Water Shortage Not Due to Decreased Rainfall

Birmingham, like so much of the remainder of the United States, has seen its available water supply diminish with the increase in its population.

Depending now upon water from deep well pumps, our community soon will have an added source from Detroit. Eventually, it is expected, all of southeastern Michigan will go to Lakes Huron and Erie for final and unlimited water supplies.

Water shortages are not sudden developments and cannot be attributed entirely to a lack of rainfall. The use of water has quadrupled between 1900 and 1950, and is expected to double again by 1975.

The U.S. Geological Survey estimates that 200 billion gallons of water were used every day last year, compared to 170 billion four years earlier. This steep rise in water consumption is a product of our high standard of living.

• • •

IT IS ESTIMATED that American industry uses 100 billion gallons of water daily. Billions more are being used for irrigation, and the rest is used by households.

Though these shortages are real enough, competent authorities maintain that water resources replenished by precipitation will exceed total demand for at least 100 years. Practical engineers, insist, however, that the trouble is caused by an uneven distribution of water supplies.

Ending pollution will increase the usable water supply, while other methods involve reducing the number of water-absorbing trees, harvesting of young trees, preventing salt water contamination of fresh water.

Added research is needed on converting salt water into fresh. Equally important is the establishment of a national program for meeting this problem, for coordinating research and for promoting cooperation among federal and local agencies.

City Soon May Have to Buy It Back Again

When the Birmingham city commission recently agreed to let Mrs. Elizabeth Bronson re-purchase her house and lot at 244 Townsend, it would appear on the surface that much of the southwest business section's parking need has been taken care of.

For Mrs. Bronson's property is immediately south of and abutting the 50-plus car lot on Merrill street. This lot is only two blocks west of the 250-car facility almost ready for use at Pierce and Merrill streets.

• • •

CITY STUDIES have indicated appreciably more parking is in demand there.

Now with the proposed Siegel branch store two blocks north, and the accompanying commercial development around the larger lot which is a foregone conclusion, the city in a short time may find itself right back negotiating again with Mrs. Bronson and her neighbors.

Jules Vern Really Could Write Fact-Fiction Today!

Jules Verne died too soon. The French author of science fiction was far too conservative in his forecasts.

When he wrote "Around the World in 80 Days," he little dreamed it might some day be possible to cross the Atlantic in half an hour. Or that soon the whole world might be circled comfortably in an afternoon.

These predictions were made to the Chamber of Commerce of the United States by John Jay Hopkins, president of the General Dynamics Corporation. He thinks that atomic powered aircraft may make it possible to have dinner in New York and dessert in London.

• • •

ONE AVIATOR has had breakfast and dinner in Los Angeles, with luncheon in New York in between.

One Verne prophecy is not yet fulfilled. We have not made it "From the Earth to the Moon."

But give us time.

Established Bidding Methods Have Proven Best

Birmingham's new ice skating rink may be delayed a few weeks this fall as the result of the city commission's last week decision to re-advertise for bids for installation of the ice-making machinery.

But we believe the delay is worth it.

We think commissioners slipped slightly in their usual smooth running of local government in making the initial contract award.

• • •

THE LOW BIDDER admittedly had not submitted a bid that met all advertised specifications. Nor had he exercised the accepted method of meeting the specifications, then submitting alternate prices for material he believed would do the same job at less cost.

However, the commission liked the bid, awarded the contract.

Then, on second thought a week later, the commission decided it should have stuck to the usual method of contract awarding.

Perhaps the commission realized that it was in effect short-circuiting the established municipal method of obtaining lowest costs to taxpayers. Because bidders can't be competitive if they don't know what the city wants to buy.

We're pleased to see the commission reaffirm its acceptance of this policy.

From The Eccentric's Point of View...

At their special session in October, Michigan's legislators will be asked to make drunk driving tests a qualification for getting a driver's license. In other words, to obtain the right to drive, you must agree to take such drunkometer tests if police officers believe it necessary after stopping you on the road. We know strenuous objections will be raised against this proposal, some of them quite reasonable. However, we already have agreed to conform to a number of qualifying factors in getting our present licenses, such as eyesight and loss of limbs. We see little real difference in being prohibited from driving with seriously impaired vision, or while bleary eyed from too much alcohol.

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GEORGE R. AVERILL
Editor and Publisher
PAUL NEAL AVERILL
Business Manager
GEORGE WM. AVERILL
Managing Editor
HAROLD P. BUERGE
Advertising Manager

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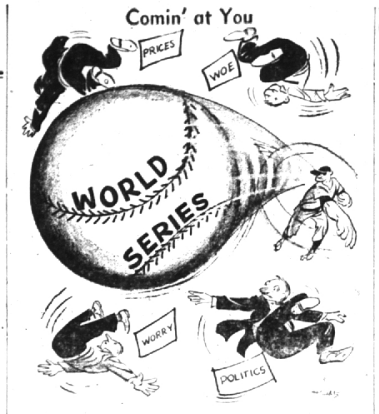

HORSE SENSE AND NONSENSE

By ALICE E. MORGAN

Listening to the lonely tolling of a bell on a recent radio program, it came to us the important roles these instruments have played and still play in our lives.

Today, with radio, television and an abundance of daily papers, the bells do not play as big a part as they did in years gone by, but still exert their "power" over many of us.

In olden days, the bells of seaport towns helped those ashore know of the comings and goings of ships. There, and inland, they recorded the passing of a community's citizens and even the arrival of new ones.

• • •

THE DREAD cry of "fire" still sets the bells to ringing in many a small community where volunteer firemen are summoned only as needed. In our lives we have seen these same bells herald the beginning and end of "air alerts" as citizens were trained for the day all hoped would never come—the day that was filled with the roaring engines of enemy bombers.

To millions of us the school bell, now somewhat a thing of the past, has played an important role.

It has signaled the start of another year of formal learning, the call to the tasks of another day and has spurred the laggard into a trot to avoid a "late" mark after his name.

• • •

CHURCH bells have called us to worship, and, frankly, we miss them. Going to church somehow isn't the same without the throaty chimes of the old church bell. It called us from our homes, the second bell hurrying us on our way, and the final notes of the last bell blending into the voice of organ and choir as the service began.

Bells have guided ships through treacherous waters, have given messages to engineers and station agents along railroads and have even helped the farmer locate his stock pastured in far meadows and woods.

They have heralded the Christmas morn and have rung out in jubilation as the New Year broke. It would have been fun, had radio been available then, to follow the bells from coast to coast, instead of the dance bands we hear today.

• • •

BELLS HAVE parts in many fields. They signal the passage of fire trucks, the rounds' end at prize fights, have their power over horses and drivers at the race tracks.

Throughout the land they let housewives know someone is at the door and in modified form call her to the phone and let her know her cake is done, coffee is perked and bread toasted.

But the housewife has another view of the bells, those romantic, beautiful, delicate bells that adorned her wedding. True, most of the bells concerned with her wedding were silent, the organ supplanting their voices, the fancy flowered bells representing their form.

THIS, THOUGH, not always was true, for once the bells had their own song to sing, telling all that another bride was facing her new life, her new world.

Bells have always been utilitarian instruments, each with its own voice keyed to the message it must bring. The high sweet bells glad tidings; deep-voiced solemn bells broadcasting the woes and sorrows of mankind.

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.

50 YEARS AGO
Sept. 22, 1905

Oakland County's new court house will be dedicated on October 16-17 at which time there will be a jollification and gala day.

• • •

Miss Jennie Keyes received a genuine surprise party last Monday evening. About 12 of the nearest neighbors and giddy girls gathered together and gave Miss Jennie the surprise of her life.

• • •

Our village is to be blessed with the family of Mrs. Blanding and her daughter, Miss Charlotte, and son, Fred. They will live in A. W. Campbell's home which will be vacated in about a week by Mr. Fred Crawford and wife who move into their own home on Henrietta street.

• • •

Mrs. Dr. Neff gave a bridge whist party at their Cass Lake cottage Tuesday of this week. Among those hospitably entertained were Mrs. J. A. Bigelow, Mrs. H. A. Poppleton of Birmingham and Miss James of Phoenix, Ariz.

30 YEARS AGO
Sept. 18, 1925

One hundred and fifty dogs were killed in Royal Oak township during the past two weeks because they were not licensed under the terms of the Oakland County Dog tax ordinance.

• • •

The Farmington and Birmingham Exchange clubs pitted their skill against each other in a golf contest at the Birmingham Golf club last Wednesday afternoon, Sept. 9. Though the Farmington club was the challenger and, therefore it would seem confident of its success in the game, the Birmingham Exchangites came out ahead with a score of 840, their opponents rating being 854.

• • •

If Mrs. J. F. Pope of 502 South Woodward avenue, will call at The Eccentric office as soon as she reads this, she may take possession of a five dollar bill which is her compensation for suggesting the name "Sunset Park" for the village-owned piece of property on Southfield avenue, near Lincoln avenue.

• • •

15 YEARS AGO
Sept. 12, 1940

Mrs. Fred D. Farrar of Greenwood avenue, holds the new title "Chairman of Program Steering" in the American Association of University Women.

• • •

Friday the 13th or no Friday the 13th, Ruth Asper this week refused to cancel plans just because she discovered that the personal shower and buffet supper which Hilda Brown, of Baldwin avenue, had planned was to be on the day of ill omen.

• • •

Mr. and Mrs. Fred Stinson (Ruth Workman) of Humphrey avenue are receiving congratulations on the birth of a son, Richard Fred, at St. Joseph Mercy hospital, Pontiac, Saturday.

Plaques to Mark Park, Playground

Largy boulders with bronze plaques attached will be placed in St. James park and on Booth playground recording the names designated by the city commission in recent resolutions.

Booth playground is on the corner of Harmon and Woodward and St. James park is south of Lincoln between Grant and Edgewood.

"The proper way to turn a child in the way it should go, is to go that way yourself."

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ONE THING OR ANOTHER *By George Wm. Averill*

Last week William R. Lebold turned over his economy-sized can of DDT, his tree auger, and trimming saws to a new man, apparently having decided that selling homes was much easier than trying to eliminate the elm bark beetle.

Five years ago, Bill joined the city of Birmingham as city forester—and the elm beetle only was something which New England city foresters wrote about in forestry journals.

At that time, Bill kept busy planting and trimming city trees with a moderate amount of personnel and equipment.

But then somehow one of those devilish beetles landed in the South Oakland area—even a few in Birmingham. And Bill and his men began a battle with the beetles to halt the alarming spread of Dutch elm disease.

This led to the need for more men and equipment including a DDT mist blower, more power saws and brush clippers.

Bill succeeded in getting the city commission on his side, appropriation-wise, and the city went into the twice-a-year spraying program for the elms on city property along the streets.

But the beetles are an active bunch—and most of them sought their nourishment from and habitation in the dead wood in elm trees on private property.

And the Dutch disease-stricken elms continued to increase greatly—but not in the city trees.

So perhaps Bill thought long about the gigantic battle ahead of him with so many apathetic householders, finally decided he would get down to earth and sell real estate.

But knowing of Bill's affection for trees and shrubs and such natural beauty, we know he is going to slip this additional remark into his comments after the ink is dry on the sale documents:

"And don't forget to spray those beautiful elms twice a year, Mr. Jones—or the beetles may get there first."

• • •

The Sat Eve Post's current series on the trouble in which America's suburbs find themselves has an interesting comment relating to the Birmingham-Bloomfield area and the Michigan Turnpike Authority. If you haven't seen it, on page 114 in the Sept. 17 issue, you might like to stop over to the neighbor's and read the comment concerning Michigan's "elegant suburban area".

• • •

There are or will be 61,300,000 automobiles on the roads this year. If you drive on Sundays or holidays you probably think you've passed or been behind at least that many.

If this seems a lot, just wait 10 years when driving will be even less enjoyable. The Federal Bureau of Public Roads estimates that by that time there will be, at a minimum, 81,000,000 cars.

If this trend continues, and there seems no reason why it will not, where are we going to put all those cars? Any one coming up with a sound answer to this question demonstrates an ability that should land him a busy million-dollar-a-year job.

A long line would doubtless form for motorists willing to donate a dollar a year to keep such a genius occupied dispersing auto traffic.

Walker Scheduled For European Duty

Pvt. Richard A. Walker of the 10th infantry division is scheduled to be sent to Europe from Ft. Riley, Kas., this month as part of operation gyroscope, new army unit rotation plan.

Son of Cecil B. Walker, 195 Catalpa drive, he is a 1954 graduate of Birmingham high school. Walker entered the army in January.

Household goods of every description are offered for sale in the Classified Columns of The Birmingham Eccentric.

Lincoln Improvement Hearing Scheduled

Birmingham city commission will hold a hearing Oct. 3 to consider necessity of constructing Lincoln avenue pavement east from Eton road.

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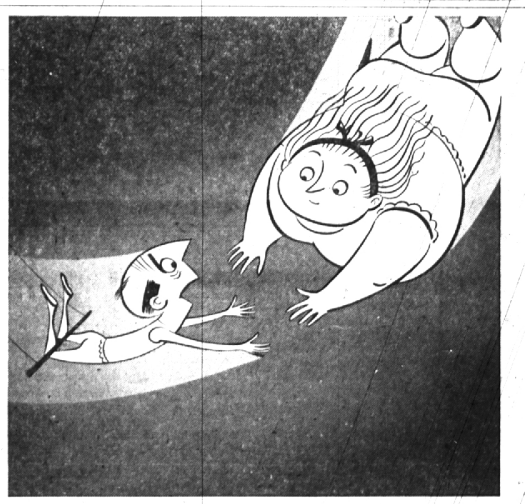

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Enjoy a carefree washday. Dry your clothes electrically—the modern way.
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