

The Book of Life

By Samuel Rosinger

Every New Year, Providence hands us an immaculately book of three hundred and sixty-five pages. This book is our Book of Life, each page of which stands for a day of the year. This book is our autobiography, the authentic record of our lives. Our career is judged by the contents of this book, and not by the eulogy which a charitably inclined minister delivers at our bier. Look at some of the back volumes of the Book of Life that stand on the shelf of your memory. Open any of them and scan the pages. Do the entries make interesting reading? Are the pages not crowded with trifles and trivialities? How much worthless chaff do you have to winnow, before the sieve of the mind catches a kernel of a thought or deed worth recording. The pages are over run with the rut of routine. They are covered with detailed accounts of barter. You look in vain for the story of Man in that book. The man is lost in the merchant, the brain is absorbed in business.

Then come entries of fleeting pleasures and pastimes, so vapid and ephemeral that you wonder at your childishness in having spoiled the clean pages of the Book of Life with such entries. Yet the Book is not unredeemable trash. In the endless desert of triteness, you find an oasis of refreshing passages. Here and there you linger on the pages with eyes lit up with joy. You come across a record of loving kindness, a deed of helpfulness, an act of charity and sympathy, rendered to a stranger or friend in times of need.

Why do these small entries, thinly scattered over the book, arrest and hold your attention? Because you instinctively realize that these are not dead records, but that the effect of your generosity, which brought sunshine into some sad heart, or infused courage in some soul on the verge of despair, is still alive and continues to exert its benevolent influence. The time you devoted to the family circle, the lift you gave your helpmate in rearing the children, the contributions you made to the welfare and happiness of your fellowmen, form pleasant reading, and their recollection gives you a far deeper satisfaction than the record of the most profitable business deals which litter the pages.

Selfish acts wither and fade, but loving deeds remain ever-green. Fill your Book of Life with deeds that reveal man's qualities of heart and mind. The greatness he may attain by the power of thought, the glory that may be his as an instrument of mercy and as a fount of inspiration for the nobler things of life. Then, when the years roll by, your Book of Life will not be a worthless tome, covered with the dust of ages and consigned to the wastebasket of oblivion, but a volume that will serve as a living source of inspiration to countless generations, long after your bones will have crumbled to dust and ashes.

ROTARYGRAMS OF BEAUMONT



WEEKLY BULLETIN

Membership Secretary Phone 932

Vol. XI Beaumont, Texas, January 7, 1931 No. 1

Slants at the Meeting

LAST week we had a little insight into the outlook, or maybe it was a retrospect of the prospect, but at this time we are unable to tell whether it is expected to stop or start something.

That stacatto of statistics Roark roared at us reverberated on our auricular nerves in pleasing cadences but being of local magnitude we can't tell whether it will influence some comet of commerce in our direction or peter out into oblivion in stellar space as we astronomers say.

Steve King ran the gamut of political activities from subpoena shaking in Justice Courts to saber rattling in Italian Courts and as a whole it looked like a solid - cinch. However, it wasn't much to cheer up a step-mother or depress a co-ed; and certainly not enough to fill your larder or fatten your cattle. The chairman gave him plenty of latitude and boy he used longitude, too. He started with an air gun and wound up with a long range rifle. He took a shot at everything political; national, international and irrational.

If brevity is the soul of wit then Tom Minyard is a humorist of the first magnitude for his speech was cut shorter than a funny story by a nasty remark from a dirty dame. He got enough applause to puncture all the hokum balloons that could be launched by wind-jamming "bull slingers" in seven states.

In fact this bunch of Rotarians is becoming sophisticated. They can sense a tiresome talk like pens in their pants. Length is almost synonymous with weight and tolerance is not a virtue anymore. Harangues are as popular as pole-cats in perfume parlors. Too, they had rather the speaks delve in a little dirt than moralize monotonously.

It has been referred to in this Rag of Reason that if the scribe eludes the law he is lucky. Man alive, he's cautious, not caustic. He's ducking dirt like a beaten mule dodging blows. It's commendatory not condemnatory from here out. Ruffled feelings react on him like saw-teeth on a sore, and during this period of intoxicating ambiguity he has cherished a little resolution in a secluded niche of his cranium that there shall be made no bad points with his pen—Check.

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ROTARY VISITORS

The following visitors were present at last week's luncheon:

Roland Broad, City.
A. M. Bureson, Coleman, Texas.
Ralph Bowen, City.
L. E. Shaner, Sharon, Pa.
B. A. Greenspan, Atlanta, Ga.
David Tyrrell, Tulsa, Okla.
Harold Young, San Antonio, Texas.
Ed Beular, Austin, Texas.
Eddie Jones, City.
John M. Wilson, Meridian, Miss.
W. S. Siler, City.
F. C. McElroy, Minneapolis, Minn.
Harry Roberts, City.

—Rotarygrams—

Prosperity and the Golden Rule

JAMES A. Farrell, president of the United States Steel Corporation, is optimistic for 1931: The stimulated buying produced by speculation on the stock market may have brought on the present depression, but it also taught people to want more manufactured articles of higher quality. And this, he points out in the January "Rotarian Magazine," will be an important factor in hastening the return of a period when demand will again overtake supply.

Other favorable factors, declares Mr. Farrel, include modernization of industrial plants, scientific management, and a better understanding of cooperation.

"The spirit of live and let live," Mr. Farrel asserts, "is a necessary doctrine of modern business, and no satisfactory substitute has been found for the Golden Rule whether in the field of economics or any other phase of existence . . . I believe that, as the years go by, appreciation of the finer relationships of business will increase, confidence in each other will be broadened, fairness to all will become second nature, and as a result business will better its own condition by better serving the public welfare, and by having a clearer conception of the rights of all concerned."

Mischievous Tongues

(An editorial in the January "Rotarian" Magazine)

ONE bit of wisdom which men begin acquiring from their earliest experience is the necessity of a proper misbelief in evil tongues. Evil reports about our neighbors start easily and fly fast. Who believes them indiscriminately finds himself shortly the only truly good person around the place. If he is so unhappy as to hear the current rumors about himself, he may even have to scratch his own name off the white list. There's a sort of person whose breath, like that of the fabled Chimæra, blackens and scorches everything it touches.

As far as individuals are concerned, the wise man learns to disregard the tongue of scandal. He believes evil of his neighbor unwillingly, and only after requiring the utmost proof. If the evil tale persists, the wise man for his own protection and his neighbor's will take pains, before believing, to go to the source of the facts. We have learned this lesson as it applies to persons. It has been so well learned as it applies to peoples. This has a good deal to do with the persistent peril of war.

There are almost six hundred Rotary clubs in Europe, and the Rotarian visitor from North America who goes about Europe attending meetings of these clubs, discovers no enemy peoples there. If he looks into their hearts a bit and gets a grasp of their different difficulties, he finds himself acquiring a sympathy for each and every one. Like our next-door neighbors at home, the peoples of the world are doing as well as circumstances allow. They have their own prejudices and shortnesses of view; but like the rest of us, each is doing the best he can.

Now there is a tongue of slander concerning people as there is a tongue of slander concerning persons. Some misguided persons have thought it necessary, for the promotion of patriotism, to make us hate other countries as we love our own. It is as easy to believe evil of strange peoples as it is to believe evil of the neighbor on the other side of the hill—easier, in fact.

All too often the inky tongue of evil is playing on that weakness. It is making us think we do not like this people or that, this nation or that. It is making us expect evil of them.

Just as we have learned to be suspicious of such talk about our neighbor around the corner, so it behooves us to be skeptical when it concerns our neighbors across a sea. With a nation as with a neighbor, when the tongue of evil is laid against it, we will withhold belief till we see the proof. This is the path to peace.