

To Vote—Know More About U.S.

Former President Truman said recently that no one should be allowed to vote until he had passed an examination in American Government and History equal to that given a foreign immigrant when he applies for citizenship.

And why not? If all voters knew that much about their country and Government, they would almost certainly take a greater interest in their Government, and vote more intelligently.

In the last election, only about 44% voted of those legally qualified.

Isn't it important to know about our Government and institutions as to know highway traffic laws? People are required to pass an examination on them before they can drive automobiles.

IGNORANCE ABOUT our Constitution and Government is shocking. In a recent poll, only one person in five could name one or more of the rights and freedoms mentioned in the BILL OF RIGHTS.

A great city newspaper sent a reporter out in the street to ask the first five persons: "What is the meaning of the 4th of July?" Not one gave a fairly intelligent answer.

In another poll of high school graduates, 25% thought George Washington was President during the Civil War.

We spend on our public schools as much as does all the rest of the world put together.

Result: Colossal ignorance of the fundamentals of American citizenship!

From The Eccentric's Point of View...

Since U. S. Secretary of State Dulles has been hospitalized, President Eisenhower has taken on something of the leadership qualities that made him the world's outstanding military man in the defeat of Hitler in World War II. Instead of being a sort of easy-going, even-tempered and incredibly calm President, which he had pretty much been prior to Dulles' illness, Ike has pleasantly surprised millions of Americans who longed to see their President manifest his leadership qualities in these troublous times. Even the unimpressible newspaper men and women in Washington, D. C. have taken, for the most part, a considerable pride in the change that has come over the President. Indeed, we'll wager that Secretary Dulles, as he seeks to recuperate in Walter Reed Hospital in Washington, gets a thrill out of Ike's new behavior.

We are recording this observation for the benefit of future readers of The Eccentric who may wonder if this area ever went through a long cold winter. So let it be recorded this 6th day of March, 1959, that for the past four months, the entire Midwest of the U.S.A. has had one of its most severe winters in more than a generation. Indeed, all parts of the United States have had periods of cold weather, some of it extending way down into Texas and Florida. Last night in Southeastern Michigan, several inches of snow fell—and yet the calendar tells us that Spring is only 15 days away. Ah! The poor weather man. He's really gone through a difficult winter.

Massachusetts' United States Senator, Democrat Jack Kennedy, continues to make a strong bid to win his party's greater support as a candidate for President of the United States in 1960. You may recall that Senator Kennedy, several years ago, wrote a book titled "Profile of

Courage". This book contained stories about a number of famous American statesmen who, when their principles and their courage were challenged by some great public issue, they remained true to themselves and their own conscience. Young Kennedy, whose father is a multimillionaire, is trying to put through a so-called labor reform bill in Congress which, most impartial observers agree, is a lukewarm collection of letters of the alphabet. These observers point out that Kennedy operates solely to woo and win the support of American labor. It looks to us as though Senator Kennedy, unless he pays more attention to the book he wrote, will be able to write another one whose title might well be "Profiles of Cowardice".

It seems to us that the present financial plight of the State of Michigan will work against the chances of Governor Williams to receive his party's nomination for President during the 1960 Democratic Convention. Opponents of Williams, both inside and outside his own party, will make the most of the fact that there is a man who is entering his 6th consecutive term as Governor of the State of Michigan and yet, during all that time, he has been unable to prevent the state's finances from getting so deeply in the red. Right now both our large State universities are facing a possible shut-down due to a lack of funds from the State treasury. You can rest assured that politicians will seize upon such a dilemma, whether it arise in Michigan or any other State. The national political game in these United States often is very cruel, almost brutal.

An American churchman says that stuffy air, much more than stuffy sermons, cause people to fall asleep in church. Of course, the combination of both makes sleeping that much quicker and easier.

The Birmingham Eccentric

Published every Thursday, at Birmingham, Mich., in the Eccentric Building, 220-224 North Woodward Avenue
Telephone Midwest 4-1100

ONE THING OR ANOTHER By George Wm. Averill

Fashion is a fad.
Why else am I supposed to adopt the 1959 continental look in suits, ties and shoes?

Why else is my wife supposed to hie herself into a high-waisted silk silhouette?
Clothing has a purpose. It keeps us warmer, it keeps us cleaner. It keeps us from being burned by the sun, or protects us from the weather.

SOMEONE SOMEWHERE in the dusty volumes of time decided to change his or her costume just because he or she didn't want to look the same as anyone else.

Suburban Sentiment

NATIONAL THOUGHT

How nice if we

could all relax

And be excused from

Income-tax!

—Dorothy Rockwell McWood

That someone went out and hunted down a 12-foot sabre-tooth tiger because everyone else was dressed in 10-foot tiger skins.

Personal vanity got into the act. And it became important to dress differently from other people. And at the same time, it became equally important for everyone else to try to dress like a person who was trying to be different.

OVER THE YEARS, various people have tried to expose the capriciousness of the fashion world. Some have done it, and are remembered:
Like Lord Spencer, who in about 1800, made a bet he could launch a meaningless fashion that would become popular within six months.

So he cut off his coattails and went for a walk.

In only two weeks, all London had adopted the "newest" in men's coat lengths.

Thus the spencer jacket was born.

Vanity first says to the daredevil few: "Be different!"

And to the many millions: "Follow!"

And our civilized merry-go-round keeps on—and getting nowhere.

Date to Watch



NATURE NOW

by Lydia King Frehse
Special Writer for The Birmingham Eccentric

Flower Names Have Intriguing Origins

Flower names have long intrigued those who follow nature's highways and by-ways. What's in a name? More, perhaps, than that which is evident to the casual observer.

Among nature's spectacular plants are those which secure their nitrogen from capturing and digesting small insects. The pitcher plant and Venus fly trap are two of these, which are named for the shape of their leaves. Leather leaf, a hardy bog shrub, the cinquefoil with their five-division leaves, and a spurge called snow-on-the-mountain are other plants whose names are taken from their foliage.

Species named for their root characteristics are frequent. Bloodroot, which exudes a deep red juice, gold thread, whose slender roots shine in the dark earth of northern swamps and coral root, an orchid with a coral-shaped root-stalk, are common examples.

SKUNK cabbage, which is already flowering in our northern marshes, carries vine, whose ill-favored flowers are pollinated by flesh-eating flies and many members of the mint family are plants named for their particular odors. Bunchberry, blackberry, May apple, blueberry—how could list a score of plants whose fruits have named them.

More numerous, however, are the plants which owe their names to some characteristic of the flower itself. Very many are lady's slippers, Dutchman's britches, harebell, skullcap, monk's hood, and Jack-in-the-pulpit. Others equally expressive are touch-me-not, whose seed pod ex-

plodes at a touch; trillium, whose flower and leaf parts are arranged in threes; cat-tail, golden-roed, turtle-head, black-eyed Susan and sunflower. All these are appropriate names for the species which they represent.

PLACES ALSO loom large in naming plants. Many states and countries have been thus designated, sometimes because of a specimen's particular abundance in a certain locality or because it was first found within that range. In scientific nomenclature, Americanus, Virginiana, Carolina and Canadiana are typical examples of this practice.

Many flowers are named for distinguished plantmen. Our beautiful twin-leaved Jeffersonia diphylla is so called for the master of Monticello whose devotion to plants, gadgets and the wild life of field and wood is now an American legend. One of our rare Michigan orchids, Habenaria Hookeri, is named for Sir Joseph Hooker, who, among other things, was director of Kew Gardens for some 20 years.

Happenings of Long Ago

Bits of News Gleaned From Old Files Of The Eccentric

50 YEARS AGO
March 19, 1909

"Mrs. Still has sent some pictures to brighten up those dreary walls at the county house."

"Very many of our young people are making bird houses. Mr. Shattuck has consented to have them placed on exhibition in the window of the Realty Co."

"It is said there are many species of insects preying upon the oak trees alone. It is the birds that save the trees."

30 YEARS AGO
March 14, 1929

"A pleasing courtesy in the church life of Birmingham was the offering of flowers and good wishes sent to the Baptist church at the opening of their main auditorium last Sunday by Saint James' Episcopal church and Father William Ryan of the Roman Catholic church."

"The garage of the village police station last Friday bore all the earmarks of a dog pound. A young pup which the police had caught in their round-up of dogs and confined there was endeavoring to howl himself free."

15 YEARS AGO
March 16, 1944

"Now cometh the season when the bicycle trucks of newboys learn visible evidence on the soft earth of many local yards. With the manpower situation what it is, the newboys have their troubles, too; but many a breakfast table will be without its morning journal unless the boys stick to the sidewalks. This Wanderer has heard it said of late."

"It seems that the housewives out West Maple way are trying to solve the problem of transporta-

tion by hitchhiking. This Wanderer thinks it a good plan, so if you lack coupons, why not hitchhike?"

LEGAL NOTICE

C 30886

STATE OF MICHIGAN—In the Circuit Court for the County of Oakland.
In Chancery.
ERNA MCINISNEY, Plaintiff vs. HUGH PROFFER, Defendant.

ORDER TO APPEAR
At a session of said Court held at the Courthouse in the City of Pontiac, County of Oakland, State of Michigan, on the 10th day of March, A. D. 1959, Present the Honorable H. Russell Holland, Circuit Judge.

It appearing that the defendant, Hugh Proffer, is not a resident of this state, but that he resides at the Veterans' Administration Hospital, Little Rock, Arkansas.

On motion of Carl F. Ingraham, attorney for plaintiff, it is ORDERED that the defendant enter his appearance in said cause on or before the 15th day of March, 1959, and that he file with the court, on or before the 15th day of March, 1959, a verified statement of the defendant, signed by him, or by a duly sworn agent, in which he shall state the facts of his case, and the grounds on which he claims to be entitled to judgment.

A True Copy.
DANIEL T. MURPHY, JR.,
Attorney for Plaintiff,
Register of Deeds
By L. P. ZIMMERMAN,
Deputy.

2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

STATE OF MICHIGAN—In the Circuit Court for the County of Oakland.
In Chancery.
GREGG KOSSEL, Plaintiff, vs. HERBERT O. KOSSEL, Defendant.

ORDER TO APPEAR
Suit pending in the Circuit Court for the County of Oakland, in Chancery, on the 15th day of Feb. 1959.

It appearing that the defendant, Herbert O. Kessel, is not a resident of this state, but that he resides in the State of California, therefore, it is ORDERED that the defendant enter his appearance in said cause on or before the 15th day of March, 1959, and that he file with the court, on or before the 15th day of March, 1959, a verified statement of the defendant, signed by him, or by a duly sworn agent, in which he shall state the facts of his case, and the grounds on which he claims to be entitled to judgment.

A True Copy.
DANIEL T. MURPHY, JR.,
Attorney for Plaintiff,
Register of Deeds
By WILFRED S. COONEY, JR.,
Deputy.

2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

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