

### We'd Like to Expand a 'Daffynition'

Recently in our Strictly Fresh column on Page One of Section One, it said that an "all-day sucker" is a fellow who believes every commercial he hears on the radio.

Perhaps we should broaden that a little and say an "all-day sucker" also is a fellow who believes everything he reads in newspapers, magazines and other publications.

Let us hasten to add that it is not usually the newspaper's or magazine's fault, or that of sloppy reporting (although inaccurate reporting partly may be to blame).

Chief cause of deception, however, is from the news source who, for some reason known only to himself, supplies misleading facts, only part of the information, or gives out inaccurate information, either intentionally or unintentionally.

### "Black Hand" Menaces Some Fellow-Italians

The United States has its gangsters, and Southern Italy its Mafia, whose American branch has long been familiar as the "Black Hand." In the United States it operates chiefly against its fellow-Italians, who, in the old country, have often seen too much of the operations of the police to trust them here. On this account often they do not apply for protection when threatened.

The Mafia, long entrenched in Southern Italy and Sicily, was attacked by Mussolini, but not uprooted. The present Italian government is making another effort, concentrated in Reggio di Calabria, the mainland headquarters of the gang. In the last two months many members have been

sent to jail or banished to the island of Ustica.

THE MAFIA IS LIKE an American political machine in one respect. Neither could thrive without the secret acquiescence or support of respected citizens. Some aid the Mafia through fear, some gain financial advantages.

When it started nearly 150 years ago it had some excuse for being, in the tyrannical and corrupt character of the government. It has long since lost any respectability, and is merely a body of racketeers.

Our own cities have had enough trouble in rooting out such gangs to appreciate what the Italian government is up against.

Through the lowered window we view a man-patented world, every detail of which is new and exciting. Here almost diamond trees, their falling leaves rich red and shining, arch over the shaded roads.

THERE THEY give way to the faded flamboyant, its foot-long seed pods gleaming dark overhead. Along ditches and swift flowing mountain streams, giant plumes of feathery bamboo make a screen. The imperial rose tree of Japan drops a shower of flowers like great and many petaled golden balls. On the gentle slopes, the African tulip tree lifts its spectacular red-blooming crown.

The royal palm, papaya, banana, breadfruit "in situ," resting within its circle of deeply lobed leaves; all these are part of the peasant of green-growing.

CHILDREN OVERFLOW the hilly huts along the roadside, their outlines half lost in a tangle of hibiscus and bougainvillea, of jasmine and lantana.

Women balancing large water containers on their heads have finished washing clothes in the nearest stream. Ponce saddles with double baskets, hand woven, carry their burdens to market.

In the village, Spanish rhythms flare from the juke boxes. Here is time and space for much song and talk and laughter. The street vendor's cart is piled high with freshly peeled oranges.

SOMETHING IS cooling in an ice-filled barrel. He lifts out and presents and flashes a friendly smile, while with a single stroke of a dangerous-looking knife he cuts off the Spanish tradition. It is inside for one to drink.

As we ascend the mountain range, the road becomes a success-

### Authors Influence Nature of News Stories

Wes Lawrence, a mid-western columnist, conducted an experiment to determine what books have most influenced the news. He checked closely a New York City daily paper to see which items would not have been there or would have appeared differently if certain books had not been written.

In that day's paper the Bible did not head the list. Its influence could be traced in only 11 stories. Twelve showed traces of the English philosopher, John Locke. Sir Isaac Newton, discoverer of gravitation, also affected 12 stories and Einstein, eight.

THE TWO WHOSE INFLUENCE occurred most frequently were economists:

### From The Eccentric's Point of View...

Detroit wants to locate its proposed new airport over in Warren Township, in Macomb County, about six miles east of Birmingham. Wonder, if that airport comes to completion, how much noise future commercial jet airplanes will extend to the ears of local and nearby residents, as the big air-birds fly low for landings and take-offs?

That Blenheim, Ontario, father of four daughters and two sons who are getting married April 28, in a single ceremony, offers proof that he believes in assembly line procedures. A farmer, he argues that he can't take time off in the spring to attend individual weddings, at separated places. Incidentally, there are nine other children in his family. We presume he'll also want future christening ceremonies held on the same efficiency basis.

At last Margaret Truman has found a man to whom she will be wed April 21.

Miss Truman is a fine girl, daughter of a fine mother... and a good father. We expect she will build for herself and soon-to-be husband a fine married life. For her fond parents—we will hope that Bess and Harry will acquire a goodly share of wonderful grandchildren. Maybe his grandchildren will tone Harry down so when he makes a political speech, he will admit that Republicans are human beings, too.

U.S. Senator Estes Kefauver considerably upset the political status of Democrat Adlai Stevenson in the recent Minnesota primary election. The soft-voiced Tennessee didn't have the Democratic machine of Minnesota with him, yet his homey pattern of street-corner campaigning evidently impressed the majority of voters up there... now Adlai will have to get down to earth, removed from the lofty flights of nicely phrased statements and wise-cracks.

**The Birmingham Eccentric**  
Published every Thursday, at Birmingham, Mich., in the Eccentric Building, 220-222 North Woodward Avenue Telephone MI 4-1100

GEORGE R. AVERILL  
Editor and Publisher  
PAUL NEAL AVERILL  
Business Manager  
GEORGE W.M. AVERILL  
Managing Editor  
GERALD E. JEHLE  
Advertising Manager

The Eccentric is a member of National Editorial Association, Michigan Press Association and University Press Club

National Advertising Representatives  
Weekly Newspaper Representatives, Inc.  
1728 Conover Bldg.  
DETROIT 26, MICH.  
404 Fifth Avenue  
NEW YORK 18, N.Y.

### Ticklers By George

"Our neighbor's wife has one unbearable fault. She has things that we can't afford!"



### NATURE NOW Views Harvesting Of Sugar Cane

By LYDIA KING FREHSE  
Special Writer for The Birmingham Eccentric

It is "Zafra time" in Puerto Rico. Thus is designated the colorful sugar cane harvest which lasts from February through June and which represents the island's largest industry.

Now it is early morning and we are off through the rich coastal flats for a two-day trip which will lead over the central mountain range to Ponce on the Caribbean side, then around the western coast to La Paragueria and Mayaguez.

Through the lowered window we view a man-patented world, every detail of which is new and exciting. Here almost diamond trees, their falling leaves rich red and shining, arch over the shaded roads.

AS WE DROP down to the coastal flats, ox carts often take the place of tractors and trucks, and the cane fields must be heavily fertilized and irrigated with water brought down from the mountains.

Whether you view the harvest from the Atlantic or the Caribbean side, there is always the slowly widening margin of slash covering the ground an hundreds of workmen cut their way into the thick green wall of sugar cane.

Because the soon turn sour, stocks are immediately tied up in bundles, loaded on ox carts, trucks, or narrow gauge railways and taken on to one of the 32 great "centrales."

HERE THE juice is extracted and converted into molasses and raw sugar. Much of the former is taken to large distilleries and made into rum.

Ten per cent of the raw sugar is refined on the island, while 90 per cent is shipped to the United States.

During the "zafra" more than 130,000 persons are employed in the 175 million dollar sugar harvest. In spite of recent industrial advances, this crop is still the basis of the island's industrial economy.

AND SO ON to Ponce, the island's second largest city and the home of a great diamond cutting industry. On its streets and in its shaded central plaza is an atmosphere more foreign than we encounter in any other community.

Here friends welcome us to their lovely modern home in their most graceful of Spanish traditions. It is a blending of the new and old which is both satisfying and charming.

### 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  
April 4, 1906  
"J. Schooner's horse 'lit out Monday last and enjoyed an old fashioned run away. No damage done and a friendly neighborly laborer stopped the steed in his mad flight."

"Mrs. Emma Fox of Detroit has just completed a course of lessons in Parliamentary Law in this village. The class was well attended and each member considers the time and the money well spent. The day of the old fashioned church society where everyone talks at a time is well nigh past and the orderly, well conducted business meeting is now in vogue."

"Last Friday night the high wind which increased to a stiff gale caused the wires connecting the fire alarm to connect up and immediately 'twont the fire whistle shrieked out and again immediately 'twont 32 calls came into the telephone central and 32 anxious inquirers asked 'Where's the fire?' Happily there was none and Nate Fall wants to know who is going to pay him for getting up and scratching around."

30 YEARS AGO  
April 2, 1926  
"One of Henry Ford's old time fiddlers, represented in the person of Joseph Brooks, supervisor of Southfield township, regaled members of the Birmingham Exchange club Tuesday noon at the Lone Pine Tea house."

"Without a dissenting vote, members of the Village Players... last Saturday night voted to accept the Old Town Hall, now located at Bates and Merrill streets and move it to another location where it will be rebuilt to suit their needs."

"Willis B. Carter, 815 Brown street, Monday night presented to the village commission a petition requesting that Brown street be paved from Pierce street to Southfield avenue."

15 YEARS AGO  
April 3, 1941  
"A record was broken at Red Cross headquarters Monday by the surgical dressing group, 300 fingers turned out 1,600 gauge sponges in the one day's work."

"One of the most successful band and orchestra concerts ever presented at Baldwin High school was held before a capacity crowd in the school's auditorium last night. This annual event was under the direction of A. W. Berndt, director of instrumental music in Birmingham."

### ONE THING OR ANOTHER By George Wm. Averill

Michigan's Upper Peninsula, come May 21, is going to learn a great deal about the Lower Peninsula (and vice versa).

In last week's pairings of cities and towns for the mayors' day exchange during Michigan Week (May 20-26), all the UP towns were paired with ones from the LP.

Birmingham and Bloomfield Hills are among those who have drawn UP partners, Birmingham and L'Anse (500 miles away at the lower end of Keweenaw Bay), and Bloomfield Hills with Newberry (340 miles from Woodward avenue and Long Lake road).

Last year, both Birmingham and the Hills stayed in the lower half of the state. Birmingham traded with Tustin (11 miles south of Cadillac) while Bloomfield Hills exchanged with Kaleva (north and east of Manistee).

It's not true that only one political party wants a stable government. You can hardly tell which one is doing the most stalling.

Our big electric power companies are getting ready for the atomic power age, and predicting many more time-saving conveniences for the American housewife.

The rhetorical question arises, "What are the women going to do with all this additional spare time?" I'd like to predict that there will be additional time devoted to the youngsters in the family, the juvenile delinquency rate would drop remarkably.

Now if father only were able to aid and did the same thing, nine out of ten of our jails would rust from disuse within a generation.

Would it be practical to establish in our annual routine a fifty-one week observance of brotherhood, while venting all our animosities during "Hate Week"?

Automation is thought of by the man-on-the-street as being industry's answer for keeping product prices down while labor costs go up.

OUR FARMERS, IF THEY CAN' just hold on a little longer in this subsidy-squabble, will be delighted to hear this concluding portion of the report, which said that by 1976, they will have to produce nearly 30 per cent more food, or an estimated 36,000,000 tons annually just to meet 1976 standards for an anticipated population of 216,000,000.

"At best, only a small part of the additional needs can come from cultivating more land; most tillable soil is being farmed now," the report said. "To work more people on the present land would raise labor costs more than yields.

Basically, the increased production must come from increasing yields and eliminating or controlling the ravages of pests, floods and spoilage which destroys so much food production."

So hang on, everybody, just hang on!

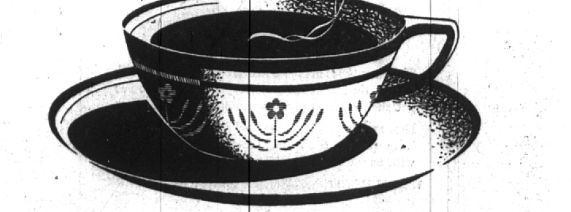
booklets - - - ?

YES... WE PRINT HUNDREDS OF BOOKLETS—EITHER LETTERPRESS OR OFFSET

Three Detroit Salesmen . . . TR 5-2629 . . . Plant MI 6-2000

The AVERILL PRESS INC. of Birmingham  
A COMPLETE PRINTING SERVICE—FROM TYPESETTING TO MAILING

FORMERLY THE BIRMINGHAM ECCENTRIC PRINTING DEPARTMENT



For the price of a cup of coffee, you can cook three complete meals for a family of four on your electric range. And, remember, no other range is "white-glove" clean. No wonder smart homemakers say:

"You can Live Better . . . Electrically"

SEE YOUR DEALER OR DETROIT EDISON