The Birmingham Eccentric

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THURSDAY, OCTOBER 26, 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 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.

Hours of Work

This week, under the terms of the Wage & Hour Law, enacted by Congress at the request of the New Deal, the hours of millions of workers will be shortened from 44 to 42; all hours more than 42 of workers who come under the Law must be paid for at time and one-half. The Law seeks to distribute available work to the unemployed by regimenting those already employed. In theory, the Law may be a worthy objective, although the employed may rightfully grumble at a system that restricts their hours of employment. It is too bad that the New Deal hasn't encouraged business to expand, thus providing, naturally, more work; recovery with some reform, instead of reform with some recovery, is what the American workman and his employer desire from Washington.

Men Are Vainer Than Women

Just for what it might be worth, and to carry a little favor among our women readers, we record the conclusion of Dr. Theron W. Kilmer, New York photographer, that men are much vainer than women when they are being photographed!

"People say women are vain," says the doctor, "but don't you believe it. I never saw anything as vain as a man in a studio."

Naturally there will be many men in Birmingham to intimate that the worthy artist is talking through his hat, or some other article of wearing apparel. We are not inclined to argue very strongly in favor of the conclusion he announces but, just the same, we have seen some men who gave both eyes to their personal appearance.

Force Alone Insures Peace Today

More than a hundred "leading historians, economists, politicians and sociologists" of the nation, queried by a committee of psychologists, agree that the best factors for keeping this country at peace included international education, freedom from economic nationalism and the "breakdown of childish patriotism."

We take leave to doubt the conclusion of the eminent gentlemen. The factor that will keep this nation at peace is outside the United States. It is the belief on the part of possible aggressors that it will not pay them to attack the United States.

The guarantee of peace today is force and nothing else. It is a sad commentary on civilization that every nation has to rely upon its own strength but the Chinese, the Ethiopians, the Czechs and the Poles know it. They learned the lesson the hard way. If we don't care for the same lesson, we will see to it that we are strong enough to give two blows for every one directed at us.

Frankly, we think the world would be much better if the nations of the world which stand for the orderly processes of civilization could get together and preserve the peace of the world. Unfortunately, every one of them is anxious to avoid all risks and to dodge all responsibility for law and order in a world that is lawless and threatened by international criminals.

Deficit Information

For the information of the statistically minded we call attention to the fact that the Federal government, for the first quarter of the fiscal year which began July 1st, spent $976,060,301 more than it collected. This is what one technically terms a deficit.

At this rate of extravagance it will be easily seen that the deficit for the full year will be a little less than $4,000,000,000. With the nation going hog-wild on preparedness, which always comes high, it might be estimated that the deficit will exceed the indicated figure.

It is interesting to observe, as a passing comment, that some of the vociferous objectors to a deficit, when incurred for feeding starving persons, are quite reconciled to the idea of a big deficit if the money is spent for military and naval purposes. It seems, from what one reads, that a deficit for war or national defense, has some virtue that is unconnected with a deficit incurred in assisting individual citizens.

We confess that we are somewhat ignorant of the terrors that lurk in deficits, except insofar as a private lack of funds might be termed a deficit. At the same time, we moan for the boys and girls who can hardly bear to see the government spend more money than it collects. They are in for a bad winter.

JOHN L. LEWIS announced the other day that "we intend to throw all Communists from the CIO." All right John, start doin' your exercises—the nation would like to see Communists bein' thrown out of every institution or organization that calls itself "American."

Trade Barriers To Progress

That the automobile has revolutionized life in Michigan and throughout the United States is apparent to anybody who reflects upon conditions that existed thirty years ago.

The 25,000,000 motor vehicles that crowd the nation's wonderful highway system have not only exercised a major influence upon social life everywhere but they have transformed economic conditions. Moreover, by making cheap transportation available they have removed some of the handicaps that afflicted individuals off the main lines of the railroads.

Because people travel faster today than a generation ago distances do not mean the same barriers. The trend to small counties, so widespread has been replaced by a slow-growing conviction that government can be revised in the light of present-day advantages.

The danger that threatens the full utilization of motor vehicles is to be found in heavy and punitive taxation and regulation by which States and communities attempt to restrict travel and transportation. We do not intend to imply that motor vehicles are taxed unfairly but we refer to discriminatory action that threatens the "freedom of the highway."

Certain States have established virtual ports of entry which almost amount to customs borders between adjoining commonwealths. The tourist who begins a long journey is fairly assured that he will not meet with undue restrictions upon his right to travel but the commercial motor vehicle is blocked and hampered by various forms of taxes, licenses and barriers.

The economic development of the United States is to be attributed, we think, largely to the practice of free trade between the various States. There should be no barriers to the flow of commerce between the citizens of our States. Whatever temporary advantages the citizens of some States may gain by these tactics will be overwhelmed by the disadvantages that will subsequently follow the general adoption of such methods.

Civilization Will Keep on Going

How many people heard the prophecy, before the European war broke out, that a great war would be the end of civilization?

Well, the idea is debunked by Dr. James B. Conant, president of Harvard University, who recently assured his listeners that "we are not facing the end of civilization." He told his young students that the nation in which they would earn a living would not be radically different from the United States as we now know it.

Every once in a while a college president makes a statement that demonstrates the intelligence that is presumably requisite in his office. Dr. Conant's observation falls into this catagory.

Mental Magnets

Do you remember how as a boy you played with a magnet? And do you remember how, like magic, it would draw to itself nails and needles and other pieces of steel, while holding it over a piece of wood created no response?

"Like attracts like" is not only the law of the magnet—it is also the law of the mind. Psychologists tell us that we cannot store up thoughts of hate and draw to ourselves the love of our fellows. We cannot think disease and be healthy. We cannot think defeat and win victories.

To make our minds magnets for the best in life we must fill them with constructive, hopeful, optimistic, harmonious, courageous, confident thoughts. To win friends we must be friendly. To win loyalty we must be loyal. To become successful we must think success.

We create our own mental magnet—we get back in the long run what we give, we attract those things to which we are attuned. It is up to us.—The Silver Lining.

Every Third Minute

The Forest Service of the Department of Agriculture says that a forest fire begins every three minutes in the United States, or, at least, that was the case in 1937.

In the 181,209 forest fires last year 21,980,500 acres of timber were burned at a loss of $20,668,880. It is worth noticing that 94 per cent of the acreage burned was in unprotected forest areas, where there is no organized fire control system.

THE NEW AUTOMOBILES are being shown for 1940! That's important news, not only to Michigan, but to the entire nation. For, you will remember, the motor industry plays a tremendous part in our national prosperity. Perhaps in this respect, even the New Dealers would not even mention "the horse & buggy days."

STORIES ARE GOING the rounds in Michigan that Governor Dickinson, past 80, is to be a Republican candidate to succeed himself next year. By that time, so far as State business administration is concerned, Michigan may be so close to "the hellish brink" that the Democrats will promise themselves into office.

LAST JUNE there were 920,310 persons on the federal government's payroll; 2,550 more than at the World War peak November 11, 1918. That is one reason why 25 cents of every dollar earned goes directly or indirectly into the tills of government. A certain number of government employees is necessary, of course; beyond this the whole thing becomes a racket.

NOW, IF DETROIT'S Mayor Reading could only get Miss America—that feminine prize beauty who hails from the Motor City—to appear with him on every campaign platform, he probably would be re-elected Mayor. Pretty girls have helped to sell much of the nation's merchandise, so why not use 'em in the game of politics?

WHEN A CHURCH BISHOP STEALS a lot of money that doesn't belong to him, and then goes to prison, that is news—news, for the simple fact that few clergymen ever go to prison. One shouldn't judge the whole clergy by the acts of a few of its delinquent members, and the same logic applies to other groups of human beings.

HAUNTING US THIS HALLOWE'EN

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
Oct. 31, 1889

Burglars still infest our usually model town. One night last week the lion was bearded in his den, figuratively speaking—that is, some bold burglars invaded the quiet home of Constable Beattie and went all through the house, but were undoubtedly frightened away before finding anything they wanted. No doubt money was the only object. Mrs. Cantine, an elderly lady, and Mr. DeConick, a barley buyer, stayed with Mr. Beattie's family that night, and both had money with them, which perhaps shows that some one was cognizant with the fact. However, nothing was lost, only Jim's opportunity to belabor the rascals and we wish he might have been able to do so.

Mrs. H. Peters, who lives in Mrs. C. Harris' house on Saginaw street, announces the fact that she can do fine laundry work and wishes it brought in. See cheap column.

Mr. Alfred David, who lives east of here on the farm formerly owned by Mrs. Herbison, raised 200 bushels of choice potatoes, notwithstanding the poor season.

Twenty-Five Years Ago
Oct. 30, 1914

Mrs. Allie Cook attended the Rotary Club Ball, Thursday evening at the Strasburg Academy, Detroit, with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. Shea.

If he hadn't been rescued by Railroad Haynes, Robert D. Casey asleep on the G. T. Ry. tracks might have been killed. As it was on complaint of Haynes he was charged with being drunk and etc. It cost $17.59 to rescue Robert from the jail at Pontiac. A friend did the rescuing.

About the pleasantest auto trip for a good delightful drive and a happy time all around was the day Charles J. Shain and wife, with Louis Randall and wife, visited Ypsilanti. It sure was a joy ride after their own hearts' best wishes.

The war is costing England $44.50 a second, which is slightly in excess of the cost of running a country newspaper.

Mr. Clarence W. Hyde and wife and daughter were entertained Sunday at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Thos. R. Navin.

Five Years Ago
Nov. 1, 1934

Approximately half of a gang of more than 200 boys were rounded up by police last night in the most boisterous and destructive Hallowe'en celebration in the city's history.

The Birmingham Y. M. C. A.'s annual maintenance fund campaign will open officially next Wednesday night with a banquet for all workers, Y. M. C. A. board members and committee workers.

Breaking and entering charges face two brothers who were arrested after being discovered prowling around the rooms of the Bloomfield Village School on Lahser road Tuesday night by Phillip Lambert, special deputy and head of a private police patrol.

We Read

"The Man With The Hoe," we read, earned $250,000 for Edwin Markham, the man with the rake-off.—Boston Herald.

What Is Genius?

Talent it that which is in a man's power: genius is that in whose power a man is.

—James Russell Lowell.

I'll Leave It to You

By JOHN DENLER

I know that there are too many laws now, and that what we need is to get rid of a flock of them and enforce those that are left, but before we stop adding new ones I would like to propose a law against "door knob talkers."

I don't know whether you recognize these public enemies by name or not, but they're familiar to you. You've had them in your home. You've sworn at them under your breath. You've wished there were a law against them, too. For they're the people who, at eleven o'clock, say they really must be going, who get up to leave at a quarter to twelve, and who, at twelve-thirty, are still standing in the hall talking—while you're fishing in your pockets for a couple of toothpicks with which to prop your eyes open.

There are several different types of "door knob talkers," all of them about equally vicious. There's the kind, for instance, who puts on his coat and hat and then drifts back into the living room to do his talking. He usually sits on the loose arm of one of your most cherished antique chairs and is particularly difficult to budge. The best way to handle him is simply to turn out the lights and go upstairs to bed without even saying goodnight.

Then there's the type who opens the front door before he turns on the chatter. Inasmuch as he has his coat and hat on, the cold winter drafts that bring you to with a start and rob you of that pleasant feeling of drowsiness just when you want it most never bother him. If you have a vestibule, you can get rid of him by suddenly slamming your inside door shut and waiting five minutes before you open it to apologize. If your outside door opens directly into the hall, however, the best plan is to wait patiently until the icy blasts cool the house sufficiently to start the oil burner. This will give you a chance to excuse yourself politely with some remark to the effect that you want to turn off the oil burner inasmuch as it's getting pretty late and you don't want the upstairs sleeping rooms to get overheated. Most "door knob talkers" will take the hint and leave.

Most of the "door knob talkers" fall into the above two classifications. There are a few, however, who put on their hats and coats and then sit on the stairs. They are a dangerous type because there is no discreet way in which you can get by them and go up to your room. Then there is another species of this household pest that worms his way, coat and hat in hand, to the kitchen, presumably for a drink of water. This water stunt is just a gag, however, for this type of "door knob talker" is never satisfied until he gets a sandwich and a cup of coffee.

I'll confess that I don't know what the best solution to this twentieth century problem is. If you have any ideas, let me know because I can certainly use them.

Trust

An old lady in Missouri has written her first novel at the age of 70. We trust this will set an example for many other authors. —Life.

A Spanish toreador is giving up bull-fighting to get married. Well, of course he knows best.—The Humorist (London).

Congressional Comment

by Representative George A. Dondero 17th Michigan District

Tax Prospects: An analysis of our Federal tax structure shows that wage earners and low income groups would be called upon to pay a much greater proportion of Federal taxes should the United States become involved in war. The vast reserve of taxing power available in 1916 to meet the World War expenditures has been employed by the Federal government at approximately the full war-time level since 1935. Because of this situation, small incomes now represent the principal source of new revenues.

In the fiscal year 1916 a total of $782,500,000 was collected in Federal revenues, less than 2 per cent of the national income, and there was a surplus of $48,000,000 after expenditures.

Because of war demands, Federal revenues increased to more than $5,000,000,000 in 1919 and to more than $6,000,000,000 in 1920. In 1917 receipts amounted to $1,124,000,000 and there was a deficit of $850,000,000; in 1918, receipts of $3,664,000,000 and a deficit of $9,000,000,000; and in 1919, receipts of $5,152,000,000 and a deficit of $13,370,000,000. In 1920 Federal revenues of $6,694,000,000 represented more than 8 per cent of our national income.

In 1935 receipts amounted to $3,800,000,000 and there was a deficit of $3,575,000,000; in 1936, receipts of $4,115,000,000 and a deficit of $4,763,000,000; in 1937, receipts of $5,293,000,000 and a deficit of $2,811,000,000; and in 1938, receipts of $6,241,000,000 and a deficit of $1,524,000,000. In the latter year the receipts represented approximately 10 per cent of our national income, exceeding the war peak by 2 per cent. It is estimated that the 1939 ration of Federal receipts will approximate 15 per cent of our national income.

Federal revenues, combined with state and local taxes, now require 23 per cent of our national income and we are not even meeting our current expenses of government. In addition; reserve borrowing power has been reduced by the amount of the national debt, which is now more than $15,000,000,000 over our war-time peak of $26,000,000,000.

The necessity for greatly increased expenditures because of war will require the imposition of income taxes upon the low income groups and an increase in the rate of taxation, as well as the levying of other taxes on commodities or transactions not now taxed by the Federal government. This would indicate that wage earners and low-income groups, as well as all others, will be called upon to yield a much greater proportion of their earnings to the Federal government than they now contribute in the event of our involvement in any war.

Strange

Fur from five rabbit skins is needed to make a man's soft hat. And still it is the straw hat that keeps jumping off.—Christian Science Monitor.

Evidently

According to an entomologist, a butterfly eats practically nothing. Evidently he has never taken one out to dinner.—The Humorist, London.

Knocking on Wood!

with JOHN H. HARWOOD

INFORMALLY SPEAKING

"It takes me a long time to lose my temper, but once lost I could not find it with a dog."—Mark Twain.

—o—

Goldfish frozen and revived 552 times appeared none the worse for the experience. Apparently only the college boys and the kitchen cat can harm these parlor denizens.

—o—

Mules have been declared out of this war. Yes, and even the horse is going to have a tough time getting into the cavalry.

—o—

Business

Business conditions appear definitely on the upgrade, and analysts generally say that "good times" should stay with us for some time. Some declare that war or no war, conditions were ripe in the United States for an upturn.

The Department of Commerce industrial index is over the 100 mark—better than in 1929. Business Week magazine's index is within a few points of 1929. Yet, common sense tells us we are not within the 1929 level, for millions of men are out of work. Something is wrong with the business indexes.

One serious defect is that the indexes don't allow for growth in population. In 1920, it is estimated that the country had 9,277,021 men between the age of 20 and 24. In 1930, this had grown to 10,870,378 men; and in 1940, there will probably be a million more in this age group alone—all looking for jobs. As long as our population expands, there must be industrial growth to provide more jobs.

Unfortunately, during the past 10 years, there has not been much industrial expansion.

—o—

Canada Looks at War

A brief jaunt into Canada last Sunday revealed little to show that the nation is at war. In London, raw-boned looking fellows in ill-fitting uniforms dug from the moth balls of the last war were seen in some numbers on the streets.

The people this observer talked with displayed no great concern, although those with male relatives of the cannon-fodder age naturally were worried about a great campaign in France which would call for men to replace the casualties. Some were enlisting to get into preferred branches of the service.

All felt the pinch which always occurs when the war burden is imposed.

The price of tobacco had gone up, and the usual package of cigarettes which sells 10 for a dime now contains only nine cigarettes.

"There isn't any wool on the market—the government has taken it all for uniforms," one man said. Retail buying is brisk, as the public hastens to buy in anticipation of rising prices.

Another man, a wholesale produce broker, reported that it was next to impossible for shippers to get jute bags for their wares. A ship from India, laden with jute, was unreported and overdue.

—o—

Argument Easy

The Canadian resident possesses a peculiar slant on American participation in the last war. He thinks it was our **duty** to go over to France and "stop the Kaiser," and now he believes for some unknown reason, that we are obligated again to go overseas and save the world for democracy.

One man was mildly indignant that the United States didn't get into the World War at once instead of waiting until 1917 when the "dirty work had all been done."

A glance at current newspapers revealed that the British propagandists were doing their job well, for the Canadian press seemed to reiterate the danger Canada is in from Hitler and invasion and all the other nonsense which they would like very much for us to believe, too.

Censorship in Canada on war dispatches appeared exactly the same as that imposed abroad on war news sent to the United States. One significant omission was any reference to the big argument in Parliament last week over the policies of Premier Chamberlain. Apparently, it is not desirable for the Dominions to start thinking about war policies; they are supposed to concentrate on sending men, machines and money.

Amateur radio broadcasting has been banned in Canada, and power plants and important factories are under heavy guard. Persons of recent German residence have been largely dismissed from their jobs.

The most surprising thing in the whole Canadian attitude is that there apparently is no feeling of gratitude for the billions we spent and the thousands of men we offered for slaughter in the Great War. Still, perhaps it is not so strange, for their role in the last war was some what the same as ours. Neither country had any business meddling in the quarrels which have embroiled Europe before North America was ever heard of. Canada was drawn in through that ephemeral bond of loyalty to an idea—the Crown. They were helping to pull English and French chestnuts out of the fire, but this fact was obscured by patriotism and the same "save the world from the Kaiser" which drew the United States into it. Both country's obligation was the same, as they see it. It is this moral outlook which makes it so easy for the Canadians and British to dismiss the war debts.

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 150 words, and must be in the office by Tuesday noon for publication the following Thursday.

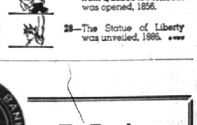
To the Editor:

In this letter I am calling attention to a mistake on the third page of part two of last week's Eccentric, where the writer says we should become ensured to all kinds of weather. Enured should begin with an "i". I hope that Mrs. George and Miss Minifie will take this as a compliment, because it proves that we are interested in their letters and read them close enough to see a slight error in spelling.

With regard to the weather perhaps if I had never lived any where else I would get tired of the ever lasting changes, but I lived five years in Arizona where the sun rises red every morning in Fresno county for four months in summer and it gets very monotonous, and then I have better health in Michigan, which outweighs all other considerations.

CHARLES MARTIN,
Route 3.

ALMANAC



"An old cat laps as much milk as a young."

OCTOBER

23—Sarah Bernhardt, famous French actress, born, 1845.

24—The George Washington bridge over Hudson River was opened, 1931.

25—The famous Charge of the Light Brigade was made, 1854.

26—William Penn reached America, 1682.

27—Grand Trunk Railroad from Quebec to Montreal was opened, 1856.

28—The Statue of Liberty was unveiled, 1886.

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