

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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### Looking Backward

Today we beg to turn our column over to a bit of amusing writing under the title "Shop Talk" which appeared in the last issue of History News published by American Assn. for State and Local History. The contents were written by Eugene P. Bertin, president of the Historical Society of Muncy.

Mr. Bertin begins his annual report to his society with a declaration of faith a creed for his society - a creed which could well be adopted by the Monterey History and Art Association. Then he states: "We believe in the importance of history. We believe in the fundamental goodness of small-town living. We would hold fast to the precious old-fashioned neighborliness which puts a roof over our head with a community house-raising, and a quilt on our bed in a quilting bee! We put great store by simplicity.

Then he puts in writing this bit of homey philosophy: "It would strengthen our social order indeed if all men could take a two-quart lard bucket on a sunny day and go strawberrying. They would not only fill themselves with a delicious red fruit, but they would also harvest something for the heart that is sorely needed in the world today.

"We cling to the simple virtues. We believe that man, with all his sophistication, has yet to improve on the Ten Commandments."

Then our author does some regretting: "We witness with regret the passing of familiar articles into the limbo of the antique market. We are irked by the increasing difficulty we have in purchasing a card of hook and eyes, a dip-pen, a washboard, a common hat pin, or a cork. We lament the passing of the familiar country doctor, the 'choo-choo' train, the wall telephone, and the popular small town railroad station."

"We believe that with each passing article, such as covered bridges, beaded handbags, and the like, goes something precious in the life of man that can never be recaptured. We revere the spirit of the true pioneer. The pioneer mother had her troubles with marauding Indians, ferocious bears, and no conveniences, but she never went through a rainy Saturday with the television on the blink. Many a modern thinks he is roughing it when he turns his sleeping bag down to 'moderate.'

"We believe it is our mission to preserve enduring elements of the past. 'Pick a tree and a park' was the motto of 200 determined women in a southern village as they battled to save the stately oaks which county authorities wanted to chop down to widen the road. Such action strikes a responsive note in the heart of a society which has been created to preserve the good things of life. It is this motive that brings about the restoration of historical sites, preserves old records, collects old glassy china and other household furniture, and encourages all people to guard the future of family heirlooms." Mr. Bertin gives us this information: "Ours is one of 2,000 historical museums in America and gratifying it is to us that the number has grown from 600 in 1930 to 2,000 in 1954." We hope that our Monterey public museums, which number four, are included in that list.

The editor goes on to state under the heading, "We have some qualms about scientific discoveries," that "we note that some of the wonder drugs are so new they haven't even got a disease for them yet. It is our experience that much of the superior technology was demonstrated in past generations. The old-covered bridge was extremely durable, the country doctor cured his patients, the old woolen mills turned out a product for which we make no apology, and the ancient craftsmen, Chippendale and Hepplewhite, set a standard that is still worthy of imitation. And these achievements were accomplished by less violence and nervousness than seem to prevail today.

"We believe in culture and beauty."

"Antiques?" asked she.

"Modern!" said he.

He pined for "good design."

She longed for the tried and true.

He seemed to stand on a clean new floor, looking up, While she, with far off gaze, felt underfoot.

The roots of a century.