

The Birmingham Eccentric

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NOTES: The Eccentric is pleased to publish stories of events which have new value and which are of interest to the community. The editorial staff of the paper, all of whom are experienced writers, will make such editorial changes in the work of contributors as are necessary in the style of the paper and as are suggested by laws of the state. Because of a technical nature of the character of the work, the Eccentric is not responsible for the accuracy of the facts or the reputation of any person, firm or corporation which may appear in the columns of the Eccentric. It is not responsible for any being brought to the attention of the publisher.

Living For A Family

Readers of The Eccentric have their budget problems as the families strive to make as much as possible of the income available for living.
Recently the results of a survey made by the WPA, have been made public, showing just what percentage of income the average four-person family in fifty-nine cities use for various items connected with a "maintenance" living. Here are the figures:
For food, 16 per cent; for housing, 30 per cent; for clothing, 10 per cent; for transportation, recreation, including amusement, newspaper, or organization dues, tobacco, toys, etc., 6 per cent; medical care, 4 per cent; for transportation, school attendance, life insurance and miscellaneous needs, 9 per cent.

It should be noted that the average sum needed by four-person families in the fifty-nine cities for a "maintenance" living was \$13.25 a week. No allowance for saving. The survey also studied the amount of money necessary for such a family to exist on an emergency basis and set the figure at \$901, but this is "insufficient to maintain health and physical efficiency for any considerable period of time."

Harry L. Hopkins points out that even the more costly family budget in no way provided a desirable standard of living for the American family and that, according to a survey made in 1929, one-fifth of the nation's families made less than \$1,000 annually. The "maintenance" budget was based on the four-person family of a manual worker, including his wife, a 13-year-old son and a 4-year-old daughter. He wears overalls to work and his wife does the housework.

Other details as to the family expenditures of this average worker's family reveal that it lives in four or five rooms, has gas, electricity, an ice-box and a radio. The family reads a daily newspaper, goes to the movies once a week and enjoys a few other leisure-time activities but does not have an automobile. Every three years the man buys two suits of clothes, an overcoat, a felt and straw hat. He has three work shirts, two dress shirts, a small supply of underwear, a pair of dress shoes, and two pairs of work shoes.

The wife buys a Winter coat and a Spring coat every three years. Her wool dress and Winter hat must last two years, but every year she buys a silk coat and three cotton dresses. Her three cotton dresses last two years. Every year she buys a Summer hat, six pairs of cotton stockings and two pairs of silk or rayon, a pair of pumps and a pair of oxfords, both of which are repaired twice.

These statistics might be interesting to the people of Oakland County who have their own budget problems. Compare them with what your family spends for various items and see how your "living" would be rated in a similar investigation.

Knowledge A Valuable Tool

Many years ago the psalmist lamented "that he who increases knowledge increases sorrow" and the world has been plagued with many similar things since that time.

We have something of a counterpart in this era among those who decry scientific knowledge and the detailed intelligence of the specialist in many fields. We have also a fringe attitude among those who cherish the idea, often advanced by either citizens, that "inner illumination" is all that one needs.

The advance of intelligence in the world has not yet halted before such ignorant barriers and as men and women look ahead they visualize a world in which the truth will eventually become clearly established. It is a goal worth seeking because past experience leads to the conclusion that the welfare of mankind will be best served by its attainment.

Not every individual who becomes a specialist, however, is equipped with the broadness of vision that enables one to appreciate other achievements in the realm of knowledge. Not every intelligent citizen is balanced in the philosophy of living that must make us servants of our age. The conclusion is easy to reach that intelligence, by itself, is not enough but that man must possess some other force or factor, which for want of a more definite term, might as well be referred to as "inner illumination."

Young people who happen to stray into these columns of The Eccentric should not overlook the importance of intelligence as an instrument toward greater achievement, both for individuals and for the race as a whole. They should not put their trust entirely in knowledge but should also develop themselves in harmony with their own personal "inner illumination." Combined with faithful adherence to inner guides intelligence becomes a powerful force in life.

If you live a comfortable length of life, you will more and more come to realize that the possession of friends is the greatest wealth you can get on earth. There is a real difference in an acquaintance and a friend, for one is as fleeting as shifting sand, while the other remains steadfast like a great rock.

Avoiding Federal School Control

There is raised, from time to time, a voice in the land crying out against Federal control of the educational system of our respective States.
A pen of praise is launched for local control of the tutoring of our youth and the war trembles with fear as to what might happen if Federal control becomes a fact.

There is absolutely no danger so long as present school districts put up the money to pay for the education of their boys and girls.
The path to Federal control opens up when local areas begin begging for Federal money in order to escape paying for the education of their own children. When the Federal government puts up the money it claims the right to say something about how the cash shall be spent, and we don't blame the officials of the Federal government.

Let's get the matter entirely straight and we won't have to be worked into a lather about Federal control. All that we have to do is to put up the money to educate our children and proceed to run our school system as we please.

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Flies 800 Miles An Hour
Nature furnishes many interesting examples to men, and scientists themselves have much to learn from the lives of the fly. The insect is a marvel of construction, and its mechanism that makes possible such speed.

According to Richard L. Post, an entomologist, the wings of the fly are capable of unbelievable vibration, much faster than could be withstood by any material now manufactured by man.

Readers will no doubt think of other natural phenomena which men find it hard to duplicate. Maybe, some day when all things are known, creation's highest animal, man, will condescend to take lessons from some of the lesser creatures of the globe.

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Should We Build Battleships?
The Italians are now building 25,000-ton battleships, which will be the last word in naval construction for about a year after their completion.

Along France has two such giant battleships coming along. Great Britain is pushing work on others, and Germany is understood to have one in process of building. News is that Japan, Italy and Japan may build four battleships to augment her navy.

Under such conditions there are people who argue that the United States should disarm, leaving battleship building to other nations and trust to their peaceful intentions in regards to this hemisphere. Even here is some doubt as to just how potent the peaceful intentions of Germany, Italy and Japan might be, these cheerful ones in fact that maybe Great Britain and France will protect us out of self-interest, if for no other reason.

We do not share the optimism of these pacif-minded brothers and sisters. The only thing that will make some nations respect the rights of the United States is the power that this country may be able to protect itself. We are strong for peace but the best way to insure it is to be able to make war unprofitable for those who might have an idea that they can find "pickings" on this side of the Atlantic ocean.

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Punishing Drunken Drivers
Drunken drivers have increased ten times as fast as automobiles on the public highways, says Dr. Theodor Kilmer, police surgeon, who would have them severely punished.

The idea has our general support, but we would like to know how the drunken drivers are going to be punished. Mandatory jail sentences have been suggested and this sounds like poison until you start to think and then you realize, all at once, that you can't put anybody in jail unless you get a jury to convict the defendant.

This seems to be the main problem, the securing of a verdict of "guilty" from juries that handle this class of cases. The problem is intensified in smaller cities where nearly everybody knows one another, and even if the driver of the vehicle were drunk there are a lot of strings tied up with his conviction. Certain no thinking citizen has any idea that a drunken man or woman ought to be allowed to operate as dangerous a vehicle as an automobile on the highway. When somebody is caught doing this, however, the plea is that nothing happened to hurt anybody and maybe he won't do it again. The point is that if you wait until some terrible accident occurs to enforce the laws against drunken driving of automobiles you will probably wait too long.

Americanizing The Irish?

For a long time the Irish have been telling Americans what they might and might not do. That is, they have so far as Irish policemen could do it.

Now it appears that the tables are turning. Not only is Ireland governed by an American born president, she is shortly to be offered a constitution similar to ours in several particulars. One interesting feature is worthy of mention. Representation will be elected by electing the butcher, the baker, the candlestick maker, etc., and not merely a given district.

While the new constitution—whose provisions will be voted upon by the people—will make Ireland more independent than ever of Great Britain, it is believed that it will also make for freer voluntary co-operation.

When such a little country can start out so bravely to be independent it must be that the leaders can see a time not too distant when big nations will not try to gobble up little nations. Hope they are right.

SOMEONE ONCE SAID that "hell is paved with good intentions, never applied." Perhaps another way of saying it would be that hell too often is paved with bad intentions, always.

My Country, 'Tis of Thee

Pride Goeth Before a Fall
Congress has adjourned. Thank God, the hubbub is gone! This and similar expressions are being heard spoken in a tone of relief much like the

noisy party has left one's house. A noisy house-party also sometimes leaves a feeling of consternation, the expense of the party, the expense of the party, the expense of the party.

But we must be grateful that Congress, before adjourning, has been able to show the President and his New Dream star-gazers that, after all, Congress is composed of American men, reared in an atmosphere of personal and political freedom, and that they cannot be stampeded into parting with their even to please a President befuddled by the adulation of sycophants.

There was a chance that some needed legislation might have been accomplished, but the President's Supreme Court proposition had the effect of sidetracking all else and of removing the mask from a hideous object—revealing Roosevelt, the man in all his glory, as well as his distrust in Democracy.

To hear him now saying, as he recently said over the radio, that the opposition are "Tories who distrust democracy," sounds like a perfect reasoning of "if you don't like it, just show it to me."

On March 4th he said of his Supreme Court proposal, "I hope that thereby the difficult process of Constitutional Amendment may be rendered unnecessary." If that was not a proposal to circumvent the Constitution and destroy democracy, then what was it?

The President's success in the 1936 election so disastrously went to his head that he thought himself greater than Congress, greater than the Supreme Court, greater than the people. Even a stomach such conceit could not defend the of fundamental law and traditions of the land. It demonstrated the truth of the saying that "every Napoleon has his Waterloo." European Nationalism and Communism are the enemies of the American people.

he greatest Democratic majority in Congress in the entire history of the country, completely defeated their own President in his fondest and haughtiest proposal. After that, at his request, having voted him more power than any other President, after giving him so much money to spend that, by comparison, Rockefeller and Ford seemed beggars, they never again saw him as a dictator.

He has now an idea that he can outdo him by his overbearing humiliation and the credit of every American citizen, who fought the Roosevelt-Fox-Naz-Fascism.

Republicans will now admit that good Democrats can be trusted with the fate of the Nation and can do their own house-cleaning.

PARAGRAPHS

An Instance
Diplomatic courtesy still has its uses in Europe. Witness the custom of referring to those German and Italian soldiers as "volunteers."—Rochester Democrat and Chronicle.

They Don't
Everybody, sooner or later, checks an idea, but none ever volunteers to do his work for a day.—Montgomery Advertiser.

May Be
Soon Japan may be in the mood to trade off Manchukuo to some man with a bear by the tail.—Chicago Daily News.

Obscure
Our idea of an obscure Government bureau is one that can't issue twelve pamphlet reports a year.—Dallas News.

Must Be
In Chicago a man was arrested for riding a bicycle while drunk. There are a lot of talented people in Chicago.—Washington Post.

Only The Beginning
Jesse's wedding cost \$25,000, which would not be exorbitant if that were the end of it.—Kansas City Star.

Changed
The ancient and honorable three R's, it seems to us, have been changed from "readin', ritin' and 'rhythmic" to "radio, rides and rhythm."—Troy (N. Y.) Record.



WASHINGTON LETTER BY SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Loans to Cotton Farmers Create New Issue for Administration Heads

WASHINGTON.—A petition being circulated in the Senate by Senator Theodore G. Biles, of Mississippi, is evidence of a new difference of opinion between the administration and southern Democrats in Congress. A similar petition is being circulated in the House.

The Senate petition, which already has the signatures of 21 senators from cotton states, asks that the government loan on cotton this year shall be 10 cents per pound instead of 9 cents, and that subsidy payments shall be made to cotton farmers this year instead of next.

At the instance of the President, a resolution was passed by the Senate and is now pending in the House which will require that Congress at its next session will raise the curtain on crop control legislation.

To revive cotton prices in 1933 the administration guaranteed to cotton farmers a loan of 10 cents per pound, and a year later this rate was upped to 12 cents. At 12 cents farmers could get a higher price from the government than they could in the open market and the AAA received 5,000,000 bales of cotton. They have disposed of all but 1,300,000 bales of these "cotton securities."

Lending warehouses with cotton for which the government was paying more than market price, with the effect of turning buyers in the world market away from American cotton to the cheaper product of foreign countries, was a dangerous trend. So in 1935 administration officials decided the rate of loans should return to 10 cents per pound, but the planter to pay option pickers higher wages. This they think would appreciably reduce the cost of cotton in the south, and by increasing purchasing power locally would help business recovery generally.

It seems doubtful at this point that the President will be persuaded to renege on such concession in the voluntary co-operation of cotton farmers as their senators have, if they get their reward for curtailing production before they earn it.

THE cost of differential "subsidy" payments for cotton that year was about \$45,000,000.

Jest For Fun

He Was
Prospective Sailor—Are there any murderers birds at sea?
Answer—Not that I know of, only seagulls.

Not So Stupid.
Visitor—Did your craving for drink bring you here?
Prisoner—Do I look so dumb that I'd come here for a drink?

Breaking It Gently.
Herbert—How did you propose to fulfill your duty?
Horace—Oh, I began by telling her I was to be married next week and then broke the news to her that she was to be the lucky girl.

Reasons
Hundreds each morning I behold Along the highways talking: More are walking to reduce. More are reduced to walking.



Henry A. Wallace, secretary of Agriculture:
"A sound agricultural policy can be formulated only on the basis of mutual understanding of farm groups and solidarity between them."
George H. Davis, President U. S. Chamber of Commerce:
"The subsidies have never been activity of the Federal government, if continued, would inevitably have demoralizing effects upon efforts to conduct community efforts to rehabilitate and rebuild blighted and slum areas."
Benito Mussolini, Italian dictator:
"War is to man what maternity is to woman."
James A. Farley, Postmaster General:
"This Administration is concerned with blighting and perpetuating prosperity. It has no time for realities."
Norman Thomas, Socialist leader:
"Every government at war has a right to deal drastically with spies and traitors."
Elji Amau, Japanese "spokesman":
"Relations between the United States and Japan are becoming more cordial than they are today."
William Dodd, Ambassador to Germany:
"No man can say when we shall have another world war."
Harry W. Colmery, commander, American Legion:
"We veterans of America are following with intense concern the course of European events."
Arthur de Souza Costa, Brazilian Finance Minister, after visiting the United States:
"The Americans won my heart."
John Hamilton, chairman Republican National Committee:
"Republican headquarters is devoting its activities to conducting a successful campaign in 1938 and 1940."
George H. Tinkham, Congressman from Massachusetts:
"Since 1901 Great Britain has been seeking to involve the United States in the Far East for her own purposes."
Franklin D. Roosevelt, President:
"I am doing everything in my power to discourage the use of gas and other chemicals in any war between nations."
Jacob Panken, Domestic Relations Judge:
"Woman is not as dependent as she was in yesteryear. She has entered the fields of gainful occupations, enterprise. She is no longer always the homemaker."
Robert N. McHenry, doctor:
"There are a very large number of mild, as well as severe, unrecognized cases of mental sickness at large."
W. L. MacKenzie-King, Canadian Prime Minister:
"Never imagine that to the overpopulated country and undernourished peoples of the continents the countless attractions and the limitless possibilities of Canada are unknown."
Bess Blodgett, personnel director:
"A person of forty may not be able to run a relay race to compete with twenty-year-olds, but he may have the mental capacity to learn just as well as a young competitor."
Well, It Wasn't in Chicago This Year:
1st Liear—"Where I've been it was so cold that the milk was delivered in chunks of ice."
2nd Liear—"Aw, that's nothing. Where I was they didn't even need fire ladders. They'd just slip a bucket of water out of the window and slide down."

A Needed Step Toward Recovery

By RAYMOND PITCAIRN
National Chairman
Sentinel of the Republic
After months of delay the Senate recently passed a measure providing for a count of the actual number of unemployed.
All Americans interested in constructive steps toward real recovery undoubtedly hoped, when they read that announcement, that the bill would pass safely through the remaining machinery of our legislative mill and go into early effect.

For an Senatorial supporter of the plan has pointed out, only by knowing the true conditions can lawmakers hope to steer a safe course through the fog which thus far appears to have obscured the way to solution of our No. 1 problem—unemployment and its relief.

And America waits that problem solved—not through wasteful meddling of political patronage, but through some practical system of bringing together the capable worker and the productive job.

This is hard to do when government neither knows nor seeks to know how many men and women need jobs. It is hard to do when the laudable objective of helping the jobless is hampered by ignorance of who they are, or in what work they are skilled. It is hard to do when two sets of official figures agree.

It is hard to do when facts are unknown and the course uncharted. A carefully conducted census should develop these facts—and at least some of the answers, and it cannot be made too soon. For on the success of efforts to restore American workers to their accustomed places in the activities of American enterprise—whether in the fields, the office or the shop—depends not only their own welfare, but our entire national progress.

This cannot be achieved through a few scattered "straw poll" schemes of a guessing contest. It demands purposeful study and constructive action.

Genius
"So he is a mechanical genius?"
"I'll say! He can walk into a hotel bathroom and within 30 minutes he can regulate the shower."
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