

Genius Cannot Be 'Assembly-lined'

There is a growing tendency to believe that scientific research can solve virtually any problem, given enough money. This feeling has been partly responsible for the tremendous growth of organized science. The success of research teams has led to the idea that this is the only way to make progress.

Yet there is in the history of science a stubborn fact—that many of the greatest discoveries have been made by individuals working alone, without outside guidance as to what field the individual's attention ought to be focused on. The free-ranging imagination, the flash of insight into truth without regard to any considerations of usefulness or practicability—these have been of outstanding importance in the past.

THERE IS GOOD REASON to suppose that the same thing remains true in our

Geography More Difficult Today

Those of us who studied geography in the quieter days before World War II may feel sympathy for those who wrestle with it today. In former times, geography involved exposure to facts that seemed as immutable as the course of the stars. "The Belgian Congo is located in Africa. It is bounded on the north by..."

"A student could nail down a boundary or other fact and then, on return from summer vacation, use the fact again with full assurance that it would not have been

time, despite the fact that directed groups of scientists have made remarkable contributions to knowledge. The great American biophysicist, Dr. Detlev W. Bronk, had something to say on this subject recently. "No one," he points out, "directed Newton to discover the laws of gravitation; no one organized Faraday's discoveries in electricity. Great scientific discoveries will elude direction and organization as surely as the creation of great music or poetry or sculpture, or art."

Dr. Bronk also sees "grave dangers that the present demand by publicists, industrialists and public administrators for large-scale scientific organizations may impede progress." That notion comes as rather a shock in a society accustomed to thinking of the carefully directed scientific team as the very advance guard of civilization. But Dr. Bronk's point is a shrewd one that merits careful thought.

changed. Today, things are changing faster than a woman's mind in a hat shop. When a youngster goes to lunch he can't be sure that what he learned in the morning will be true when he gets back.

Change is a condition of living. But the rate of change is much faster than in the past. If the poor citizen reading his paper is befuddled, what of the boy trying to find a boundary for the Congo that will hold up until mid-semester exams?

From The Eccentric's Point of View...

Frequently we hear comments made by prominent leaders in our country that Russia is increasing its industrial output at a greater ratio than we are in the United States. Hearing this, some people might think that very shortly Russia will surpass our country in its ability to produce the commodities of life. The truth of the matter is that Russia was so far behind us when, after the second World War, she really began to build her industries, that she would have to make great progress even to get a fair start. You also hear from time to time how much money Russia is spending on this or that, and that her rubles converted into American dollars fairly compare with portions of our own industrial output. But one ought not to be fooled by the amount of money that Russia is spending on this or that; Russia's industrial setup is far from being as efficient and as modern as ours in the United States; certainly the average intelligence

of a Russian worker compared with an American proves that the Russian cannot produce as much for each dollar of employer investment as we do in this country. For example, it is said that for every job in industry in the United States business has an investment in buildings and equipment of about \$16,000. Russia's per employee investment is much less, proving that her plant and equipment are far less efficient than what we have in the United States; then add the productive difference between one of our workmen and one of Russia's and you may realize how difficult it will be for Russia to catch up to us.

In the formal circles of international ambassadorial society, Fidel Castro is labeled a bum. He, like certain others of his stripe, is devoid of nearly all ordinary courtesies, niceties in social behavior. And, besides, this Cuban revolutionary needs a shave!

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ONE THING OR ANOTHER

BY GEORGE WM. AVERILL

One of the more unusual features of President-elect Kennedy's inaugural parade Jan. 20 concerns his World War II Navy PT boat crew. (The Detroit dailies didn't carry this story—this column read it in the Cleveland Plain Dealer).

The ex-PT crew is bringing up from Panama City, Fla., either the last PT boat commissioned or the last one still in service. It is to be put into the procession with the crew (minus Kennedy, of course) "riding" it.

All of which leads one to be thankful for little things. Suppose Kennedy had captained a battlegwagon!

Here's this column's scoring on the 40 things which make a hometown a good place to live in—27 "yes", 13 "no". (According to those who set up the questions, a "good" town should get 30 or more "yeses".)

Maybe it's pure coincidence, but in this column's mail this week came a comment from a local individual about a non-Birmingham citizen's reaction to a part of our community life. Relate it to your score on last week's "good hometown list", if you wish.

The reader's letter speaks for itself:

"For four years I have been paying a

man to run his sweeper through our snow. He's not doing it this year.

"I TALKED TO HIM today and he said that of 750 properties in Birmingham he's covered for four years, only 100 people paid him.

(This is, of course, a business VENTURE in which these snow cleaners do it and hope one will pay.)

"He said he gets about a 75 per cent return in Royal Oak and Detroit areas which he covers. But he says in Birmingham, he has heard people say to a neighbor: 'I got my snow shoveled free—were you a sucker who paid?'

"He doesn't seem particularly bitter, but he says people seem to like a Birmingham address, but they don't want to pay for it.

"I WANTED HIM AGAIN this year, but he's not going to do it. I asked if he knew anyone else who would, but he says others who have talked to him are naturally reluctant to try where he failed.

"It's a sad commentary on our community, but it's probably a break for (my son), who has complained for years that the mechanical sweeper was cheating him out of snow-shoveling income."

"It's nerve-wracking, but — that's the way the ball bounces!"



People's Column Says Thanks For Education Week Efforts

To the Editor: One of the fine and rewarding things connected with the preparation for American Education Week was the willing response and diligent effort of the people in the community who were called upon to participate.

This year people in homemaking, industry, journalism, retail business, the ministry, public life and education followed through on requests for contribution of time and energy.

I thank you for the suggestions that your newspaper made. They helped us to focus community attention on the daily points of emphasis. The articles drew favorable comments. Your continued help and the help of others will "Strengthen Schools for the 60's."

RUPERT W. WELLS, JR.
AEW Committee Chairman

Autorama Will Further Work In Traffic Safety

The ninth annual Autorama will be presented for the first time at Cobo Hall, starting Friday and continuing through Sunday. The show is sponsored by the Michigan Hot Rod Association.

The organization, which includes 24 clubs and more than 800 members in Michigan, uses the show's profits to further its work in traffic safety.

Proceeds from the 1961 event will help buy equipment for and aid in completing a 43-acre drag-racing strip near New Baltimore. Cars from California, Kansas, Wisconsin and Canada, plus cars from the 24 associated clubs in Michigan will be shown. Also contributing will be cars from Indiana, Ohio, Illinois and Pennsylvania. Four of America's top hot rod show cars will also be shown.

The official opening will be 5:00 p.m. Friday, Saturday and Sunday the show will open at 10 a.m. and closing time for all three days is 11 p.m.

Happenings of Long Ago

Bits of News Gleaned From Old Files Of The Eccentric

30 YEARS AGO

Jan. 7, 1911
Midnight of Dec. 31, 1910 was welcomed by no one more gratefully than by the Great Hive of Industry of the Ladies of the Modern Maccabees. . . . Since this intelligent organization of women bravely faced the task last June of readjusting its rates of insurance, the officers have labored day and night to make plain to their 68,000 members in Michigan, the self-evident fact that adequate rates should be adopted for the future.

Earl Barr who is acknowledged to be one of the very few very best dancing masters in Michigan has been prevailed upon to start a class here by many of the young people who enjoy this form of amusement. He will meet with those interested at Johnston-Shaw Hall, Jan. 11.

Last week, Thursday, will long be remembered by Editor Mitchell as the day of all days in 1910. Every man, woman or child, and every John Heth, with the black pony and light bolts, empty the house of the World Court. Well, the pair got into the sled and away went the pony, and up in the cold, cold air of the Mitchell. He did describe the most graceful mid-air curve, the cutest parabola ever witnessed in Oakland county. "After four days of rest cure," Richard is himself again."

30 YEARS AGO

Jan. 8, 1931
Birmingham's taxicab problem assumed all the proportions of a mathematical quandary Monday night when Commissioner Fred L. Tucker vigorously upheld his interpretation of the ordinance which he declared permitted any cab to occupy any stand, thereby affording opportunity for further complications in the matter.

Thefts, forgeries and bad checks caused villagers only \$566 loss during 1930, because Chief John Hackberry, two weeks ago, he and \$11,222.31 of the total of 13,777 losses reported to police. During the year, 84 arrests were made for felonies, uttering and publishing leading the list with ten.

Mrs. George T. Hendrie, of Bloomfield Hills, prominent among Michigan people engaged in crusading for the United States to enter the World Court, will see several others this week obtained the consent of 100 Michigan people, leaders in various fields, to affix their names to petitions to be presented to Senators Couzens and Vandenberg at Washington.

Monday saw the last of the delectable luncheons and parties when Mrs. George Allison entertained at the Colony Club for Frances Finney Dewey, Friday Mrs. Alexander Copeland entertained.

15 YEARS AGO

Jan. 3, 1946
A public reception for all city

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