

Is Van Doren Now a "Prodigal Son"?

Much has been said and written about one Charles Van Doren, the former Columbia University English teacher who recently confessed that he participated in a "rigged" TV quiz program, winning \$129,000. He is the son of an otherwise illustrious literary family.

He won national fame, as a contestant. All who watched him each week presumably enjoyed his deportment, many even being thrilled when he kept answering correctly the wide variety of questions hurled at him.

When, months after the quiz ended, he was repeatedly asked "did you receive advance information concerning the questions and answers?" he always said "No!" He even is said to have told that to a New York district attorney.

YET, WHEN FINALLY he is forced to appear before a Congressional Committee, he emotionally and at great length told that Committee, publicly (and thus the entire nation) that he had been telling untruths; that he had been given advance knowledge of the questions and answers.

In brief, Van Doren opened his head and his heart in admitting his duplicity in the TV affair. He subsequently lost his teaching job and his \$50,000 per year job

with NBC.

What a shocking revelation... perhaps not so much in itself as a program of entertainment, as in the fact that he was deceiving millions of people.

YET—AND HERE we pause as we mentally hold conversation with one ancient Citizen of Galilee—in the ultimate act of Van Doren did he not play the part of the repentant "prodigal son"? Though Van Doren did not "waste his substance with riotous living", as did the Biblical character mentioned by Jesus in the parable, he did waste the substance of personal character, of public faith in his probity, his fidelity to truth...

And, appearing before the Congressional Committee with his open confession, did he not thus portray the act of the prodigal son?

That's a question each of us is called upon to answer, if we properly appraise the whole Van Doren incident, it seems to us.

Yes, we scorn and condemn Van Doren's infidelity in relation to the quiz show—yet we also ask ourselves if, in the name of approved Christian charity, we should not forgive him. ... he was lost, and is found."

From The Eccentric's Point of View...

As we write this, India's Prime Minister Nehru is losing his temper over Red China's invasion of his native soil. Nehru may get so darned upset about this that he'll call out his personal bodyguard to stand it... when what he really should do is to stop it against the Red Dragon in a more manly style. Having gotten this off our mind, let's meditate upon some of the truly great and glorious contributions of India's sons and daughters to human society during past decades.

Frequently one observes the disappointment revealed by some loyal Democrats over the descent, in public enthusiasm, of their support of Gov. Williams. Summed up, this is about what they say: "We, for the most part, still believe in Gov. Williams philosophy, and we had hopes that he would have a good chance to achieve high federal office. But his Michigan record, especially in regard to our financial problem, has tarnished some of his political glamor. In politics, it appears, it's his hard to stage a come-back."

More change takes place in human affairs these days than used to—perhaps changes that required a century to take effect now are shortened to a decade. Certainly this is true in the fields of technology, chemistry, even in the roles of government. The chief item of delayed change, it appears, is in the area of human behavior; ethically, morally, progress takes place with the speed of the proverbial snail.

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ONE THING OR ANOTHER By George Wm. Averill

Local school systems are desperate over where to get operating monies from.

People protesting on the local level about assessments and property taxes.

Legislators in state capitals confounded over where to place additional hidden taxes—or which existing ones will cause the least consumer squawk if raised.

Enough of this confusion, I say!
Away with all the problems!

Away to Washington where we can find disinterested, impartial, clear-thinking, economically-minded congressmen who have all the answers!

And they can print more money to spend if need be!

Then we back here on the grass roots level can return to eating our grass—as do all contented oows and sheep!

Women are not made to be believed.

That San Francisco longshoreman who was given a hat by Russia's Khrushchev when he was here recently, won't part with it—even though he was offered \$500 for the fedora. Actually, its value is fictitious, in a way—its only distinction being that it once covered the bald head of today's leader of Communism... the chap who carried out Stalin's butcher, not to overlook a bit of his own in Hungary.

Beginning the first of 1960, you may have to pay up to an additional 12 cents per thousand gallons of water you use. This is because Detroit, from whom most south Oakland County communities get their water, has increased its charges for the sale of that liquid.

"Democrats Map Plans to Control Legislature" read the headline in a recent Detroit News story. Well, give 'em time and the Republicans will prepare a similar map. Both will, of course, contain many as-yet-hidden detours.

"Basketball... baseball... football... I had a ball!"... no wonder our world is so balled up, these days," solemnly wheezed the Old Timer down Troy Township way

You may remember that one of the late President Roosevelt's statements was, in referring to the ever-increasing national debt: "We only owe it to ourselves." Boy! if ever we all are able to collect, what a splurge U.S. citizens will be able to make.

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Any time now the Birmingham city commission should be considering what disposition, if any, is going to be made of the former 60-acre well site on E. Maple, across from Berz airport.

In 1957 the then city commission agreed to wait two years before bringing the matter up again.

To get ahead, one must use more activity than reflectivity.

You don't think aluminum rusts? It does! Oxidizes like bronze, iron, silver. The aluminum rust, naturally, is dull gray. It comes off black on hands or clothes.

Aluminum furniture, storms, screens, etc., cannot be regarded as the "end all". They require maintenance to keep them looking clean and presentable.

See your hardware man for aluminum cleaning details.



NATURE NOW by Lydia King Frehse Special Writer for The Birmingham Eccentric Turkey Survives Wilderness Days

The first illustration in Audubon's "Birds of America" (1827-30) is the wild turkey gobble. This is fitting because there is America's largest and most spectacular game bird.

Audubon, painting in what was then a revolutionary style, caught the bird in his native habitat, striding through the canebrake, the sunlight gleaming on his copper and iridescent plumage. His long gobble's beard of black bristles is swaying in the breeze; his red legs are striding over the leaf strewn earth.

In his journal's Audubon left a biography of the wild turkey. He reports that in those days when autumn came the turkeys would gather into great flocks to move gradually toward the rich lands of the river bottoms. The hens were still busy guarding their families of half-grown chicks and would travel in separate parties intent on gathering the seeds, nuts and fruits which were falling to the ground. Both parties followed the same course, taking wing only when chased by an enemy or when blocked by a body of water.

dry place on the ground, there to make a shallow nest lined with leaves. This might be at the side of a log or under a thicket of sumac or briars.

Here she would lay as many as 20 cream-colored eggs spotted with dull red. She was very secretive about her nest and in her absence protected it from crows and other marauders by covering the eggs with dried leaves.

The young chicks were able to leave their nest a few hours after hatching. However, the mother continued her vigilance over her flock throughout the summer at first leading them to higher ground where they would keep dry.

THIS THE little family foraged over woodlot and clearing, finding the grain, fruit and nuts which the wilderness so abundantly provided. They were especially fond of pecans and wild grapes. Sometimes they dined on beetles, tadpoles and small lizards.

With the coming of winter the flocks were again united and by early spring they were ready to repeat the pattern of their kind, being joined by the young cocks and hens in the same courting play of the previous season.

A REMNANT of his kind is yet to be found in the Southeastern states and transplants are being tried in several states. Only recently a flock has been successfully developed on Drummond Island to the great surprise of many who predicted these birds could not endure such severe Michigan winters. With two dozen turkeys as a population the flock now numbers about 200.

So at Thanksgiving time we give thought to the bird which has traditionally been associated with this national holiday. Like the passenger pigeon and the buffalo, the wild turkey belonged to the great American wilderness, which is no more.

Mrs. Frehse

BY LATE November the young were matured and the flock was reunited for the winter. In snowy weather they remained on their roosts in the trees, but as soon as the snow melted they would resume their travels. Their strong legs would carry them at so fast a pace that they could outstrip most animals and even outrun a man on a horse.

In mid-February the courting period began with much gobbling and strutting. Now the two sexes traveled together with a great show of blue-play until the brooding period began in mid-April.

THEN THE hen searched out a

Happenings of Long Ago

Bits of News Gleaned From Old Files Of The Eccentric

50 YEARS AGO
Nov. 19, 1909

"A big rain Monday night with a little cooler weather just naturally warns us that winter is coming."

"Our streets have been nicely cleaned and for a few hours we felt proud of them and then the paper throwers put in their work and spoiled it all."

30 YEARS AGO
Nov. 21, 1929

"Approximately 70 members of the Oakland county schoolmen's club are expected to convene tonight for a banquet meeting."

"With the completion of additional facilities for winter sports at the Oakland town park, Birmingham this year will have an enlarged playground when the first snow falls."

15 YEARS AGO
Nov. 22, 1944

"Residents of the west end of Oak street appear happy today, following Monday night's meeting of the city commission where they received favorable action on a petition for improvement of their section of that street."

"For the first time this fall, a light covering of snow was observed when Birmingham residents got up Monday morning."

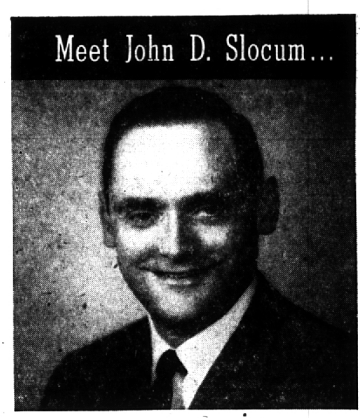
The Light Touch by Jeanne Westerdale

REVERSAL
He used to bring his lessons home—I'd help him, patiently; But now in latin, science, math; He's educating me!

SINK TRAP
A woman, I maintain, could fix A faucet, master plumbing tricks— It's just that no one shows me how... You'll teach me? ... Later, please, not now!

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