

Too Big

Much has been written in the past few years of our American desire for great size. The biggest this, that or the other thing is the basis for our boasting. Further, there is the fallacy, repeated so often that we have come to believe it, "that failure to grow is to retrogress." This is without support in fact when applied to size. Nature has put on growth a wise limit. When man or beast, tree or flower, reach maturity they cease to expand in size, otherwise Mother Earth would certainly have to hang out a "standing room only" sign. Nor does the youth, come to manhood, immediately start a shrinking process, nor a tree addived at its ultimate growth enter at once into a state of gradual decay. To each is given years of mature usefulness before decline begins.

In many things we long and strive for unwise bigness, size that often obscures the finer grain of quality or renders the thing unwieldy. Of this there is no better example than our big cities where our democratic type of government has largely failed by reason of the fact that the people as a whole can know little of those they elect to office; while in the myriad activities of municipal affairs the dishonest office holder can hide with ease his grafting or the abuse of his office for personal gain.

We believe that the day of the smaller city and of the town is at hand if they will but direct to improvement that same endeavor which in the past they have directed to numerical, commercial or industrial growth. Size is not a measure of comfort, of happiness or contentment. In a city it is assuredly not a factor in good or economical government. The crowded city with its milling masses, its rush of business, its whirlwind of amusements, provides far from ideal environment for the development of children into the clear-thinking, virile, cultured citizens which the nation needs.

Fortunate are those whose lives and interests are in the towns and smaller cities. Let their efforts be to improve their communities in ways physical, cultural and spiritual, and to them will come a class of citizens not attracted by belching factory chimneys. Nor need business languish in such cities. The biggest stores or other enterprises are not always the best nor even the most profitable. The biggest schools do not best train children for life. The biggest newspapers are not the most trustworthy molders of public opinion. The biggest city politicians are not the most able nor scrupulous in the use of public money. The benefits of bigness is truly the great American myth.

ROTARYGRAMS OF BEAUMONT



WEEKLY BULLETIN

Membership Secretary Phone 932

Vol. IX Beaumont, Texas, July 15, 1931 No. 28

Slants at the Meeting

The new year got under way last week without a flare of trumpets or display of excitement. The "even tenor of its way" was only a manifestation of the solidarity of the little boy with the big voice as he flew into the meeting with the eagerness of a fly into tangle-foot.

To comment on the quality of the program might be an infraction of the 2nd object of Rotary in as much as this scribe is particeps criminis, even though it was an infinitesimal degree.

Realizing that the cruz of the meeting is a good program that binds you tighter than a strong corset does a fat woman it is real Rotary SERVICE to help lubricate rather than crystallize the wheels of progress.

Ralph Chastain is to be complimented on his ingeniousness in working out a splendid program. The conception was admirable, the execution was marred.

We are not attaching the blame; just locating it. Apparently old "Vocational" Bill got an extra shot of enthusiasm in that structural steel plant and "fabricated" so much data it was harder to cramb it into a five minute allowance than that Biblical fat man passing through a cock-eyed needle on a package of Camels.

Charlie Ledwidge's resume of the primitive history of Beaumont in its adolescent period certainly provoked and reflected a keen insight into some of the incongruities of our forefathers.

Steve, king of humor, got stymied on the first hole by the aforesaid Bill with his riveted bottoms and barrel heads and could never shoot himself out. He was as helpless as a hunch-back on a chiropractor's table. Time, the essence of things, had flown and left him stranded full of wise-cracks tighter than a fat goose at a Jewish feast.

Anyway you fellers learned something about your neighbors business so don't feel hard because Mac's vocation is steel.

"Attendance is the Price of Membership"

OFFICERS

JIM EDWARDS President
CHESTER EASLEY Vice-President
IRWIN FERAY Secretary
P. B. DOTY Treasurer

DIRECTORS

JIM EDWARDS—J. S. Edwards & Co.
CHESTER EASLEY—Seaport Coal Co.
IRWIN FERAY—T. H. Mastin & Co.
SAM ROSINGER—Jewish Congregations.
MILLARD McMASTER—Petroleum Iron Works Co.
BARTOW COUSINS—San Jacinto Life Insurance Co.
KEITH HOTCHKISS—Pipkin & Brulin.
BARNEY STEINHAGEN—Steinhagen Rice Mill Co.
PERK BUTLER—American National Bank.
BEEMAN STRONG—Yount-Lee Oil Co.

Rotarygrams

ROTARY VISITORS

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

Hastings Harrison, Tulsa, Okla.
C. C. Wier, Winfield, La.
J. R. Nason, Hattiesburg, Miss.
M. G. Thames, City.
Dr. Buford Barr, City.
B. E. Quinn, City.
B. A. Greenspan, Atlanta, Ga.
C. H. Wakefield, Houston, Tex.
Dr. Ernest Robertson, City.
W. M. Stanley, Boston, Mass.

Rotarygrams

More Roadside Philosophy

By Samuel Rosinger

As you drive in a rolling, mountainous country, how steep do the hills appear that lie ahead of you in the far distance. But when you reach the foot of the hills, their extreme steepness and sheerness seems to vanish, as if by magic. The same holds true of the hills of life, the problems we encounter, and the difficulties we run up against. Viewing them from a distance, they seem steep, often insurmountable. But facing them bravely and courageously, their formidable and forbidding height vanishes, and before we realize it, we are on the summit, and sit astride on what, but a little while ago appeared as the unattainable top of the world.

As an ardent lover of nature, I am very happy to notice an appreciable decrease in billboard advertising along the highways. National concerns,

"Attendance is the Price of Membership"

who formerly ruined the beauty of the countryside with a glaring pictorial display of their wares, are conspicuously absent. But even local firms seem to use but sparingly this, formerly very popular, form of advertising. I inscribe the decrease in billboard advertising not so much to the prevailing depression, as to the stiff competition which radio advertising offers to all methods of advertising, including the newspapers. If radio will succeed in clearing the countryside of these eyesores, and thus restore to nature its unravished beauty, one could condone the loud speaker, even for the mushy crooning of Rudy Vallee and the moron mirthmaking of Amos 'n Andy.

As we jog along at fifty miles per hour, huge busses, giant freight-trucks and mammoth moving-vans whiz by us. Each one of these vehicles eats heavily into the income of the railroads, and slowly, yet steadily, cripples the country's chief medium of transportation. We are sorry for the railroads, who have been the benefactors of the country. Yet, as long as the railroads rely on governmental support, they are bound to share the fate of the clinging vine. In countries where the church leans on the state, the church, lacking the initiative of self-help, has remained stagnant and spineless. Not in increase of freight-rates, but in initiative and resourcefulness, and above all independence, lies the salvation of the railroads. We notice, however, with satisfaction that these vast motor vehicles, do not hog the road with that utter unconcern for the rights of passenger cars that they used to maintain heretofore. Apparently, they realize, that regulation is in the air, and do not want to incur the ire of the travelling public.

Most of the towns, and even cities, situated along the road, have still the antiquated speed limit of fifteen or twenty miles per hour. The smaller the town the lower seems to be the speed limit, as if to compel the tourist, by law, to linger, and take notice of a burg which otherwise would escape his attention. A commendable exception to this stupid traffic regulation, which is flagrantly violated by residents no less than by tourists, I observed at the entrance to a pretty resort in Colorado. "Please Drive Carefully" read not the regulation, but the request of the authorities. I am quite sure, that far more motorists respect the reasonableness of this appeal, which is addressed to their sense of fairness and consideration, than the arbitrary and antiquated speed limit to which they are subjected. Police authorities use too-much compulsion, and too-little persuasion. Germany in the days of the Kaiser with her ubiquitous "Verboten" signs had nothing on our law-ridden and prohibition-prostrate democracy.