

Remember The Christmas Message

Each year there is a crescendo of activity related, sometimes remotely, to celebration of the advent of Jesus Christ. Then all at once the wondrous day itself has come and gone. Echoes of its meaning may continue to be heard, but for many these echoes soon fade away in the stridency of daily life.

One important factor in this is that New Year's follows so closely upon Christmas. Even were men and women truly inclined to cherish Christmas in their hearts, their attention may be distracted by thoughts of the year past and the year to come. Both festivities and sober contemplation tend

to muffle those thin echoes of the Christmas message.

THIS IS A LOSS TO humankind. For the very best thought to hold in mind as the new year arrives is that, whatever may befall, God cares about man and has not abandoned him to the blind forces of the universe.

That is the heart of what Christmas is all about. That is the faith to cherish as we pass from hectic year into the uncertainties of 1961. Any man who honestly holds that faith can fashion his recollection of the Christmas message into shining armor against the perils of the future.

From The Eccentric's Point of View...

When you seek the reasons why certain primitive countries, Congo, for example, can't measure up to the freedom opportunities offered it, don't weary of finding the answer. If you look about you in these United States, perhaps the answer will start to come. We are the most literate, enjoy the highest living standards, possess the largest average church attendance population, yet we are not free from the shackles of intolerance, and for some time have been embarked on trading freedoms for pseudo-security via governmental bureaucracy. Republicans say nasty words about Democrats, and the latter return same to the former, with interest. Considering the imperfections of our own nation... how can you expect primitive African tribes (or any other backward nations) to fashion conditions even remotely comparable to our U.S.? Revolution never can supplant evolution as a process to produce civilized people.

We hope that our ex-Governor G. Mennen Williams will achieve sound success in his newly appointed role as an Assistant Secretary of State, U.S.A., in charge of African affairs. Primitive African tribal nations, loosed from the colonial controls of white men, easily become the prey of the cunning Communists. William's main job is to convince such peoples that our western ideology is their best guarantee of freedom, and therefore their future security and happiness. The cause of freedom, to primitive people who know not its real meaning, is not easily sold—especially if they are hungry and are promised bread... even from the devil.

President Eisenhower was a frequent player on various golf courses, and from the Democrats he received much criticism for engaging in this sport. Well, it is my public knowledge that Jack Kennedy likes to play golf, and has done it nearly every day that he has been shaping up his cabinet, and other federal agency heads, at Palm Beach. We do hope, though, that the Republicans will refrain from finding fault

with any President who finds that hitting a little white ball can provide him with needed relaxation from the "biggest job on earth."

Certain areas of Detroit are proving to be dangerous to move about in, especially for women. So Detroit is increasing its police patrols in those sections where many women are employed. Wonder why Mayor Mariani doesn't work on a plan to have the women congregate, when shifts change at their employment concerns, at some central spot, to be picked up and delivered by special bus.

That loss of life and damage to the U.S. Navy's Constellation ought not to have happened. Imagine, here was a project with the faith and credit of the United States as its support; surely Uncle Sam provides plenty of money and assumes he also has furnished sufficient brains to build and protect, while building, such a colossus of the sea. The Constellation tragedy ought to make some new and apparently needed change in the curriculum at Annapolis.

President-elect Kennedy buys some of his suits from a London, Eng., tailor. Vice-President-elect Lyndon B. Johnson, while in England recently, also bought some suits from the same tailor... so our two top near-future federal officials have to go to Blimey to be suited, eh? (Sort of balancing off some of the suits purchased in the U.S. by the Duke of Windsor?)

Michigan's Governor John B. Swainson's brief speech following his being sworn into office Jan. 1, contained an assortment of generality-promises. "If we but lay aside our prejudices, if we unite in a real bipartisan effort in the interest of a great Michigan, our goals can be reached," he said. Yes, Sir, Governor, from now on you will be reminded of your campaign statements... and the going fades from mere words to expected realistic actions.

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ONE THING OR ANOTHER

BY GEORGE WM. AVERILL

Automation should be applied only to machines, systems and processes.

But that isn't what has been done. Automation has insistently invaded the field of human relations. It started many years ago, but has been greatly accelerated by the past generation.

When applied to habits, to community life, to human relations and to thinking—automation causes trouble. And there's plenty of that today.

IN THIS COLUMN'S estimation, the cause of the trouble is man's decaying habit of thinking for himself. In its place he lives off other people's ideas, their habits, their feelings and emotions.

He becomes more and more automated—and more like a system, a machine, a process. He erroneously believes this makes his life easier.

This deterioration of individual thought and action is dismaying to many people. Especially as this be-like-a-machine thought invades and grows in the field of education.

IF THERE'S ANY GROUP which ought to express and foster individual thought and action, it should be our teachers and educators.

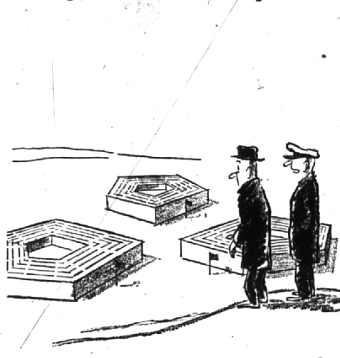
But there appears to be waning educational interest in individual expression. This is borne out by the growing numbers of educational unions, of equal salaries for all despite ability, a marginal expenditure of energy and hours. More automation in education.

Perhaps there is a daring local school district which would like to reverse this trend in education. Can anyone suggest a more acceptable way than to reward teaching merit with additional pay?

HOW ABOUT A SPECIAL FUND from which a citizens' committee can reward teachers who contribute appreciably beyond what is expected of them?

Maybe someone has a more practical or effective idea to prevent more automation in the classroom. If so, please step forward and sound off.

"It began innocently enough — each service thought it could do each thing best."



NATURE NOW

By Lydia King Prehse
Special Writer for The Birmingham Eccentric

Life in Winter Woods Reveals Adaptation

Now in winter our spinning planet earth makes its way among the countless stars bringing to us a new season.

Often we hear the expression "The dead of winter." However, winter is not dead. Much of our wild life rests but it is not extinguished.

A recent field trip in a snowy woodland revealed many seasonal changes. The life-cycle of both plants and animals is uninterrupted, motivated as it is by the laws of survival.

To continue the species is the life's strongest urge and inherent in every plant and animal are the essential adaptive powers to maintain life in any season.

WINTER presents similar survival hazards to both plants and animals. Basic among these are a limited food supply and the threat of cold and storms.

Many animals, like snakes and woodpeckers, hibernate. Others solve both these problems by hibernating. Others grow thicker coats of fur or feathers. Some store a part of their winter's food supply under the bark of trees. Others cache nuts and seeds during autumn's plenty against the lean and hungry winter days.



Mrs. Prehse

The crisscross tracks of our active cottontail rabbit were everywhere evident in swampy areas, especially where brush abounds. We never see this vulnerable little mammal without a sense of regret that it is he who is the staple diet of the carnivores of the woods.

HOWEVER, NATURE counterbalances his defenseless ways by endowing him with unusual ferocity and with an adaptive taste for whatever vegetable foods he can salvage from winter's bareness.

Chattering squirrels, who enlivened our afternoon in the winter woods, solve some of their food problems by digging up hickory nuts and acorns which they had hidden during "October's bright blue weather." These lively acrobats will be among the first of the four-footed to be seen in their young. Come March, a hidden litter of acorns will be seen in its nest in some dark hollow high in a tree trunk.

Some birds which feed upon fruits, seeds or insect eggs and larvae remain to enhance the winter woods. Chickadees, juncos, tree sparrows and brown creepers can brave the cold of any winter day.

"IN THE DISTANCE we heard the half-note interval of the "peto, peto" call of the hardy tufted titmouse. This neat grey bird with white breast, washed with reddish brown, is at one with bark of (Continued on 6-B)

Happenings of Long Ago

Bits of News Gleaned From Old Files Of The Eccentric

50 YEARS AGO

Jan. 14, 1911

Franklin School is now running peacefully after a fine vacation... Willie Clements who has been absent from a mild form of typhoid fever is around again... The Snow property has been purchased by Mrs. Pickering. It is reported that in the Spring she will settle here with her mother, Mrs. Coleman.

Mr. Edison says: "It is beyond his understanding why the American housewife has stood so long for household drudgery. Electricity will sweep dust, wash and dry dishes, launder, iron and cook." It is in the January Delimitator at the library. Read it.

During the holidays each desk in the high room has been provided with a brand new ink well, of a different type than the old one... A new cloak rack has been erected for the use of the boys... During the past week our school has become associated in the High School Spelling League of Michigan.

30 YEARS AGO

Jan. 15, 1931

Fire protection for residents of Bloomfield Township living outside the Village of Birmingham and the Village of Bloomfield Hills, a problem which has confronted property owners in this district for several years, may soon be solved... The Oakland county Board of Supervisors Monday voted almost unanimous approval of a proposed state law permitting townships to raise funds to maintain a fire department or to hire outside departments.

The first of a series of public meetings on the proposed zoning ordinance for the village will be held at the Municipal Building tomorrow night when members of the Plan Commission, James W. Parry, village manager, and R. J. Corry, township supervisor, will discuss the proposed zoning with residents living in the district west of River Rouge and south of Maple Ave., west of Quanton Lake and north of Maple Ave.

Largely due to the efforts of Harold S. Smart, of Adams Road, manager of this year's Detroit automobile show which opens Saturday, we will be unquestionably more important than any other similar exhibition ever held in Detroit. Walter J. Judd, of Lone Pine road is also an important member of the DADA committee directing the show this year.

15 YEARS AGO

Jan. 10, 1946

With the Victory Bond Cam-

paign closed, with both state and nation well over their quotas, Birmingham has been figuring her part in the successful drives and finds the results encouraging, according to Herbert J. Gardner, general chairman... Birmingham has a credit of \$751,194, with still further credit anticipated when the figures are all in...

"Guest in the House" by Hagar Wilde and Dale Wilson, will be the presentation of the Village Players on Jan. 25 and 26... assisting the director, Dean Burnett, is Mrs. F. C. Guest, Mrs. Vera Howard and Mrs. Howard Fox.

The re-opening of the Ruth Shain International affairs class will be on Jan. 15 at 10 a.m. at the Community House. The topic will be "Germany—our First Foreign Ground." Women who have never before attended are welcome to enter now as each program is a unit in itself.

The regular monthly meeting of the Birmingham Musicale will be held today at the Community House. The program will consist of opera music.

STRICTLY FRESH

Anyone with four kids will agree that a few evenings at home makes what a pleasure.

Failure is what a fellow faces when success turns his head.



It's the wise man who makes the past his guide, not his hitching post.

Some gals will sail on the sea of matrimony only after the sailor has made a raft of money.

Then there was the homeseck salesman who walked into a restaurant and ordered two eggs fried on the edges, burnt toast and a cold cup of coffee.

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