The Birmingham Eccentric

(Founded in 1878)

Published every Thursday, at Birmingham, Mich., in The Eccentric Building, 232-232 North Woodward Avenue
Telephones 11, 12 and 13

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Entered as Second Class Matter in the U. S. Postoffice at Birmingham, Michigan

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

(In Oakland County)		(Outside Oakland County)	
One Year	$1.50	One Year	$2.00
Six Months	.85	Six Months	1.25
Three Months	.50	Three Months	.75

All newspaper and advertising copy must be in the Eccentric office by Tuesday noon to obtain insertion for that week.

* *The Eccentric is a member of: National Editorial Association, Michigan Press Association, University Press Club, and Oakland County Weekly Press Association*

THURSDAY, APRIL 27, 1939

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 Tuesdays. 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.

One Day: 100,000 Dead!

Erich Maria Remarque, German author of "All Quiet on the Western Front," is on a visit to this country, where he wants to see the people "who so impress every one in Europe."

The German writer has been living in Switzerland, having lost his German citizenship. His report on the outlook for peace is not encouraging.

The popular conception in Europe, says this author, is that a world war will break out and that 100,000 persons will be killed the first day. From a "little fire" the conflagration will spread throughout Europe until it involves the whole world.

Suggests A "Brain Pool"

Dr. Alexis Carrel is a great surgeon, who has served well his fellowman in his profession, but he is more than a specialist because, in his thought, he is profoundly interested in the welfare of human beings.

We are interested in a recent statement, attributed to him, that the "present knowledge" of the world is too great to be in one mind. He advocates something like a "brain pool" of the best scientific minds to serve the present age as a "composite Aristotle" to develop a new civilization, based on reality rather than philosophical ideologies.

Dr. Carrel undoubtedly states a fact when he declares that present knowledge is too great to be in one mind. The scholars of the world have specialized so long and pursued their specialties so far that it would require many years more than human beings enjoy to be able to become acquainted with what they have discovered.

The chances are, however, that much of this specialized information will become useless when some master-mind ascertains certain basic principles, which may crystallize present mass-knowledge into a gem of pure wisdom that will serve the world. Perhaps, somewhere in the world today, there is a young man or young woman, who has within an alert brain, the germ of understanding that will sweep away much of the debris that now clouds intelligence.

Should A Wife Work?

A bill, recently introduced in the legislature of Illinois, would prohibit employment in any gainful occupation of any woman whose husband had an income of $1,500 or more yearly.

This is what we consider a dangerous measure. It might possibly be declared unconstitutional, if passed, as an infringement on the rights of women, but, if not, should be killed anyway.

While the question is open to serious differences of opinion we do not think that any law should prohibit a woman from having the right to work if she desires to work. That her husband has a job has nothing to do with her rights.

Hitler Symbol Of World Froth

If you have read much about the personal life, ambitions, and desires of Adolf Hitler, you will begin to understand that he seeks to conquer the world by force. He has a maniacal idea that pure Germans only are God's chosen people; he will bend to any diabolical method to achieve his ends. Hitler, it seems to us, is merely the bitter froth boiling on the top of a world that is all confused, all bewildered, all astray from the finest decencies of life. Our own nation, our own State, is struggling to throw off corruption, dishonesty, lust for money and power by some; can such a world survive its own destruction?

Peace Is Within

The peace and happiness of the average citizen of Birmingham does not depend upon the amount of money possessed, the success of any organization or the outcome of any great struggle abroad.

The contentment that makes for human happiness is within the reach of every individual who is able to face life with a philosophy that solves personal problems. The acceptance of religious tenets often provide the answers, whether these religious beliefs are adopted as an individual or a member of some religious organization.

The capacity of the individual for self-control is the key to happiness and contentment. It is a product that you cannot buy, or receive as a gift. It is within reach of all but is obtained by very few.

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT last week told Democrats that "the New Deal policies are your only hope for victory in 1940." The President having spoken, now all we need is the voice of the country in 1940.

Dictators Face Economic Ruin

The news from Europe, so far as we have been able to judge, indicates definitely that the standard of living of the peoples of Italy and Germany has been gradually lowered under the rule of the dictators, Mussolini and Hitler.

Recent dispatches emphasize the difficulties that these regimes encounter in their effort to live on their slender resources and there is basis for the suspicion that both nations are nearing the end of their economic resources.

While Hitler is far ahead of Mussolini in dedicating national activity to the purposes of war, both dictators have expended vital national resources to build up their fighting forces. This has been done at the expense of the standard of living of the Italian and German people.

Having subordinated every national activity to the perfection of a war machine and having secured the apparent endorsement of their peoples, the dictators face a serious problem. They are finding it difficult to maintain the pace they have set, and the power of their armaments is diminished by the strengthened armaments of other powers. The dictators are unable to secure basic supplies by purchases abroad because of their weakened economic structure and they see their fighting forces losing the race with other nations.

In this situation Hitler and Mussolini must decide whether to lower the standard of living of their peoples to a new low and continue their program of rearmament, in the hope of surpassing other nations and thereby acquiring world control. If they continue the armament race, they will be matched by other powers and their relative position will not improve although the economic condition of their people become worse.

So what? Well, this: Hitler and Mussolini today are probably better prepared for war than they will be at any future date. They may create larger armies and construct larger navies but their adversaries are doing the same thing. Relatively, then, Hitler and Mussolini have a better chance to win a war today than they will have later. Consequently, this is their hour and if they do not take the gamble now the chances are that in a few years, their extensive war machines will be too great a burden for their peoples to support.

Consequently, we look for trouble in Europe. If no war develops before the fall of 1940, there will be a likely chance that war has been averted for a decade or more. The chance for peace has been improved, we think, by the sale of airplanes to Great Britain and France, with the implied notice that American industry will sell necessary materials to the democracies as they need them.

Regimenting Michigan

Instead of worrying about how Hitler is regimenting the German people, it might be a good thing if we would pay attention to some of the proposals continually coming before the Michigan legislature.

If all the laws proposed there to regulate people and their jobs were passed, we would all be living in a straight jacket.

One of the latest is a plan to establish a state board of examiners on watch making. Four years' apprenticeship would be required, an examination and, of course, a $5 annual license fee.

In defining "unethical conduct," the bill includes advertising prices of watch repairing. What is unethical about that? If so, what about other forms of advertising? Michigan has a "false advertising" law which protects the consumer against misrepresentation, misleading statements, etc.

Another legislator suggests that we line up the contractors under government control. He would create a state license board for them with power to examine, classify and qualify applicants. Naturally there would be a license fee, in this case $25; renewal $15.

Still another control measure has been proposed. This would set up a code of ethics for painters. In this case, the initial license fee would be $50. A board would examine and license painters and decorators and provide laws whereby the annual license could be revoked.

At this rate, eventually we won't have any watch makers, painters, masons or anybody else. We will all be working in government bureaus, collecting fees and telling other people how to run their businesses.—ROYAL OAK TRIBUNE.

Flying To Europe

Now that the 42-ton Yankee Clipper, giant plane of Pan-American Airways, has made a survey flight to Europe, it may be assumed that regular passenger service across the Atlantic is only a matter of time.

Even the most confirmed moss-back should realize, by this time, that the airplane has reduced the size of the world, so far as man is concerned. The ocean that once required weeks and good winds for its crossing is to be spanned regularly in a day.

What the automobile has done in the development of this continent, the airplane will do for the world. Gradually, the old globe shrinks, whether it yields to planes of peace or bombers of war.

Politics On The Bench

The recent survey of nearly three hundred Federal, State, municipal and county court judges, conducted by the United States Department of Justice, convinces the investigators that "politics and personal bias" rather than scientific jurisprudence often dominate the decisions of many judges.

This is not news to many persons familiar with the workings of courts, but it will come as something of a shock to people who believe that a lawyer becomes an angel when he dons the judicial robes.

PARADOX: former Governor Frank Murphy ran up a $25,000,000 deficit while Governor of Michigan for two years; as Attorney-General of the United States he now wages a national crusade to save investors of companies whose affairs are going through federal bankruptcy courts.

YOUTH MUST BE SERVED

Congressional Comment

by Representative George A. Dondero, 17th Michigan District

To the Editor:

When the bill providing for additional funds for W. P. A. operations until the end of this fiscal year, June 30, 1939, was under consideration in the U. S. House of Representatives there was a great deal of debate on the subject and the Senate and the House voted to cut $50,000,000 from the President's request.

The attitude of organized labor toward the W. P. A. was of particular interest. I participated in the debate on the bill and during the course of my remarks I took occasion to present to Congress extracts from two letters received from Detroit labor unions.

The first, from the Bricklayers and Masons' Union, dated February 1, 1939, expressed this opposition to the W. P. A.:

"It is our contention that the W. P. A. has become a distinct menace to the construction industry, not only to the mechanics but to the contractors who have for many years past employed our people, due to the many abuses which have crept into the W. P. A."

The second, from the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Detroit, voices similar opposition:

"It is our understanding that W. P. A. was created for the purpose of producing productive work for unskilled labor only. If that is true, we vigorously protest any W. P. A. money for projects that invade the field of the skilled trades.

"We trust that you will give our complaint serious consideration and use every effort to cure this vicious practice, and that you will use your good efforts to see that no more W. P. A. money is used for any building operation. As it now is W. P. A. money is of no value or assistance to the skilled, semiskilled, and unskilled labor of the building trades."

The paragraphs above quoted were incorporated in my remarks on the floor of the House and appear on page 5059 of the Congressional Record for March 31, 1939.

Recently a brick mason, driving a taxicab in Washington, notified his employers that he had obtained work for practically the balance of the year 1939, but when he took the job he discovered they were unable to obtain hod carriers at $20 a week because they were on W. P. A. getting $12 a week. For this reason the work had to be abandoned and he returned to the job of taxi driving and the hod carriers are still on W. P. A. work instead of being in private employment at higher wages.

I am not against providing for the needy and those in want and there is not a Member of the House, regardless of his politics, who does not take this position, but I am opposed to continuing a governmental function that is driving the Nation toward ruin and destroying the spirit and initiative of the American people. I voted for the $725,000,000 appropriation in January to uphold the judgment of the committee reporting the bill.

One thing that is now uppermost in the minds of the American people is, How long can we continue to spend and spend and borrow and borrow before we reach the brink of national bankruptcy and ruin? Secretary Morgenthau, before a subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations, stated recently that he would not care to make any forecast of what might happen if the public debt went beyond fifty billion dollars.

Sincerely yours,
George A. Dondero, M. C.

PARAGRAPHS

Different

Something different in the Washington hubbub, as the lawmakers gather; is John Garner, giving us the old Coolidge silence with a Texas accent.—Portland Oregonian.

His Favorite

A chain of American hotels is now placing, in every guest room a 500-page volume of familiar poems. Including it is assumed, the clerk's favorite, "Charge, Chester, Charge!"—Detroit News.

More Plausible

Wilbur Glenn Voliva's theory about the world being flat seems much more plausible during the income-tax paying season.—Detroit News.

The Good Old Days

This was a better country when so many men didn't make a living organizing drives to get money out of other people.—Dayton News.

Undecided

We don't like public dinners. We sometimes think a whole glass of water waiting to find out which piece of silver to begin with.—Brandon Sun.

Another Crying Need

The crying need is a paving material so durable that the new pipes will have to be laid in some other street.—St. Louis Post Dispatch.

Modern Men

Men still die with their boots on, but usually one foot on the accelerator.—Arkansas Gazette.

Ain't It So?

Woman stand dustless mops in closets so that they fall at the slightest touch. Men are people who leave snow shovels in garages to be snowed in.—Detroit News.

Ready

"We want no American peasantry!" cries a Senate sympathizer with the share-cropper. Still if he's wrong, our girls are dressed for it.—Los Angeles Times.

Random Remarks

Alfred Rosenberg, Nazi philosopher:

"Christianity owes its enduring virtues to the Germanic character."

Ludwig Marcuse, exiled German author:

"A war must end either in the destruction of Hitler and Mussolini or of civilization."

Franklin D. Roosevelt, leaving Warm Springs, Ga.:

"I'll be back in the Fall if we don't have a war."

James Montgomery Flagg, artist:

"Beauty comes from breeding. I have never seen a beautiful woman in a beauty contest."

Joseph S. Ames, chairman, Advisory Committee for Aeronautics:

"The peace of Munich indicates that wars may be won before they are fought."

Henry Ford, auto maker:

"It's the Spring of the year, you know; great things will happen this year."

Charles M. Sheldon, author of "In His Steps."

"There are brave men and women going without enough to eat because they will not beg for help or go on relief."

E. D. (Cotton Ed) Smith, U. S. Senator from South Carolina:

"I would rather be in the 'horse-and-buggy age' than the 'jackass age'."

John A. Peters, Federal Judge, Maine:

"People supported by the Government are simply eating off their fellow citizens."

Mehdi Frasheri, Premier of Albania:

"When our men are dead, the Italians will have to face our women."

WASHINGTON LETTER

BY SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Sharecropper Problem, FSA Fears, May Spread Throughout America

WASHINGTON. — Agriculture officials are concerned because farm labor is on the increase numerically, and because the differences between farm owners and farm labor presents a growing problem.

After the famous "hunger march" in southeastern Missouri, the Farm Security Administration realized that it must provide for more than two dozen of these sharecropper families or let them starve.

They are being fed through state relief authorities and through grants from the Farm Security Administration. If FSA continues to support people who won't work at prevailing wages, it will be, in effect, supporting a strike.

* * *

THE average farm laborer in the southeastern Missouri area, where the strike broke out, works only about four months a year. His wages in that period are not adequate enough to provide for him in the idle months.

By taking care of him and his family in that idle period, FSA is in effect subsidizing the landlords and their low wage scale.

These landlords are said to have forbidden their tenants to hold meetings. There are rumors that a tenant group trying to hold a crossroads conference was routed by violence.

FSA authorities feel that wages in southeastern Missouri and many other parts of the country are too low for farm labor. But they say it is no part of their function to try to adjust wages.

Nevertheless, by this policy of including destitute veterans of the "hunger march" with the 5500 families it is supporting in seven southeastern Missouri counties, FSA is identified with the economic tangle, which is no nearer solution now than it was before the march began.

* * *

THE position the Department of Agriculture has taken in this case is difficult to defend on the basis of its specified functions, and will be expensive to maintain.

There is evidence that the Missouri problem is likely to become more and more common in other parts of the country.

Both C. I. O. and A. F. of L. have shown interest in the disagreement of farm owner and farm laborer where the conflict has become noisy, as in the west coast area.

But the organization of itinerant and scattered farm labor presents a greater problem than labor organization has so far faced.

Happenings of Long Ago

Bits Of News Gleaned From Old Files Of The Eccentric—The Items That Make Up The Historical Background Of The Birmingham Of Today.

Fifty Years Ago
April 25, 1889

While scuffling recently with other boys, Will Beardslee had the misfortune to crack a bone in his foot, since which time he has worked and played on a pair of crutches and found it slow and withal very painful.

"Stokes" McStay has gone to Battle Creek to fulfill a baseball engagement. For a small town, Birmingham turns out her quota of baseballists and if Stokes fills the bill as well as Rainey and Wright, great will be his reward.

The Bill Poster wildly insinuates that if William Willits does not intend to build, he should remove that pile of stone from the street. Not going to build? Oh yes, we remember; what's the matter with removing that pile of stone from our streets? Twould be a great improvement. We would suggest that the Improvement Society take it in hand.

Under the careful and steady labors of John G. Wilson, Greenwood cemetery is as clean and tidy as a well-kept lawn. Many lots in the new addition have been sold and others will soon be taken, thanks to John.

The Southfield cheese factory is in full blast and the quality of their output equals and excels any of the famous factories east and south. Beddow's full cream is really the daisy goods.

Miss Millie Shain is home for a good big month's vacation, having earned the same by a year's service at the E. M. A. and during the next four weeks she will renew her acquaintance, not only with here relatives but with her many friends.

Ed Kyser bought H. M. R. Gibbs' bicycle and Gibbs has ordered a full nickel-plated improved Star. Birmingham has now a royal club of Star riders. All the new machines being sported by our young blades are Stars and they ought to be, for Star is safe and the winner over all others by the best judges of a practical wheel. So if you must scorch boys, please be shooting stars.

Twenty-Five Years Ago
April 24, 1914

W. I. Deer has just put in his barber shop two fine hydraulic chairs. They are a fine addition to his shop. "Safety First" is not a favorite slogan for a barber. He says, see a barber and like all other tonsorial artists, he dislikes the name of "Safety."

Mr. and Mrs. John Wendell were at their summer residence on Saturday to view the landscape o'er and to decide just how soon they can come out and settle down at "Larkspur." the only place on earth where they consider life worth living.

Mrs. Harvey C. Wilson is back home and among her many friends, after a winter spent in the south at Americus, Ga., and what do you think? She says she is already homesick to go back there.

"The Village Post Office" at the First Presbyterian Church played to a full house, with most satisfactory results as to the audience, the financial end and satisfaction given by the young actors, many of whom had never before appeared behind the footlights.

The saloon in Birmingham came very near to being a thing of the past at the Council meeting Tuesday night last. On a vote to reject Jas. E. Wound's application for a license to sell," there were seven ayes and three were dry. Lucky Jim! President T. B. Smith voting wet. The application of Seeley Peck was rejected for lack of proper form, the notary forgetting to sign. For very interesting news, read all the Council proceedings—with more to follow.

Mrs. Charlotte Wilson has sold a lot on Greenwood Avenue to Mr. Muehlman of Detroit who will erect a fine residence thereon, during the coming summer. Thus does Birmingham Heights prosper and the thinly-settled part of town gradually grow up and look civilized.

Five Years Ago
April 28, 1934

Workers are $5,500 short of goal in Community House Roll Call. Drive will end Saturday, but "Cleanup Committee" will carry on. Full canvass is sought by H. Kenneth Bingham, chairman of drive. Extends hope of meeting $7,500 quota.

First National Bank offices will be moved. DeFunet Institution will occupy space in former Birmingham Savings Bank building. Reports on cost of operating Thad D. Seeley's receivership and progress of liquidation are still awaited from staff. Hulbert leads drive to secure more information.

Taxpayers will vote Monday on bond bill. Fate of $38,000,000 issue for public works construction will be decided at polls. Controversy is waged by proponents of measure, including state officials, 19 million for building use is part of war stake, would spend revenue from bonds.

Schools reject bond propaganda. Board of Education refuses to allow distribution of 38 million referendum circulars. Object to "prejudiced character" of circulars.

Joseph A. Byrne is nominated for Postmaster by President Roosevelt. Permanent appointment regarded as certain, following action by chief executive. Bill is now before Congress.

First World's Fair trip is won. Dorothy Ward, 15, fills quota in Travel Opportunity Club sponsored by The Eccentric, but keeps on working for friends.

Life tenures advocated for judges and chiefs of police. Freedom from political influence would be best weapon against crime, says Professor John B. Waite of the University of Michigan, in address at Community House.

Miss Julie M. Kane wins highest honor open to women at University of Michigan. Will serve as chairman of Junior Girls' play.

People's Column

The Eccentric is pleased to receive communications for this column. All communications must be signed, but signatures will be kept confidential upon request. Letters must be limited to 500 words, and must be in the office by Tuesday noon for publication the following Thursday.

April 24, 1939

Mr. George Averill
Editor, Birmingham Eccentric
Birmingham, Michigan

Dear Sir:

In the last edition of your paper I read an article regarding the dedication of Baldwin High School's new track field behind Pierce School.

As a former teacher in Baldwin High School and a resident of Birmingham, I have followed with a great deal of interest Coach Franklyn Whitney's consistently successful track and basketball teams. The track teams have won several regional and state championships and the basketball teams have seldom failed to reach the quarter finals in the state championships. This performance is especially remarkable considering the lack of track, field and gymnasium equipment.

The city of Birmingham should be grateful to Coach Whitney for the excellent work he has done. The results have been so outstanding that I think the new track field should be named for him.

Very truly yours,
W. M. Hebblewhite
327 Southfield road

Hard on Songs

The average good radio wears out popular songs faster than it does batteries.—Detroit News.

Ain't It So?

How much more pleasant bridge would be if people would be dumb instead of acting dumb.—Duluth Herald.

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