

It Is as the People Wish

Mighty are the Universities of Scotland, and they will prevail. But even in your highest exultations never forget that they are not four, but five. The greatest of them is the poor, proud homes you come out of, which said so long ago: "There shall be education in this land."

So said Sir James Matthew Barrie in an address on May 3, 1922. Sir James was a Scottish novelist and dramatist who lived from 1860 to 1937.

Long ago, the people of America determined that their children should have an education. Out of their decree was born the public school system.

Today, as in the past, the quality and success of the school system depends on the interest and dedication of the citizens.

We are fortunate in the Birmingham School District that citizen desire to provide a top quality education and citizen participation to that end remain at a high level year after year.

THE LATEST demonstration of democracy in action at the community level is the work of the Birmingham Elementary Curriculum Study Committee.

This committee has completed nearly a year of research and has presented its report to the Birmingham PTA Council. The

council in turn delivered the report to the board of education at a dinner meeting Tuesday night.

Completion of the committee's study was announced in a front page news story in last week's Birmingham Eccentric. Further reports and evaluations of the group's recommendations will be forthcoming.

WHAT WE wish to acknowledge here is the contribution of these dedicated citizens. There were 12 subcommittees, comprised of volunteers, who spent hundreds of hours gathering information for the study.

These people are to be commended for their devotion to their community and their schools, for their generous contribution of time and talent to a project of tremendous importance and value to all residents and taxpayers.

Their interest, their efforts attest once again to the kind of citizenry this community enjoys. It is because of people like this, willing to give unselfishly of themselves, that we have such an excellent school system.

AND the system will retain its high degree of quality as long as this citizen interest and dedication prevail.

From out of our homes, then, still comes the decree: There shall be education in this land.

Youth Problem Explored

Almost 10 years ago, The Birmingham Eccentric published, a series of articles dealing with the local juvenile delinquency problem.

Out of these writings developed a serious movement to do something to curb the problem. People were moved to action. In recent years it was forgotten, with the exception of a few committees.

Last week The Eccentric started another series of articles on today's local and area youth problem, the second appearing in this week's issue. They are presented as part of The Eccentric's continuing program of public service.

THESE STORIES are designed to explain the problem as it exists in the cities, villages and townships in this area and to describe what is being done and what can be done in the way of solutions.

Information was gathered from police departments and other governmental

sources, clergymen, local committees engaged in youth programs and teen-agers actually involved in juvenile cases.

Our research shows that the problems and solutions in Birmingham and the area reflect the national trend. We are no different, no worse than any other community.

AS FOR WHAT can be done, there are individuals and groups who believe that more recreational facilities are needed. But others say too much is already provided for the youngsters—that not enough is left up to their own initiative.

The important thing now is to recognize that the problem is growing and to find positive ways in which to combat it.

Knowledge of the whys and wherefores will help in determining solutions.

The articles published by The Eccentric should assist in a better understanding of the problem and bring constructive suggestions for positive action programs.

There Could Be Uniformity

Opposition to control of firearms is based largely on the brief sentence that comprises the Second Amendment to the Constitution: "A well-regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed."

Circumstances have changed so much since the late 18th century, when this was written, that it is only the flimsiest basis for argument against registering firearms and restricting their sale.

The question has been a subject of concern in Congress during the past several months. Now it has been brought to a head by the Kennedy assassination, and it appears that action may be taken in the near future. Several measures are under consideration in Congress.

CONGRESSIONAL action alone may not

suffice. At present, state and federal law on the subject lacks uniformity. It would seem sensible for federal and state authorities to develop a system of interlocking laws to regulate shipment and sale of all firearms. This could be done within the framework of the Second Amendment.

It cannot be assumed that even the strictest regulation would absolutely rule out the possibility of assassination. There can never be any guarantee that a man of apparently good character who buys a deer rifle will not turn it to criminal use.

But firmer controls would greatly cut down on the number of weapons in the hands of juveniles and criminals of record. It would reduce, though not eliminate, the chance of another such terrible event as that at Dallas. These are reasons enough for whole-hearted support of firearms regulation.

From The Eccentric's Point of View ...

Hoping to be British prime minister some day, Lord Halifax renounced his viscountcy and became a commoner, plain Quintin Hogg. The question was raised: How plain can you get?

French-Canadians threaten to secede, and there's talk of annexing Quebec to the United States. Which would be one way of getting some good French teachers.

The cost of living has gone up again. Other surprising facts: The sun will rise in the east tomorrow, and next Tuesday will be followed by Wednesday.

Smathers was in a steam bath and missed a chance to forestall a 90-million space cut. The steam was hot—but wait until his Florida constituents get at him!

The Australians are strengthening their defenses. They've decided that the Chinese Big Brother peering down from the north may not be very brotherly.

American Telephone & Telegraph says it will split its stock again next June. That's the kind of double talk stockholders like to hear.

PEOPLE'S COLUMN

No Age Revision on Liquor; For Better Future Citizens

To the Editor:

Possible change in the liquor and cigar laws to permit their purchase by minors 18 years of age and older appears ill for the caliber of our future citizens.

It cannot be logically contended that a boy of 18 should be permitted to purchase liquor just because he can get it anyway, if he wants to. If a boy gets liquor he probably obtains it by tapping the home "har supply"—and against the wishes and orders of his parents. It is almost a certainty that he does not purchase the liquor at a drug store or state liquor store.

PENALTIES are very severe to the holder of a liquor license to sell to a minor, and with a liquor license as valuable

as it is, no merchant is going to be either careless or dishonest.

Each week the Liquor Control Commission cracks down on violators in formal hearings, with severe penalties, including revocation.

The human body cannot easily adjust to the absorption of alcohol at any age, but in youth the effects are more pronounced than in adulthood. A boy or girl of 18 has not reached physical maturity or maximum stamina, and as a result cannot throw off the effects of alcohol assimilation.

At 21 the body has probably reached close to its maximum stamina, where it remains at top efficiency for about a decade, according to physical fitness authorities.

IF BOYS of 18 and 19 can get liquor dishonestly, resulting in your approval to reduce the legal age to 18, why in the future cannot boys of 16 and 17 do this illegally, later resulting in your suggesting that the legal age be reduced to 15?

Let us be sensible about this age-old problem of liquor. It demands that laws be enacted to protect youth against itself, and that these laws be vigorously enforced.

Concurrently we, as parents, are expected to uphold the law as it affects our children, to set a responsible example in this as well as other areas of demeanor, and to report promptly any licensed violators of the laws of our state and community.

C. L. ERICKSON
3090 Morningview
Birmingham

PEOPLE'S COLUMN

Bemoans Postponement Of Freedom March

To the Editor:

I am sorry to hear that the Freedom Procession planned for Dec. 14 has been cancelled. I hope it is only a postponement, and that the plan is not to be abandoned just when we need it most.

Rabbi Prinz, who lived in Nazi Germany under the Hitler regime, has recalled that under those tragic circumstances "bigotry and hatred were not the most urgent problem. The most urgent, the most shameful, the most tragic problem was silence. A great people, which had created a great civilization, had become a nation of silent onlookers. . . ."

We are truly grateful to the clergymen of our area who have so to speak, cracked the silence and taken the initiative in planning this corporate witness to our concern for human rights. It gives courage to those who already work for the cause, and, hopefully, a light to those who have remained silent because, perhaps, they awaited leadership.

SURELY, the service planned would give us all a chance to demonstrate our dislike for the climate of moral dishonesty in which we are living when we speak tolerance and equality but practice the opposite; when we pray for "truth, unity and concord . . ." but willfully perpetuate the conditions that distort truth and make unity of concord impossible.

I salute all our clergy who have had the courage to take a public stand and have offered us the opportunity to share it. I hope that all their congregations, and their fellow clergymen, will be there to walk with them.

ALL OF US can well use the time intervening to get busy and write our congressmen, expressing

our concern for the early passage of a civil rights act that will embody those provisions outlined in the President's program and help to achieve the just and honorable goals he worked for.

Let's not sing loudly about "Onward Christian Soldiers" and then go out expecting to win the battle with cotton balls and Q-tips and wet handkerchiefs, even when they're wet with tears for the innocent victims of bombings and other kinds of assassination.

May it be said of this community, ". . . We are not divided. All one body we. One in hope and doctrine. One in Charity. . ."

MRS. HARRY C. DUMVILLE
Barden Road
Bloomfield Hills

Yesteryear Happenings

50 YEARS AGO
Dec. 12, 1913

Mr. Business Man Attention! A Business Men's club will be organized in Birmingham Tuesday evening, Dec. 16, at the council rooms. Mr. C. Day, editor of the Detroit Trade Journal with the secretary of the Ann Arbor club and the state secretary will speak on the advantage of corporation. Men in all lines are asked to be present and help boost Boulevarde Birmingham. Pride of old Oakland.

For the first time in three and one-half years our old friend Samuel C. Mills took a trip, south on the trolley. He began to sit up and notice things at Burrenmore Park, at Roseland Park Cemetery he was wild, and at Larkmoor station he fell off his seat with surprise at the growth and improvement Southward. He says in two weeks you can walk from Royal Oak to Detroit on a cement walk all the way. Every bit of land is platted out, one between Highland Park and Royal Oak.

Backward, turn backward, O time in your flight, give us a girl whose skirts are not tight; give us a girl whose charms many or few, are not exposed by too much peek-a-boo; give us a girl no matter what age, who won't use the streets as a vaudeville stage; give us a girl not too sharply in view and dress her in skirts that the sun can't shine through.

30 YEARS AGO
Dec. 14, 1933

Representatives of more than 20 Birmingham civic, welfare, church and service organizations will meet in the Community House at 10 a.m. Friday to discuss plans for making use of federal relief funds to finance a "Work-Relief in Education" project. (See HAPPENINGS, 7-B.)

Everything Except Flags

To the Editor:

I am perplexed with the kind of thinking which prompts local merchants to display a solid phalanx of American flags to advertise sales or bargain days, and yet in these days of national mourning, there is not a flag anywhere in our downtown area except for the police station, post office and library.

Our 11-year-old nephew made a pertinent observation when he visited here on the Fourth of July. On touring our residential area he said, "These people have everything except flags."

A RESIDENT

(MORE PEOPLE'S COLUMN LETTERS ON 7-B)

Forecast: Heavy Snow



ESTABLISHED IN 1878 • A Free, Responsible and Aggressive Press Is Democracy's First Line of Defense

PUBLISHER: PAUL N. AVERSA
ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER: HENRY M. HOGAN, JR.
MANAGING EDITOR: KENNETH R. WHYTE
ADVERTISING MANAGER: ARTHUR SHAFER
George R. Averill, Editor Emeritus

Published every Thursday at Birmingham, Mich., in The Eccentric Building, 1225 Bowers Street. Telephone Midwest 4-1100