man talk about the earth. He said that the earth represented all wealth. Everything, except air and sunshine, comes from the earth. We thought of the wealthy Indian. All that he prized came from the earth—the gold and the diamonds. His food and his clothing all came primarily from the earth. We got to wondering if there is very much of anything of a material nature which does not come from the earth. Then it occurred to us that there is no other place for it to come from.

It is obvious our food comes from the earth:

Our clothing comes from the earth;

Our homes, our shelter, be it brick, wood, steel, or cement, comes from the earth;

Everything comes from the earth.

Look about you, as I am doing this minute. I see a desk, papers, cash register, counter, linoleum, glass, steel in many forms, a press, Linotype, a cameo ring, a suit of wool clothing, a silk scarf—even an electric lamp that is glowing with electrical energy produced either with coal from the ground or the rushing waters of a river up the surface of Mother Earth.

In this rural county we are appreciative—very much aware—that our products come from the earth. Our primary industry is farming—supplying food products. There are places where the products are one or two operations removed from the earth—the manufacture of automobiles, for instance. The fabrication of steel, cotton, wool, and the processing of corn, wheat, and meats, may not impress those engaged in it that they are dependent upon Mother Earth. They may become a bit thoughtless concerning this important and fundamental fact.

History of this country divulges that we are the greatest squanderers in the world. Our forests, our soil, our oil and minerals, and the depleting of our streams and lakes indicate this. We have used up much of our natural resources in a relatively short time. What about the generations to come?

A bushel of wheat is actually more valuable than a bushel of fine diamonds.—Clinton County Republican-News.

Net Profits Not The Answer

Expert analysts agree that the nation made great progress toward a new prosperity during the year 1936. What sets them up is the estimated $7,000,000,000 net profits that rank the year next to 1929.

Let us call attention, however, to the fact that the welfare of the United States is not indicated by "net profits," but rather by the average standard of living. With millions unemployed and on relief projects, with many improperly housed in wealthy cities and with farmers, after a few good years, even now facing problems of tenancy and low-income, the nation cannot be said to be prosperous no matter if the net income figure goes to the moon.

Whether well-fed and comfortably-housed people like it or not, there is no use dodging the fact that the real problem before the American people is the proper distribution of income wealth and work. Progress on this task has been slow.

Practical Paragraphs

By John Edwin Price

WHAT IT TAKES TO GET PAY RAISES

"All work and no play makes jack—and plenty of it." I don't know who wrote that, but I do know that there are men who make money as fiercely as Atilla made war. He was called "The fear of the world" and "The Scourge of God."

There have been men in the money making field like that, cruel, crushing, wild cat men. They didn't have much play and nothing much but money.

The small town's wealthiest man sat in the barber chair. No one spoke. When he left a "sitter" remarked, "Money will buy everything." "Yep," said the barber as he shook the gray hairs on the floor, "everything except health, happiness and heaven, next."

Be that as it may, a friend of mine drew forty dollars pay for last week's work. He said, "When I went to work down there, they gave me $20 a week. But I made up mind I'd earn it and b'gosh I promised myself that I'd learn everything about the business that I could. I havn't laid off for a few aches or pains and I've never been late. If I can help the other fellow, I always do. Next week I'm to be raised to $45. I know my machines thoroughly and the boss lets me study blue prints in the office 30 minutes a day."

Say what you will, those who have to make a business get results are sure to have sense enough to reward that kind of effort and application. Many workers have learned it—some have not. These last aren't being raised next week.

While some gain promotions by struggle, others work as confidently and smoothly as Edward R. Stettinius who at 31 was vice president of General Motors. Forbes Magazine says of him:

"Annexed by Chairman Myron C. Taylor of the U. S. Steel Corporation when 34, to become vice-chairman of the finance committe, he early this year became its chairman, a position of transcendent importance.

He became gray-haired before 30—from heredity probably rather than from work strain. He functions extremely smoothly. And knows how to smile."

IT'S THE SAME OLD TALE

WASHINGTON LETTER

Wagner-Steagall Housing Bill Is to Benefit $600 Families

BY SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

WASHINGTON.—If the Wagner-Steagall housing bill is passed, the low income groups, which means those families whose income is not more than $600 a year, will benefit greatly.

Those who are pushing this piece of legislation hope optimistically that, in the next four years, it would be possible to build 375,000 subsidized houses for people who cannot afford such dwellings if they must depend on costly private enterprise.

The Wagner-Ellenbogen bill, passed by the Senate last year, recognized housing as a government responsibility. The difference between this draft and Senator Wagner's earlier housing bill is that the federal subsidy will be put on rents instead of into the original cost of construction. This change will enable the government to retain some control over the housing projects it subsidizes, and will make the necessary appropriation for grants less at the outset.

* * *

EARLY hearings and passage by the Senate are likely in the case of the new bill. The measure defines government responsibility by making it a federal policy to employ funds and credit to help alleviate unemployment and "to remedy the unsafe and insanitary housing conditions, and the acute shortage of decent, safe, and sanitary dwellings for families of low income that are injurious to the health, safety, and morals of the citizens of the nation."

A United States Housing Authority with three members would administer the act. The Authority would issue bonds to the amount of $1,000,000,000 in the next four years. This money would be loaned to local or state public housing agencies for periods up to 60 years at the going rate of interest, which is now 2½% on government investments.

The annual federal grant to local housing agencies could not exceed the existing annual rate of interest plus 1 per cent on the cost of developing or acquiring the project. So contributions out of federal money on the basis of the going rate of interest at this time could go as high as 3½ per cent.

Secretary of Treasury Morgenthau is reported to question the proposal because of its expense in the long run. Altogether the bill would take from the Treasury in the years 1939, 1940, and 1941, $50,000,000. It is estimated that operation of this plan would require some $500,000,000 of non-federal loans, plus the federal billion and $50,000,000 for grants in the first four years.

* * *

AVERAGE annual subsidies would run between $100 and $125 per unit. But an individual grant could run as high as $175 a year on a $5000 house, and it is estimated rent costs would be cut 40 or 45 per cent. Rents, of course, would depend on local taxes on housing projects." If there were tax exemption in practice as well as in theory, there would be a possibility of reaching the $600 a year families who could, for example, get a maximum subsidy on a four-room, $4000 house at rent of about $2.50 per month per room.

The proposed Housing Authority also could lend up to $25,000,000 a year to limited-profit housing agencies on demonstration of *low* cost housing or slum clearance projects.

RANDOM REMARKS

John D. Rockfeller, Jr.

"The church is a human institution, no more perfect or infallible than man himself."

Naotake Sato, Japanese Foreign Minister:

"Japan has no territorial ambitions in China."

Harold G. Hoffman, Governor of New Jersey:

"The sit-down strike is a symbol of Communism."

Anthony Edin, British Foreign Secretary:

"It is a comforting thought that over the vast area where the U.S. flag is flying, there is another great peace-loving and progressive influence at work."

Jane Todd, woman legislator, New York:

"Gin-weddings or hasty unions entered into for sake of headlines, should be curbed."

Tyler Dennett, president, Williams College:

"We're getting 'nice boys' on the campus now."

Jeff Davis, chief of the hobbes:

"Hoboes don't steal chickens. They aren't drunkards. All they ask is an opportunity."

H. W. Oppice, dentist:

"Fear of the dentist is inherited; a fear of the unknown implanted by education in the home."

Alfred P. Sloan, Jr., president General Motors:

"A man loses his independence when he joins a labor group of any kind and he suffers as a result."

Spanish Correspondent, London Times:

"The war that is being waged in Spain is not a Spanish war and it has not been a Spanish war since August."

Samuel Hoare, British First Lord of the Admiralty:

"The right strategy and tactics for the navy, just as for the air force, are offensive rather than defensive."

Gerald P. Nye, U.S. Senator from North Dakota:

"Twice have we gone to war to win this freedom of the seas. Twice have we won wars but never did we win that cause."

Francis E. Townsend, convicted of contempt of the House of Representatives:

"My crackpot idea is becoming the idea which will save America from economic serfdom and will bring happiness and prosperity to our people."

NIGHT RAIN

I love the beating of night rain
Against my roof and window pane,
Its steady gentle tapping, tapping,
Its quiet, yet insistent rapping.
I like to be awake awhile
And hear it splashing on the tile,
Though often with its rhythm, mine time
It lulls me off to sleep too soon.
It strikes up little melodies,
As if the roof had strings and keys
My troubles and my worries wane
When I am listening to the rain:
Pattering, pattering on my roof
Truly it is the warp and woof
Of music and of poetry,
A gracious gift from heaven to me.

Beatrice McDonald

Jots 'n Jest

NEW books offers "rules for every occasion," but we'll bet it doesn't mention sitdown strikes.

* * *

Scientist says cows developed cuds from the eat-and-run habit, which gives us something to think about, anyhow.

* * *

Dispatch says Mussolini named in love diary, so probably we'll next hear from Il Duce in Hollywood.

* * *

Britons complain coronation parade seats are only 18 inches wide which will be nothing compared to those in the Supreme Court if the bench is increased to 15 members.

* * *

Amelia's newest flight has been postponed, which means that Mr. Putnam probably will come home some night and find his wife.

* * *

Census reveals bears are getting thicker in the west again. They're coming back in the stock market, too, these days.

* * *

Historians now agree first bathtub in America was used in Philadelphia, which ought to just about wash up the question.

* * *

Dispatch from India says natives almost buried ballot boxes with their offerings in recent election, probably using the American system.

* * *

Story says dog wanders freely on floor of Arizona legislature, trying to win over members. Undoubtedly owned by a lobbyist.

THE OTHER CHAP SAYS:

Might Be.

A Washington man, who was clinically dead for five minutes, said afterward that he "floated in a warm friendly place." Our personal fear, however, is that in our case the emphasis might be more on the warmth than the friendliness.—Geo. Ryan, in the Boston Herald.

Review Needed

A Kentucky school superintendent fired five times at a burglar, but missed him every time. The professor needs to do some reviewing on triggernometry. — Thomaston (Ga.) Times.

'My Country, 'Tis of Thee'...

By T. H. MILLINGTON

T. H. MILLINGTON

No Revolution in Michigan?

Governor Murphy is reported to have said there is no revolution. Still, the writer knows of coercive acts and personal injuries upon people not in sympathy with the U. A. W.

However, when a group of men big enough to be effective can go in and take possession of private property, hold it for weeks, causing losses to thousands and throw thousands of auxiliary men as well as the general community running into millions of dollars, it looks very much like war.

Nevertheless, we must admit we have had no official bloodshed. But the writer does not think that the lack of bloodshed has been through any fault of the strikers. Attempts have been made to force the issue, and the strikers would have resented such bloodshed and would have retaliated. Anybody doubting this is kidding himself. I know from conversations that they would not be in any mood to explain to many ordinary mechanics suddenly turning brave but knaves. Oh, yes, they know what they are doing. They are not dumb. The whole affair stinks to high heaven of a deal.

It Takes Two to Make a Fight.

The facts are that the injunction of three months' law has been successfully defied and its precedent most dangerous to the safety of private property has been established. That precedent will always be blotted out by fully armed palaver. Somebody someday will give the powerful arm of the law against some poor devil who works for Wilson Governor Murphy, by his spineless tactics, has led to believe that sitdowns are now if not exactly legal, at least permissible, and may be undertaken without risk to life and limb. This is the time there will be bloodshed.

It is doubtful if in the end any bloodshed will have been saved. Hatreds and distrust which have now been engendered will demand payment in both principal and interest.

Governor Murphy may say that to talk of civil war in Michigan is "all nonsense," but it's **not nonsense** to differ with him and look at things realistically. Michigan is in the incipient stages of civil war, and the battle of Flint have won the first skirmish. Listen to the strikers express their ideas and you will find they claim a victory. Is not emasculating governmental authority a victory?

Governor Murphy may have saved bloodshed for the present, but in his determination to do that at any financial cost to innocent sufferers, he has lost not only for Michigan, but for the whole nation, something far more precious than that. That loss is confidence in our government and respect for law and order. We have found to our dismay that mob rule, when big enough, is superior to the agencies of established government and respect for law and order. That is a real New Deal for America!

In discussing this matter I am not condemning labor for organizing to further its own legitimate interests legitimately. I believe unionized efforts, so long as they respect public interests and private rights, are necessary. But what does seem puzzling is that the strike trouble has been among the highest paid workers in the country. The really underpaid workers are largely in the small plants in small towns. Out of the twenty million workers in the Nation there are only about two million in the Lewis unions. The others, excepting the two and a half million in the A. F. of L., are too scattered to represent a threat to local police, even if organized. So the organizers, in their labor of **love for the working man,** unionize the highest-paid workers in the industrial centers who can pay the biggest fees and make the biggest showing of force. That is what makes the whole thing look like a racket.

The Three Negotiators

Picture to yourself the Governor's room in Lansing. There sit three men: Governor Murphy, Walter Chrysler and John L. Lewis.

Governor Murphy, smiling.

Walter Chrysler, work-giver to 60,000 men. Voluntarily he increased their pay in early winter. Voluntarily he gave his men millions of dollars for Christmas. Voluntarily he gave his men another raise after Jan. 1st. Voluntarily he distributed back pay to the workmen delayed by strikers holding the plants and records. Mr. Chrysler, himself risen from the ranks, is classed with his company as paying about the highest wages in the automobile industry. He is a producer of wealth and well-being to his employees, to his customers and to his communities. His skill has been building comfort and happiness in thousands of homes—but now all this is stopped.

John L. Lewis, glowering and shystey looking. The number of his union members has not been made public, therefore it is safe to conclude that he has only a minority. If he had the majority he would brag about it. But whether he has a majority or not, his existence that his union be the only bargaining agency is unfair, and I think illegal, because that would permit the plant and the Lewis representatives to settle wages, hours, etc. for the non-members—not a party to the negotiations. That, I believe, would be unconstitutional under Article V and Article XIV, because it would deprive the third party of his liberty to negotiate. It is therefore trying to force Mr. Chrysler to become party to an illegal act.

Mr. Lewis does not give his members work. No. He does not pay them, but he collects a monthly fee from those who are members running into millions of dollars annually and he throws out of work all of them, members and non-members, and unlawfully takes possession of all Chrysler plants. To the plant world a parasite is the vine which finally kills the plant it lives upon.

What a setting for a conference! Where is equity and equality? What has become of justice? By his ruthless tactics, Lewis definitely has both Chrysler and the state government at his mercy.

And the Governor? He smiles, and talks, saying both sides must obey the law.

For shame! With the consent of the great State of Michigan Lewis has forced a great concern to keep its plants inoperative until he is satisfied with negotiations and by the same method he has thrown out of work thousands of men and, according to reports, loaded the welfare lists.

By what law or power or justice or dignity or common sense does the Governor consent to such revolutionary procedure? Not alone the corporation immediately involved, but industry and commerce in all branches are adversely affected and losing millions of dollars, while the Governor just smiles and says it is "nonsense to talk of civil war in Michigan."

Yet, we have no revolution today—but those affected know what has happened. Who will repay them the millions lost? The Government which they support with heavy taxes is not coming to their rescue.

Yes, we have no revolution today—but for the present the Chrysler plants and the loyal workers have lost the first skirmish to the rebels.

And the Governor still smiles, and talks.

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