

Everybody'll See This One

They Apparently Want More Data Before They Will Vote 'Yes'

Twice within the past four months a majority of Birmingham voters have disapproved propositions placed before them by our city commission.

One of them, in April, was for a new east side fire hall. Voters negated this on the theory that not enough time had been provided for full and open public discussion of the proposition.

Last week the voters turned down a proposition to amend the City Charter, which amendment would have empowered the city officials to enter into a contract with the Southeast Oakland County Sewage Disposal District for handling a portion of Birmingham's sewage.

Again the apparent reason for disapproval of this amendment was lack of time for full and open discussion of the proposition—especially since the commission and the manager had failed to explain satisfactorily the possible eventual details of the subject.

MEMBERS OF The city government should not, in our opinion, assume that these two failures to win public support mean that both propositions should not again be submitted to the voters; for both are within the bounds of public necessity.

They failed to carry simply because our city officials did not, prior to the balloting, provide the taxpayers with every possible bit of information on these subjects, or at least more than enough data to give the picture in the proper perspective.

In no way are these expressions of the voters attacks or criticisms of the honesty and integrity of our officials. Rather, we think, they are simple reminders to them that, under our form of government, the taxpayers are entitled to a reasonable period of time in which to ponder the subject at hand, to learn all they can about it—in brief, to engage in the forthright discussions that attend good citizenship.

PUBLIC OFFICIALS in a community like Birmingham are not professional politicians. They are not interested in deceiving the taxpayers so that they can acquire any personal gain.

Birmingham's history of its city officials has been that they are our neighbors, willing to enlist their time and talents to help their community grow and plan for its affairs as well as the circumstances permit.

Poor Bricks Beget a Bad House

To build a house of bricks, first you must have good bricks, then good mortar to bind and hold them together. Otherwise the house will, over a period of time, fall apart.

If you wish to build good administration of government, you must have adopted good principles plus competent and honest human beings to operate these principles. You may argue that you try to use good principles, but if you fail to

Birmingham, due to its exceptional growth, is presented with many new and pressing problems. The solutions to many of these problems will cost additional money. Our city officials and our school officials are faced with well nigh staggering problems of expansion of services, in order to meet the normal demands of our tremendous growth.

IS IT ANY WONDER, then, that our citizens, pressed on every side with high costs, are more wary than ever before of accepting possible added taxes?

But the taxpayer, too, must realize that this community does not belong to any group of public officials. It belongs to all of its citizens. They must pay the costs of governmental services. They vote into office those of their major preference, but when they have left the ballot box at election time they have not necessarily abdicated from their duties as citizens.

Between elections citizens have the right and the duty to contact their public officials . . . whether they be local, state or national. Is not such contact the very essence of an alert and informed citizenship?

WE SHOULD NEVER elect public officials and then forsake them. To do so is to give them less homage than they deserve. And we remind public officials that they will do better jobs, win more sympathetic understanding and approval of themselves, if they welcome public participation in their routine activities.

To spend several hundred thousand dollars of added taxes for a new fire hall is no little matter. To amend a city's charter—its basic constitution—also is no act of unimportance.

So we suggest to our City commission that it be not discouraged; that it take up the temporarily shackled fire hall and charter amendment it failed to win passage of, and with plenty of opportunity afforded to the citizens for public discussion, again present them to the November election ballot.

THAT IS THE American way of doing civic things.

We're not discouraged, boys . . . and your townsmen will say: "Thanks!"

use good people, then your program goes sour.

When you remind yourself that governmental operation uses human beings, and that human beings are not all good, not all bad, and they get mixed up in government (as they also do in private activities), you better understand why perfection is hardly possible.

Indeed, you cannot build a good brick house with either poor bricks or poor mortar.



Happenings of Long Ago

Bits of News Glanned From Old Files of The Eclectic—The Items That Make Up the Historical Background of The Birmingham of Today.

50 YEARS AGO August 13, 1902. It is with considerable satisfaction that we are able to announce to our readers the establishment of a new firm which will hereafter be known as the Birmingham Brick and Tile Company, Ltd. It is composed of A. Whitehead, J. E. Daniels and George H. Mitchell.

Someone dares to suggest that if we are to have the supervisors and their wives visit our village trees, clean out a few alleys and slick up a bit. How about it?

From the Orin Review, Miss Myra Coleman of Farmington and Miss Cleane Doty of Birmingham were guests of Miss Edith Littlefield on Saturday until Tuesday.

Both of the ladies are connected with the Detroit Conservatory of Music, Miss Doty being one of the teachers.

It is a shame the Salvation Army machinery will not be held here. They profess to be seeking sinners and right here in Michigan they have had 10,000 come to them. Salvationists, you missed the chance of the year.

Self feeders' band cutters and sackers seen on their machines working in this part this year. It looks to us either as though, before long, he'll be the only man in Birmingham who isn't having his work done for him by some sort of a machine!

20 YEARS AGO August 16, 1932. Birmingham educators have affected a \$47,000 slash in teacher salaries, balanced the budget and announced the closing of the school on Sept. 19. Married women will be placed on a half-time basis and others have arrears due for two or three months. Some staff members have volunteered cuts as high as \$1,000 in their annual salaries.

The newly completed landscaping project at the Birmingham Community house speaks well for the cooperative spirit of the village. Started by the Farm and Garden association, the project has proved as a small-scale program for the time being the most beneficial of many projects having brought it nearly to fulfillment.

A bee flew into a car and so

well, the first lap of the political race is behind us. Candidates are rolling up their sleeves and getting down to the business at hand—carrying their messages far and wide to the voters. Birmingham began its "water revitalization" several months ago when a concerted drive was put on to register voters. The success of their efforts was proven last week Tuesday when an unprecedented number of ballots were cast locally for a primary election.

That interest has not waned was evident at the city hall the morning after the election. Before the finished tabulating returns and filing out the necessary blanks, registrars were being made by persons who had "missed the boat" for the primaries.

In early every precinct there were interesting little sightings on the election.

YOUNG MOTHERS, unable to get the services of baby sisters, brought infant, carriage and all, to the polls. While baby didn't get a chance to vote, he for a while was at least starting a step in the right direction of a lady voter.

In one district a lady waited over an hour to vote, only to find she was not the lady who had forgotten that a brief residence in another area had cancelled her right to vote in Birmingham.

While we're not able to vouch for this, we did hear of one election inspector who forgot to vote until so close to the 8 p.m. deadline that she's taking a terrific ride from her family.

During these pre-primary campaigns all of us have had to realize many times that getting the nomination is not winning the election. It has been drilled into us that this will be a long-range battle, with the primaries only a dress rehearsal.

Will the voters go along with this? What do you think?

THROUGHOUT the day, clerks in all of the city's eight precincts

ONE THING OR ANOTHER By George Wm. Averill

It wouldn't surprise me some of these days to see in The Eclectic the following classified ad: "WANTED by the Birmingham city commission—a man or woman who can figure out what the local public wants to know, then has the ability to put into public hearing, city notices, special pamphlets the facts and figures such public desires. Position now open, could have used you months ago. Pay practically nothing, but unlimited opportunity for advancement of workable ideas."

An optimistic supporter of primary loser Don Leonard was overheard to remark, "Well, it's better to have voted and lost than never to have voted at all."

From time to time people ask me why The Eclectic's overall page size is noticeably larger than those of the three Detroit dailies. The answer is because the three dailies use only a 3-point column rule (The Eclectic uses 6-point), and the shrinking of the page margin. This amounts to almost a 1 1/2-inch difference between the page sizes of the dailies and The Eclectic.

The huge daily presses are high-speed in order to turn out in a short time the hundreds of thousands of copies they need each day. These big presses require curved plates fastened tightly to the cylinders. The curved "screens" are obtained by pouring molten lead against a similarly curved paper-machined "mat." This "mat" is obtained when a damp paper is applied under pressure against the

Storm Sash and Screens Standard & Combination Available or Made To Order

Combination Doors Plywood, Glass and Lumber

Woodcraft Co. 1184 Grant St., just South of Lincoln Phone MI 4-0424

Advertisement for Woodcraft Co. featuring images of storm sashes and doors, and contact information.

Advertisement for Most Modern WATER HEATER you can buy... because it's ELECTRIC

Advertisement for Electric water heaters, featuring a cartoon character and the text 'SEE YOUR DEALER or Detroit Edison GET THE FINEST... GO ELECTRIC'

From The Eccentric's Point of View . . .

Poor Estes Kefauver! He so wanted to win his party's nomination that he pondered in the left-wing elements of his party, and lost. When a candidate frankly seeks public office, either for the first time or for re-election, he often grasps every hand extended his way . . . and loudly suggests by his action: "Votes! Votes! Votes are what I want . . . who wants to vote for me? . . . I'll promise anything for votes!"

Shocked over the damage done by last spring's flood, where the rampaging Missouri river flows, the federal government sympathized with those who suffered, and gave them financial help. Yet that same government now opens the flood gates at Sault Ste. Marie and lets more water flow southward, doing great property damage. As so often happens in Big Government, "one hand doesn't know what the other hand is doing."

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So They Say . . .

ALEXANDER WILEY, U. S. Senator from Wisconsin:

"We Americans can, and must, get rid of incompetents and security risks, the disloyal individuals in government—but we can do it in a traditional American way."

Dean Acheson, Secretary of State in Brazil:

"Today our civilization faces the stark necessity of strengthening itself or perishing."