Mercury Starts 100th Birthday Celebration With Festival Edition

This year our Blackberry Festival edition will not only bring you "Best Wishes" from your local merchants, it will also bring you selected writings of the late Warren R. Fisher. This portion is in celebration of the 100th birthday of The Carlisle Mercury.

During the remainder of this year we hope to bring you at various times historical items of interest, reproductions of old pictures, papers and excerpts from old Mercurys.

We hope you will enjoy our way celebrating our 100th Birthday.

From the Diary of a Country Editor

by Warren R. Fisher Sr.

THIS, THAT AND T'OTHER

Thursday, March 24, 1927

Wise men say that there are three sorts of persons who are wholly deprived of judgment,---they who are ambitious of preferments in the courts of princes; they who make use of pulpits to show their skill in curing it; and they who intrust women with their secrets.--Pilpay.

Kentuckians Like 'Em Hot.

As this newspaper recently observed, we shall not need the diversion of an "ax-slaying exciter" this summer, for ere the scum grows thick on ponds and the stream is dry up in the meadows, the chatter of politicians will hold forth as the "cracking of thorns under the pot," and there will be sweetness a plenty and to spare. For signs are not lacking that those who want the offices and the emoluments thereof are aware that your Kentuckian likes his politics as well as his karrutts hot. And but 'twill be, this bubbling cauldron of politics, are the katydid fiddles under an August moon. For the faggots are being piled.

Once upon a time it was the juice of the corn that fired the faggots under the pot. The genius of Mr. Volstead has removed that highly inflammable heating agent, in a manner of speaking--or so some say---and few States are vouchsafed a major moral issue wherewith the politicians may season their political burgoo. But not so Kentucky. The pari-mutuel is with us still. Yet in a little while, no doubt, and this form of amusement for the man who chooses to waste his substance in an attempt to get something for nothing will take its place with the dodo and the ichthyorazurus, and will lay its bones alongside the carcass of the John Barlycorn that was potent without potash. And the nitwit who thinks he can "beat 'em" will hie himself to the hillsbook maker who knows he can't---and your politician will be a-questing for an issue.

Not that there are no issues. The Lord knows that we lack not for issues in Kentucky, but they are not heat producers; they do not work the "great common pot-pul up to a frenzy for or fornints; they are not such sure-fire vote-getters. Who has seen the question of public education of modern prisons, of the more humane care of our mental unfortunates call forth bitter diatribes from press and pulpit and bring old friends to resort to flasticuffs for or against the cause of some candidate who wants the office and is pay that goes with it? You haven't, we'll venture to say. A cause must have the old, old beating agents of personal liberty and its curtailments and divergent views as to the harmleasness of wickedness of an amusement to bring the voter to the whoopla stage where he is sure to vote "and bring someone with him."

This newspaper was once taken to task by a highly esteemed contemporary for expressing a preferment for the murmur of a mountain stream, the odor of bacon frying over a wood fire, the whistle of a red bird from the pines and the calm, quiet remmersity of star-strewn heavens to the mouthing of politicians. Criticism was deserved. One should take an interest in politics; should cling to the old ideals of service to State and Nation; should believe that statesmanship did not go out of fashion with the hoop skirt, though one wouldn't get very far with such old fashioned ideals these days. We used to believe in fairies, even political fairies, but it is so tiresome to keep bolstering up the illusion. Alas, for the frock-coated cause, with hand in bosom, a la Dan'l Webster, or with upraised finger after the beat manner of Dr. Munyon. They too have been laid along with the dodo and the dinosaur. In their stead we have the practical politician, of slush funds and "little green houses in K street;" good business men, hardboiled, suave and excellent psychologists of the herd instinct. They have to be.

For there are many like us, more's the pity! who are more interested in the enthralling task of making a living, of getting a new car or a new house or another farm or even in thrilling to the wafted carol of the meadow lark and fragrance that spills from the golden cup of a daffodil, than in politics and politicians. It takes a deal of steaming to bring us to the boiling point, at which stage we "pour" more easily---to the polling place.

So the thorns will crackle under the pot and the cauldron will bubble with its charge and counter-charge, . . . double, double toil and trouble, Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

School, roads, prisons, asylums and even taxes, perhaps, will be forgotten in the seething. We will be told of improving the breed of race horses, a horry argument, we think, which will be easily answered. We will be told of abolishing gambling and saving racing, wagerless, an argument, in our opinion, equally as poor, for so long as horses are raced and the telegraph brings the results of races, there will be money wagered. The betting will be done, as most of it is now done, in all probability, through the hand books. The antis have a trump card in their "State, a partner in gambling" argument. It will be hard to answer, but the pros are sagacious and the answer may be forthcoming.

In any event 'tyill be a merry scrap. It will not be settled, the antis tell us, until the pari-mutuel is abolished. It might be settled by the forthcoming elections and again the mighn't. The element of chance will add interest, of course, to the races of the various candidates who are pledged to abolish betting. Funny thing politics, but here in Kentucky the gapse is becoming as standardized and ennui-provoking as a procession of flivvers or the arrest of bootleggers or short skirts.

Yes, it promises to be a warm summer, politically speaking. Old dog Tray and Shep and Ring can come to town and pant a bit in perfect safety. The boys at the rewarring stump will furnish the excitement.

Thursday, May 3, 1928

In Forestry Week

Trees that the love of men preserve
Have roots that reach beyond the soil
Whose tender, unseen tendrils toil
Within a nation's heart, and nerve
The growing sinews of a race.
Where men have loved peace and right
Aye, mark ye well that favored place
Where forests guard the pleasant leas:
For peaceful is the land that lies
Within the hills where forests rise
And men are taught to love the trees.

Henry Edison Williams.

This, That and T'other

A page from the diary of a country editor.

Lay late, and hazily there comes into my fitful dreaming the roll of a drum, brisk and martial, and suddenly I awake to find the sunlight streaming in and know that my drummer is not warlike, but love-born, though his uniform be as gay and bright as any drummer-lad who ever rapped a call to battle. For my drummer is a fat yellow hammer upon whom Spring has wrought and these many days, beginning before dawn, he has sent his ratatattat rolling from his gutter drum on my roof for feminine approval of his musical prowess. Of late, I think, the pauses grow longer and perhaps wistful and I fear his bachelorhood does irk him. Yet may he be of good cheer, for Spring comes not by the calendar this year, it seems, and the sex is coy. And cold perforce, what with snows in late April and winter fires still crackling on the hearth. One day right soon, we shall have warm weather and I shall hear the familiar "wicker, wicker, wicker, wicker," like the swishing of a willow wand and my flicker will have ceased his drumming to bow and scrape and posture for his lady. A sovereign alchemist is Spring and right readily do her children of the wild heed the call that knocks sometimes in vain at the soul-portals of her human children, barred by conventions, by inhibitions of custom, by the artificial restraints that are necessary to the peace of the human herd. It might not be otherwise, yet do we miss something. I am sure, that comes to our cousins of the wild in the calm acceptance of the "still voice" that speaks and has spoken through the ages.

There is something inevitable about the way my purple martins set about the business of their home making. Coddling on the eastern porches of their box this wintry spring morning they seem sad and despairing. Yet they do not despair. A hint of warming sunlight sets them a-twitter, winging joyfully in great, sweeping curves, popping in and out of their little rooms, alive to the business at hand. Ever the great urge drives them; ever the future calls; every do the little martins do be fledged this summer, when the corn blades are green and the bollybocks stand like gay old-fashioned ladies along the garden path. Do these purple swallows, tottering on weak legs about their tiny porches, envision the summer, the gaping mouths to be fed the tiny wings growing stronger every day, the hint of autumn in the air, the trial flights, the southward journey of the colony---all to be in the brief space of a summer? I think not, and yet who knows? But I do know that so it will be this summer and the next and the next through countless years. Mating, building, hatching---driven by something too strong for choice, that something to which man has stretched imploring hands, into the mystery of which he delves with his brain, hatching here a gleam, there the blankness of despair, but ever searching and ever carrying on --driven by the deathless urge coming down through limitless years.

Lord, I do grow solemn in philosophizing and would better emulate Dr. Johnson's friend, Mr. Edwards, who upon meeting his distinguished schoolmate after many years, being a trifle awed by his fame, hurriedly remarked;

"You are a philosopher, Dr. Johnson. I have tried too in my time to be a philosopher; but I don't know how, cheerfulness was always breaking in."

Fortunate Mr. Edwards! I would that cheerfulness would "break in" with me these dull, depressing days of winter-spring, for I do well nigh perish in the doldrums. So that I envy Fulton, the barber, for even as we both suffered with the twinges of the grippe a few days ago, I was surprised to fcar him embark upon one of his delightful prevarications as he trimmed me. A ficctionist par excellence, this genial chrtsotonsor and this time he told me of a flock of geese that he surprised frozen in the ice of a pond one morning, which made such a flapping upon his capture of a fine gander that the ice was lifted from the surface of the water and startled natives of warmer climes to the south saw a few hours later the unusual spectacle of a gentle rain falling from a cloud of geese. When prevarication breaks out in Fulton, cheerfulness breaks in with his hearers and I wonder if this Munchausen of the shears, with his wild stories and the solace of the fiddle hasn't got him a philosophy that Dr. Johnson might envy.

* * * * * *

Yesterday my catbird came back and his song is most springlike sound I have heard. A rare musician is this slim aristocrat of birds and his singing is not excelled in sweetness one whit by his cousin, the mockingbird. He will be here to set our my bird bath and this morning he made his ablutions like the fastidious

Continued on Page 3

Homecomers

Welcome to Carlisle

CELEBRATE 4TH

Stop and see us for that GOOD GULF GAS! !

Luther Hollar

Gulf Service Station

Gulf Distributor

Welcome

to the

BLACKBERRY FESTIVAL

Visit us now - and we hope to serve you at our new location. next to the Dairy Queen, by July 15.

E & M Restaurant

EMERY CLARK MEREDITH EVANS

Welcome

We all

Extend to you a most hearty welcome to the annual Blackberry Festival

Rex & Paul

Shell Service Station

East Main Street

WELCOME

Friends

While here shop and visit our store.

Sim's Jewelry

Independence Day

The Management and Personnel wish you an old fashioned good time during the Blackberry Festival.

Blue Grass Knitting, Inc.

WELCOME to THE BLACKBERRY FESTIVAL

The Circuit Clerk

Beulah Hughes

WELCOME To Carlisle and the Blackberry Festival

Have a happy and safe 4th.

Emery Clark, Sheriff

Meredith Evans, Deputy

WELCOME TO CARLISLE

Let's make this the best HOMECOMING ever.

See us during the Festival.

The C.C. Cole Co.

Welcome Homecomers

See Us For Your Building Needs

Ratliff Bros.

Welcome To Carlisle

Enjoy this Homecoming and the annual Festival

Hopkins Drug Co.

The Spirit of '76

Welcome To The Annual Blackberry Festival

Mathers - Shearer

This, That and 'Tother

Continued from Page 2

gentleman that he is. His wife has not yet come from the south yet, so his song is feeble. Perhaps my catbird deserts his wife in winter as does my downy woodpecker, or slips away in early spring with an eye to a new crop of "Flappers." All of which may be but a slanderous auspicion, aroused by a friend, himself a lover of birds, who writes:

"By the way, 'Jack' my catbird, has arrived, 'Jill' his wife, has not appeared--in fact, I am auspicious that he has a new Jill every year--perhaps not a bad idea. I suggested as much to my wife, poor wretch, and her retort was not flattering to my vanity." Now, "Jack's" vanity may come a cropper too, if he be a catbird that the young lady catbirds call "Mr.' Jack," that unflattering remark of respect that is so deadly to those of us who may not be "fair and fat," but are (Lord help us!) "forty." In which case he may be found come middle May, disconsolately brooding on the wisdom of an ancient saying.

"Old friends are best. King James used to call for his old shoes; they were easiest for his feet."

I shall watch my catbird to see if he proves a philanderer.

* * * * *

All of this day I have been restless and ill-content. It is cold, but the sun shines now and then; my lilac bush is budding into bloom; the shrubbery is fairly full of song caught in the branches of the willows; violets have sprung up in the tight-rolled buds of the peony branches are swelling and some, too, I found me a poem today that is as beautiful as any I have ever read--a veritble vignette of spring that should brighten, a dull brain as a colorful picture brightens a room,---

Far lighter than a flock of words,
Released by some wild thought,
The wind has twirled a scarf of birds
And caught this tree about with it.
And dizzying is the pain
He flings the fabric to the skies.
Falling, it floats into the grain
Where now invisible lies.

---Kenneth Slade Alling, in Voices

Yet I am out of tune somehow, a-weary of my books, languid to the call of field and tree and unfolding blooms; and I am ashamed.
Something is wrong with me,
Or should I be
Blythe as the birds that sweetly sing,
I, too, should wear
A happy air
And flash a welcome to the spring;
But I, so wrapt in my affairs,
Deplore my cares.

So Edgar Guest, poet prolific of every mood, whim and fancy in human flesh is heir to. The "something" must be a hang-over from the "break-bone fever," called by modern medicine, the grippe, in my case, or is it "spring fever," that it is a devilish mood, so that I have been at this, that and t'other all day, with no satisfaction in anything, until my wife, poor wretch, will be glad to see tomorrow come and myself away to the office.

But just at twilight I opened the covers of a book and straightway was lost in delight at the cranky manship of genius. A delightful book, "The Birdgcs of San Luis Rey," beautifully done, delicately wrought, and one finishes it with a resolution to think of it, to delve on into pleasant paths of thought which the imagination of the author has pointed out. *It is as if he had said,* "you may use your imagination if you like along this way farther if you choose." It pictures a life's story in which much of the goodness of the human heart, "now here at last," says the Abbess Maria del Pilar, "that anywhere you may expect grace." And one can do that. The thoughts are comforting.

Likewise this author knows love and of this he writes so beautifully that I would have you read it:

"This assumption that she need not look for more devotion now that her beauty had passed proceeded from the fact that she had never realized any love save passion. Such love, though it expends itself in generosity and thoughtfulness, though it give birth to visions and to great poetry, remains among the sharpest expressions of self-interest. Not until it has passed through a long servitude, through its own self-hatred, through mockery and great ecstasy, can it take its place among the loyalties. Many who have spent a lifetime in it can tell us less of love than a child that knot a dog yesterday."

And that, one finds, though much later than this author, was to be thirty, is true.

Thank heaven for books! This one chased away the doldrums and with it came a new respect for modern craftsmen, and also kinder thoughts of life and of people and a renewed hope that I may cherish many illusions yet a while longer, so that happily the days of chimney corner may find me with an outlook not unlike that expressed by this Canadian poet, Thomas Curtis Clark:

When I am old, and days crawl limp and slow,
When stressful duties bring no weariness,
Then I shall calmly sit till sunset glow
Recounting all the hours God sent to bless.
Ten thousand dawns shall come again to me
To loose me from the feat of unbending night;
Old-fashioned gardens limned by memory
Shall haunt my noontide with their pure delight.
Soft, through the windows, tender words shall come,
Voices I knew when life was April-sweet;
Then I shall sing, no more shall I be dumb;
Youth shall return, to make my joy complete.

When I am old, and quieted all strife
My heart shall say, How good, how kind was life.

So, at near midnight, mighty contentfully to bed, and there the closing sentence of "The Bridge of San Luis Rey" comes to me, and it is:

Even memory is not necessary for love. There is a land of the living and the bridge is love, the only survival, the only meaning.

May this be a new saying of that mystery, into which the minds of men have delved, toward which men have stretched supplicating hands, hopeful hands through the ages? I wonder.

Thursday, May 11, 1933

This, That and 'Tother

Up betimes for me and to stroll in my backyard garden where Spring pirouettes her coming in the light-wrapped buds of peonies and the myrrid voices of the little feathered folk that now begin to make the fields vocal with their medley of joy in an earth reborn. And again my purple martins teeter uncertainly about their perches on weak legs and once since have lost their importance to curving and slender wings, swift and incomparable. And in their merry chatter, their bubbling laughter and the fluelike whistle of the male, Spring speaks to me and there surges back into my heart all the hope of summertime, which lies over the rim of life's horizon, beyond the sight of mortals---that wistful sense of a possible fulfillment that is age-old, that is in all men the very sleeer of the Spring.

And under the graceful canopy of my weeping willow, which burgeons aforetime into full leaf, there comes momentarily to me a feeling of peace, unused in these times that try our souls and stretch our courage to the breaking point, so that a sweet note first heard comes like the voice of summer and the flutter of wings in my bird bath and one that my favorite of all lovely singers of the fields and trees, the slim grey arisaucrat of the feathered choir, the catbird, is come again to make her well-guarded nest in the shrubbery. Ever shall I remember that fecund May, when she made her nest in the honeysuckel on my porch, so that we might look down into her jewel casket of woven twigs and come close to the brooding bird that sat valiantly steadfast and curved like a slim, grey bow on her blue-green eggs, though the beedy eyes showed her terror of our nearness. And I shall not forget the mate who sang from a nearby tree in which cherries ripened in scarlet clusters, singing loud, singing cheerfully in the sunlight of early morning and the fulness of mid-day, singing with plaintive reassuring sweetness as twilight came on---for the catbird sang to my heart that spring, for I, too, might sing, through crudely in comparison, to a blond fledgling of my own. And now she comes on flying feet to call me to breakfast, to question me, to chatter endlessly and like a very magpie, after the manner of her age and sex. And always with the yearning of maternity for the baby fast merging into little girl I am conscious of a kinship with those feathered folk of the wild that now so determinedly, so patiently, and with such cheerfulness and sweet music go about the business of love and homemaking and the rearing of broods. Who shall say that there lies not over the rim of that horizon, beyond which our eyes may not see, a change for these, as much to be desired as is vtalented by the fondest hopes of man?

* * * * *

So to breakfast, which of late has lost for me its relish, save for coffee and a nibbled crust---though I do make up for it bountifully at evening, when I should not. And soon I make ready for a journey, to which my wife, poor wretch, looks forward with keen interest, while I, bedevried by worries and anxieties of business, am loath to undertake, so that I remind myself of a sledge dog that wearies and wailing at our departure, we are away into a country-side new, it seems to me, more beautiful in any spring. There is no grandiuer of beauty in our Bluegrass Region of Kentucky, no ruggedness of rock or hill, but a soft melting into each other of rolling hills of green velvet, splotched at this season with the warm auburn of plowed fields. To me the region brings a sense of peace, perhaps because it is home, perhaps because to my mind it is the most beautiful countryside I have ever seen. And though I have listened to glowing descriptions of the meticulous beauty of rural Britian; though I realize that in the loving care a long line of generations has lavished on English estates there must of necessity come a mellowness and a finish that our more carelessly tended fields may lack, yet there is a diversity of beauty in the Bluegrass, I am sure, that speaks a various language of loveliness not surpassed by any region on earth. But then this is my country and I love it. It's fat cattle in woodland pastures, it's colts afrolic in the paddocks, the meanders of little branches, cutting miniature canyons through green sward meadows, it's old brick houses, it's whitewashed post and rail fences, topped with a flat board, it's old stone walls, weathered and grey, riotous with Virginia Creeper and the trumpet vine, it's fields empurpled with the blue seed pods of the ripened grass in June, clean swept by the strippers later to shine like burnished gold; the steep, shady banks of the creeks and the sweep of turf to the water's edge of the lovely Elkhorn---all these, and more, speak to me of the lovely region which enraptured even the grim Boone as he first looked out upon this fertile table-land from the knobs above the swift-flowing, rocky stream he named the Laiblegrd.

* * * * *

So to drive over the old highway to Paris, along which rushed the gaily-painted stages from Bryan's Station, to fall into the jaws of a cunning Indian trap at the great bend of the Licking and fight the last battle of the Revolution at the Blue Licks; on to Paris and along the meanders of the Elkhorn to Kanlaxim Lodge and then into the rolling hills of Anderson and Nelson until we come in the early of the evening to old Bardstown. Never I think did the art of pronunciation nap so hapily, never our cadenza, slurring Kentucky speech elide so lightly as when sung upon tongued the vowel and gave us Bardstown. For whose coming Stephen Collins Foster wrote his songs in the home of his Rowan kin or not, forever inextricably will the name and fame of this bard be associated with Federal Hill and with Bardstown. I, at least, prefer to think of this "starved genius of the World" as composing songs in the great high-ceiled rooms of the Rowan home, under its venerable trees, or in the old slave quarters.

* * * * *

As we walked down the flagged path under the maples past the well where the one-time masters of Federal Hill lie sleeping, a mocking bird was singing and song sparrows trilled in the shrubbery. Sadness? No, dignity, yes, and peace.

* * * * *

More meticulously cared for, one knows, than ever the Rowans saw it, the great yard is perfect, without that mathematical precision which mars so many shrines, that "landscaping" which would paint the lily and teach the rose a deeper hue than red. Loving hands, wise heads and perfect taste have "restored" at Federal Hill. The feel of Kentucky is about these rooms, with their great transomed beds, their white carved wooden mantels and brick hearths, their cronch mahogany and crystal candelabra, Beautiful and gallant wit and wisdom graced these great high-ceiled rooms, trod these polished ash floors---that, the portraits in the great hall tell one. As in many old estates of Kentucky one might easily lose oneself at Federal Hill in imagining of the stateliness and beauties, the graces and formalities of a day that is dead, but thrilling is that perfection of line that even unkeptness and decay might never mar, luxuriating in the spaciousness of rooms and hall, the flavor of the past, the aroma, if I may put it thus, of Kentucky, came to me most keenly in the sensing of a thin yet unmistakable perfume that lingered about the old kitchen. Straightway there in boyhood memories of a great high-ceiled kitchen with its wood-burning stove about which an ebon-hued Hebe bustled, evoking similar delicious odors; of a dining room in which great logs crackled in the old fireplace and about whose walls hung the same savory perfume, fainter yet delightfully agreeable and appetizing. I lingered and there arose the picture of a golden-brown burden on its silver platter, borne respectfully by some grizzled servitor to the dining room in the "big house." Its surface was sugared and clove-speckled and it exhaled a perfume as truly typical of Kentucky as that of blue grass curing in the windrows, hemp retting in the fields of Autumn. It was the aroma of old ham. This, then, I know was my country and here were my people.

* * * * *

To dinner, where I made my, of late, annual appearance in dinner clothes, feeling somewhat boarded up and conspicuous, and here listened to eulogies of poor Stephen Collins Foster, who, when alive no doubt suffered the slings and arrows of the outrageous fortune that was the portion of artists in a ruder day and not infrequently is their lot now, while living. I would that the flowers of encomium might have gladdened the heart of so true an artist while

Continued on Page 4