Sunday Oregonian

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KEEPING FIT.

Dr. Dudley A. Sargent and William Muldoon, eminent authorities on physical training, believe that youths of today are the physical inferiors of their fathers a generation ago. But Dr. William G. Anderson of Yale, who has examined a mass of available data, finds that the college boy of the present is on the average somewhat taller than his parent was and has a somewhat larger chest. Whether the boy of today is more efficient or more successful, all things considered, than the youth of half a century ago is yet to be determined, but there is no question that he has better opportunity to make himself physically fit. "The hygienic atmosphere of the public, high school and college is better and we know more of the value of rest, bathing, cleanliness, prophylaxis and kindred subjects," says Dr. Anderson. If the conclusions of Dr. Sargent and Mr. Muldoon are true, they are a sad commentary on the trend of modern physical education.

Outside of the schools, Dr. Anderson points out, influences are constantly at work to counteract the advantages of systematic training. The danger is not that youths will leave school less fit than formerly, but that they will succumb to temptation to relax the regimen of exercise that is absolutely necessary to physical well-being. The younger generation does not walk as much as its fathers did and Dr. Anderson believes that walking ought never to be discontinued. Athletics are splendid because they require every participant to "put hinges in his knees" to authority and to observe regular habits, but every business and professional man knows how difficult it is to continue an athletic system after he has left school behind him. Gymnastics cannot be trusted safely to bridge the gap between youth and middle age because the number of men who will keep up their exercises has been found in practice to be small. Games, plays, sports and dancing are more appealing, because they are likely to be persisted in where voluntary and set contractions of the muscular system soon become unattractive. "It is too bad," says Dr. Anderson, "that formal gymnastics are so unpopular, but it is the truth." His conclusion, nevertheless, coincides with experience. It is quite impossible for most men to maintain any form of exercise into which an outward interest does not enter. Walking may be combined with nature study, or with many other things, and games involve an essential element of competition. Certain forms of dancing are safe for adults, inasmuch as they stimulate action of heart and lungs and quicken arterial circulation through the large organs of the body. But an important point is, if possible, to avoid permitting oneself to slip backward; it is vastly easier to "keep fit" than to "come back" in the physical sense.

The period between the active athletic life of the average youth in school and the time when the man begins to realize for the first time that all is not as it ought to be is critical and it is important to recognize the signs of approaching age. Dr. Anderson, who is by no means a pessimist concerning the chances of a man of fifty to regain a measure of the ground that he has lost, thus describes them:

> Of the straws indicating the wrong direction of the wind let me refer to the loss of memory for little things and dependence upon stimulants. Some men must have coffee as soon as they are seated at the breakfast table, and any modification of the first meal programme is followed by an outburst of feeling. No healthy man will give way to an exhibition of temper.

The looking glass may reflect important warnings if it is studied carefully. A drooping figure is a signpost on the road to deterioration. Stooping, however slight, is accompanied by falling of the chest walls, which in turn cramp the thorax and interfere more or less with free action of the heart and lungs. These are signs that an improved attitude should be assumed, gradually if necessary, but not neglected. One advantage of walking is that it promotes this. Posture is more important than many persons realize, because it concerns development and maintenance of function of all the vital organs of the body. Value of any sane system of exercise is enhanced by the facts that bodily health depends on it and that it also directly affects mental capacity. "The brain substance," Dr. Anderson reminds us, "is as much a part of the body as the neuro-muscular machinery and is affected by proper exercise and right living in an equally effective way."

Undoubted gains have been made within a generation in knowledge of hygiene and in its practice in the period during which youths are under systematic control. Growing popularity of the toothbrush is a homely illustration of the effectiveness of hygienic propaganda. But there still remains a gap to be bridged. The lesson must be learned that early middle age is vitally important. It is in this period that the seeds of future trouble are sown, seeds that are apt to produce weeds of physical disorder unless they are uprooted quickly. But it is even better that they should not be planted at all.

Oregon had less than its quota of freak bills during the recent legislative season, judging from reports from other states. A Nebraskan has introduced a bill in the legislature of his state providing that work at $5 a day shall be furnished to all applicants, whether citizens of the state or not, payable in warehouse receipts. Provision that these receipts shall be accepted as money at full face value is reminiscent of the period of provisional government in Oregon, when there was no money in the country. But the Nebraska statesman goes farther than the pioneers of the Pacific coast ever thought of doing, for he also provides that when there is state work to be done and no one to do it officers shall be empowered to conscript bankers, lawyers, doctors or any others found available and put them to work as common laborers or force them to provide substitutes. Additional provision that those who file notice of refusal to abide by the law shall have withdrawn from them all the benefits of statutory law also takes us back in memory to provisional government days. It was precisely in this way that the tenuous authority of a doubtful government was enforced in early Oregon.

EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS.

Over at Walla Walla they are going through the ancient process of safeguarding and protecting the interests of the taxpayers again. An association was organized the other night which resolved to keep close watch on the public officers and make an appropriate protest if any of them seemed to be on the point of spending too much money. Several speeches were made which indicated that the meeting took itself quite seriously.—Yakima Republic.

This is writ sarcastikle. It is good satire. It is reprinted to show that other communities have their tax problems and the same old way of handling them. The taxpayers meet, make a few addresses denouncing the tax-feeders, pass some resolutions, appoint a committee or two and adjourn till the next meeting. Meanwhile the tax-making machine rolls merrily on.

Well, what is there to do about it? Let us suppose the taxpayers never said anything, much less did anything. Then what? If the taxpayers don't spend too much money, somebody gets up a grand scheme for a new bridge, or a beautiful park, or a magnificent boulevard, or something equally lovely that appeals to the popular imagination, and the people enthusiastically vote it and forget all about it till next tax-paying time. Then they remember quite well—and blame the tax-levying machine.

The truth is that the great and vital question of lower taxes is not alone for the tax-leviers, nor the tax-spenders, but for everybody. That is what we are saying. Unless everybody makes up his mind to take an interest and helps to put on the brakes, there will be the same old breaking of the speed limit in taxes.

ONE MAN OVER ALL.

The best way to settle such controversies as that regarding the respective merits of the battleship and airplane may be to establish a secretary of national defense under whose control both army and navy might be placed and the air service with them. Each one of the three might then have a big bureau under the secretary, who, with the advice of experts, would decide the part that each should play in the general scheme of defense and would make them work together.

Army and navy have each a natural desire to magnify their own importance and may be inclined to consider their own problems with too little regard for the part that the other service is to play. Each is apt to be jealous of a separate air service on an equality with it and wishes to have its own air corps in a subordinate position, that it may not interfere with the established course of promotion. A cabinet officer who regards all with an impartial view to the combined purpose which all should serve should be able to suppress jealousy and to bring all to work together to the one end. He could reach a sounder conclusion as to the efficacy of airplanes in naval war than could either a naval or an air officer, for each of the latter is prone to overrate the military value of his own craft.

The arm of both the army and navy that most needs development is the air service. It was neglected before the war, was the victim of a dismal failure during the war and has been hit hard by economy since the war ended. Yet aircraft made greater progress as an effective weapon than any other implement and there is no known limit to their further development. They should be removed from control of men who are inclined to belittle them and to increase their own authority by bringing the air corps into their power.

SELECTING A NATIONAL TREE.

The campaign of the American Forestry association for selection of a national tree progresses apace, notwithstanding the obvious difficulty of choosing one that shall truly represent the whole country. American Forestry, devoted to forest preservation, is right in calling attention to the fact that the main purpose of the campaign will have been served if thereby the thoughts of people can be turned "toward the value of the forests to our commercial life at this time." The forestry people have simply availed themselves of an opportunity to obtain publicity that will not be begrudged them. Interest in the whole subject of trees has been stimulated by such incidents, for example, as a tree election recently in the schools of the District of Columbia. This was preceded by three months' study of tree values. A good deal can be said of the merits of such an election as a lesson in practical politics, without personalities. Its cultural value also is unquestioned.

The hall of fame for trees has proved efficient as advertising. If it succeeds in "selling" the tree as a whole to the American people it will be worth while. Something of value is determined by inquiry into the kinds of trees which best serve public use, even if no final conclusion is reached. It is said, for example, that the walnut leads in the vote thus far, which invites the question as to why this tree should be uppermost in the public mind now. The answer probably is that people have not forgotten its importance in the recent war, or the yeoman service done by Boy Scouts in locating specimens for use in making rifle stocks. But the real lesson was that inconsiderate waste is certain to involve penalties. This is measurably true of the hickory, another candidate for the hall of fame, which is urged as the most distinctively American of all trees, and of the elm and of certain varieties of oaks.

The issue is not, "Which is our most popular tree?" but "Which is the most useful tree in America?" The American Forestry association probably errs on the side of caution in assuming that "useful" is to be interpreted in the purely utilitarian sense, but this, too, is a minor matter by comparison with the whole purpose of the campaign. Everybody who thinks about it knows that trees have many uses, and that one of their main functions is to increase the pleasure of living. Nobody wants to live on a treeless waste. It used to be the ambition of every settler on the plains to start a clump of trees growing in the vicinity of his house.

Incidentally the suggestion that memorial trees be planted along the Roosevelt highway—one of the outgrowths of the forestry association's campaign—is gaining headway largely as the result of the proposed hall of fame. If one cannot elect his favorite tree to a hall of fame, one at least can obtain its planting somewhere along the roadside between the Atlantic and the Pacific. Every interest will be served and beauty of landscape heightened by variety. Fir, pine and larch, walnut, hickory and oak, maple, willow and poplar, and their brothers and cousins of the tree family, would vastly add to the attractiveness not only of this transcontinental highway, but of every other roadway in the land.

MENNONITES AND CIVIC DUTY.

Hostility to the Mennonites who are seeking entry into the United States from Canada is due to their attitude toward civil government, rather than to the circumstance that they are racially of German origin largely. The Mennonite movement which began in Switzerland in the sixteenth century and spread into Germany and Austria has been combated not because of its religious aspect, but because adherents of the faith profess that they owe nothing to the state that gives them protection and that they are bound by no obligation of patriotism.

The governor of Mississippi has declared that so far as he is concerned these immigrants will not be deterred from entering his state. Doubtless he is influenced by the reputation their precursors in America have achieved for thrift and industry. Wherever they have settled, as in Pennsylvania and Kansas, they have made the soil productive. Lancaster county, Pennsylvania, was long regarded as the most prosperous agricultural community of its size in the United States, largely because of the Mennonites and the example that they set. The Cumberland valley in Maryland and the Shenandoah valley in Virginia similarly blossomed under their husbandry. Even on inferior soil they have done well.

The issue is whether refusal to accept a share of the burdens of government, which disqualifies them for citizenship in its restricted sense also makes them undesirable neighbors. Economically there is nothing to be said against them; politically they refuse to conform to the requirements of modern society. Menno Simon, the Dutch reformer from whom they took their name, taught that no Christian man could become a magistrate or ruler, take an oath or go to law, that the Old Testament was largely abrogated by the New, that ministers might not receive stipends and that only those who "were awakened" should be baptized. Unchristianity of the state has been taught to Mennonites from earliest times. The Canadian Mennonites now seeking asylum in the United States are the descendants of others who colonized in Russia with a promise of exemption from military duty—a promise that was afterward rescinded. Canada has wearied of them because of belief that those who will not share the burdens of government are not entitled to its advantages.

A CLASSICAL FRAUD.

Owners of copies of the "Ulster County Gazette" dated January 4, 1800, containing an account of the funeral of George Washington, will be interested in the conclusion of an expert on old newspaper issues that in all probability there is not a genuine copy of that issue in existence. Edward A. Henry, in charge of the University of Chicago's collection of old newspapers, says that he has never seen one and does not know of anyone who has.

Inquiries as to the value of this historical relic come perennially to the office of The Oregonian, to the curators of historical societies and to librarians in all parts of the country. Judging from the number of them, one is almost convinced that the circulation of the old Ulster County Gazette must have run into the hundreds of thousands. Only two other bits of memorabilia that we can now recall to mind are comparable to the Ulster County Gazette—the Vicksburg Citizen, printed on wall paper during the siege of Vicksburg in 1862, and the New York Herald, containing an account of the assassination of President Lincoln in 1865, both widely duplicated. Obviously the value of these as relics is dependent on their genuineness, since the historical events that they recount have been better described by other historians. But men who are expert in these matters have scientific methods of determining frauds that put the issue quite beyond doubt. Chemical and mechanical analysis of the paper on which they are printed, for example, is conclusive. A fine linen rag paper was used by publishers in 1800, and most of the copies which have come to the attention of Mr. Henry, although printed prior to 1850, did not appear early enough to have used the newsprint that was common in 1800. "That soft paper," says Mr. Henry, "will be good for many hundred years yet, while the earliest Ulster County Gazette we have is already badly discolored."

Curious variations are found in the printing of different editions of the same date. In at least two the heading of the paper is set in italics, and to one, which is known to be a forgery, the printer has added the word "copyright." The Library of Congress has twenty-six different editions, the New York public library nine, and the University of Chicago three. The Wisconsin State Historical Society has copies of the Ulster Gazette for August 18 and September 22, 1804, believed to be genuine, but no issues of this newspaper of an earlier date are known to exist.

Nor is it certain that the first issues, which savants now regard as forgeries, were published with fraudulent intent. The field of unsupported speculation is not for the historian, but it is possible to frame a number of plausible theories. One of these is that some printer, probably in the vicinity of New York, may have thought to produce something of interest by making a so-called facsimile of an original account of the funeral of Washington. If these were well received it is not difficult to suppose that the same printer may have multiplied his editions. It is possible that first buyers bought copies of the paper for precisely what it was and were not deceived by their spuriousness. But others treasured them as genuine. Copies are constantly turning up in old trunks, and each is hailed as a prize.

There is but one recourse left to collectors who now discover themselves to have been deceived, and that is to make their collection of frauds complete. Next to intrinsic worth comes a commercial value imparted by scarcity, but after that there is a vaguely defined field for collectors who like to possess an individual specimen of every existing variety of the article of their peculiar fancy. Collectors of this type usually lose their sense of proportion but occasionally create adventitious value which is none the less real because it is hard to define. A British peer is said to have sailed the world over in a yacht in quest of certain revenue stamps intrinsically of small worth but essential to the unity of his scheme. We do not, however, commend pursuit of fraudulent Ulster County Gazettes as a profitable business. It is rather an avocation for such as have ample leisure and money, and small appreciation of the true value of either.

WHY NOT GIVE THE TRUTH?

The public is privileged again to hear from Mr. Ellingson, who is general chairman of the Order of Railway Conductors, Spokane, Portland & Seattle railway. Mr. Ellingson may know a great deal about the subject which he essays to discuss. If he does, he conceals the fact most successfully in an ill-natured barrage of misstatement and evasion. He neither states correctly what The Oregonian has said, nor what the railroad managers have said, nor what the railroad employes have said and done. If the railway conductors are content to have their case in such hands, The Oregonian will not complain. But the public is entitled to have the employes' case fairly and persuasively presented. If it is to be done, it is evident that it will have to go elsewhere.

What is wanted by The Oregonian, and what the public is entitled to have, is a frank answer to certain damaging statements as to slackerdom among the employes made by the managers and certain other statements as to the relations of employers and employes; and there is no attempt to answer. Why not? Are they true? The managers say they are. The employes, so far as they are voiced by Mr. Ellingson, do not deny. Why not? Why not?

The national agreements are condemned by the managers on the ground that they permit no consideration to widely varying local conditions or to conditions peculiar to any one railroad and that they cause inefficiency and waste of money. The managers have stated their case openly before the labor board through their committee. The brotherhoods have had an equal right to reply through their committee. The Oregonian has never questioned that right, and does not now. As to questions which are common to all the railroads, it is proper that the labor board should hear spokesmen for all on each side of the controversy. But that is not what the brotherhoods want, for we are told that they "are willing to meet the managers in conference to discuss the national agreements' merits and demerits," which is very different from a hearing of both parties by the labor board. The aim is to secure recognition of a committee representing all the railroad brotherhoods of the whole country to deal with a committee representing all the railroad managers in arranging rules and working conditions for each particular road.

It is pretended that the statements of facts and figures quoted by The Oregonian were made directly by this newspaper and were accepted after "access to the railroads' records," which is not open to the brotherhoods. The pretense is false and known to be false when offered. The figures were distinctly stated by The Oregonian to be taken from published statements of the railroad executives, many of them before the labor board, which are open to all the world and are therefore as accessible to the brotherhoods as to any person or organization. The Oregonian does not profess to know whether they are true or false; it says they are of such gravity as to demand an answer.

We are told that the brotherhood representatives "are equipped with a table of facts and figures which they are anxious to produce." Then why not produce them? Because they are waiting "until such a time as Mr. Atterbury is willing to listen." That is, they want to draw the managers into an acknowledgment that details of management for each road are a subject for agreement between national committees of the two parties, with the public unrepresented. This is the essence of the Plumb plan, but it goes farther, for that plan provides for equal representation of management, employes and government on boards of directors, while the public would have no voice in the conference which the brotherhoods desire.

Expenditures on maintenance and repair under government control are not to the point. The statements in question relate to rules by which men are said to receive the same wages for less work than they did before the national agreements were made, or are paid for doing no work. Those agreements had little effect on cost of operation under federal control, for the first of them was signed on October 20, 1919, little more than four months before federal control ended, and the last was signed only six days before that event. Comparisons are between conditions before and after federal control, between operation under local agreements and national agreements.

The issue cannot be dodged by misrepresenting The Oregonian as the defender of the railroads, for we have been as free in criticism of them as of any other interest. The railroad managers have made specific statements of fact, which The Oregonian says demand specific answer. Mr. Ellingson has written profusely and offensively, but he has not answered them. Nor will he.

THE OLD LAW WORKS AGAIN.

An instructive story of the effect of abolition of government control of sugar prices is told in the annual report of the American Sugar Refining company. In the early part of 1920 the visible supply was low and President Wilson refused to exercise the powers conferred by the McNary law to continue control. The price of refined sugar rose to 27½ cents a pound. Then the merchants ceased to rely on American refiners alone to supply them. They bought all over the world on their own account for arrival during the last six months of the year. The company says:

> The world was scoured for sugar and it was found. The great demand and high prices acted as a magnet. Sugar which had disappeared from the world's statistics, and supposedly was consumed, found its way to the warehouses of manufacturers and jobbers even from the interior of China. Sugar began to pour into the United States from nearly 50 countries. In the single month of July alone 587,000 tons of sugar reached United States ports.

The total of such imports was about 700,000 tons coming from Java Europe, Canada, Argentine, Central America, Mexico, Brazil, Peru, the West Indies, Japan, China and British India. The result was that the price broke in August "into the most violent decline ever recorded in sugar." Many firms went bankrupt, but Americans had enough sugar at a more reasonable price.

Here was the old law of supply and demand at work again, though it came into operation after the period of control with as great violence as the bursting of a dam. It might have been advisable to "ease off" gradually from government control to an open market in order to prevent so great a shock as accompanied readjustment, but the boom in price brought its own cure. Sugar was discovered where it was not suspected to be, and the speculator, hungry for a big profit, brought it to market. With the world supply to draw on and with ocean traffic open, no combination can control the supply, and the American people are sure of sugar at a price fixed in the world market.

A MORAL FOR UPLIFTERS.

If there is a moral in Sinclair Lewis' "Main Street" it is that uplift depends a good deal on point of view and that sometimes it is the self-appointed reformer himself, or herself, who most needs uplifting.

"It's so much more complicated than any of you know," says the "generalissima of suffrage" in conversation with the heroine of the book, along in chapter 38, which is near the close. It is "so much more complicated than I knew when I put on ground grippers and started out to reform the world." And the ultimate conclusion is that in "conquering Washington or conquering New York" the conquerers must above all things not conquer. For the uplifter who is popular with wealthy patrons "can be pretty sure that he has softened his philosophy to please them." People instinctively protest against being made over to order and especially when they may harbor unappreciated ideals of their own. "Your middle west is doubly Puritan—prairie Puritan on top of New England Puritan; bluff frontiersman on the surface, but in its heart it still has the ideal of Plymouth Rock in a sleet storm." The lot of the uplifter is hard. There is but one way out:

> There is one attack you can make on it, perhaps the only kind that accomplishes much anywhere: You can keep on looking at one thing after another in your home and church and bank, and ask why it is and who first laid down the law that it had to be that way. If enough of us do this impolitely enough, then we'll become civilized in merely twenty thousand years or so, instead of having to wait the two hundred thousand years that my cynical anthropologist friends allow.

But the eternal principle that the true reformer must have capacity for comprehending the point of view of the objects of his compassion is not to be vitiated by a cynicism. The inmate of a hospital for the insane in Connecticut, in which state a legislator recently introduced a bill to legalize euthanasia for the "hopelessly insane," had a delusion that he possessed six million dollars, knew everything about machinery and could fly to the moon in an airplane at any time he chose. The Connecticut solon would put him to death for his own good, whereas he probably was infinitely happier than any member of the Connecticut legislature. It has not been recorded that the bill passed. It was regarded without seriousness only partly because of its violation of humane principles. Doubtless there was an undercurrent of resistance to meddlesome interference in the affairs of those who are happy in their own ways.

Gopher Prairie, in which the Main street of the tale is situated, was a place in which the "only ardent topics were prohibition, the place in Minneapolis where you could get whisky for $13 a quart, recipes for home-made beer, the high cost of living, the presidential election, Clark's new car, and the not very novel foibles of Cy Bogart." As a remedy for this the heroine of the tale proposed, among other things, to start a salon. No one will be much surprised to learn that a Thanatopsis club accomplished less than its most ardent advocates expected. Or that an average middle western town should fail to grow enthusiastic over a movement to supply it with a "Georgian city hall—warm brick walls with white shutters, a fanlight, a wide hall and a curving stair." "Forming about it," the author tells us, "and influenced by it, as medieval villages gathered about the castle, she saw a new Georgian town as graceful and beloved as Annapolis or that bowery Alexandria to which Washington rode." A "walled rose garden" was metamorphosed from a wire-fenced potato patch in thirty minutes or so. This was to have been the task of the Thanatopsis club, to be accomplished "with no difficulty whatsoever, since its several husbands were the controllers of business and politics."

Failure to look below the surface is discoverable in every pseudo-reformer's work. The notion that country towns "no more exist to serve the farmers who are the reason of their existence than do the great capitals" betrays a common species. They "exist to fatten on the farmers, to provide for the townsmen large motors and social preferment." They constitute a "parasitic Greek civilization," minus the civilization. And the remedy is a Thanatopsis club. "There's nothing that attacks the Tribal God Mediocrity that doesn't help a little," but the truth is that "probably there is nothing that helps very much." The trouble is spiritual, but the churches haven't gotten together to handle the problem, and there is small prospect that they will do so for some hundreds of years.

Yet the true secret of Gopher Prairie and its kind is found in the "records of the Minnesota Territorial Pioneers," in which it is revealed that only sixty years ago, not so far back as the birth of this reformer's own grandfather, "four cabins had composed Gopher Prairie." "The long stockade which Mrs. Champ Perry was to find when she trekked in was built afterward by the soldiers as a defense against the Sioux." Besides:

> The four cabins were inherited by Maine Yankees who had come up the Mississippi to St. Paul and driven north over the virgin prairie into virgin woods. They ground their own corn; the men-folk shot ducks and pigeons and prairie chickens; the new breakage yielded the turnip-like rutabagas, which they ate raw and boiled and baked and raw again. For treat they had wild plums and crabapples and tiny wild strawberries.
>
> Grasshoppers came and darkened the sky, and in an hour ate the farmwife's garden and the farmer's coat. Precious horses, painfully brought from Illinois were drowned in bogs or stampeded by fear of blizzards. Snow blew through the chinks of new-made cabins, and eastern children, with flowery muslin dresses, shivered all winter and in summer were red and black with mosquito bites. Indians were everywhere; they camped in dooryards, stalked into kitchens to demand doughnuts, came with rifles across their backs into school houses and begged to see the pictures in the geographies. Packs of timber wolves treed the children, and the settlers found dens of rattlesnakes, killed fifty, a hundred, in a day.

The whole philosophy of opposition to uplift—from without—is contained in the comment of the less imaginative husband of the reformer, who says: "Imagine how a person would feel, after working hard for years and helping build up a nice town, to have you airily flit in and simply say 'Rotten!' Think that's fair?"

For Main street in Gopher Prairie one may substitute a good many places, not merely small towns, and a good many people not necessarily western villagers without impairing the principle involved, which is that spiritual growth comes from within. And the thousands of Gopher Prairies with which the land is dotted seem to be working out their own salvation in a way satisfactory to all but the most discontented of hopeless pessimists.

OTHER CITIES' EXPERIENCE.

There is but one alternative to allowing private corporations to provide public utilities under public regulation. That is public ownership. It has been tried in numerous cities. The town of Wakefield, Mass., has been trying it for twenty-five years, and its citizens now pay 70 cents per thousand feet for gas more than is paid by those of six neighboring towns that are supplied by a private corporation.

Wakefield undertook to supply both gas and electricity, and has put more money into the plants year by year. Two or three years ago the electric plant was worn out, and the town closed it and began buying current wholesale from a corporation and retailing it to consumers. Its gas plant is now worn out and no matter where the town buys gas, consumers must pay $2.20 per thousand feet while its neighbors pay only $1.50. The investment in its plant is gone, also the taxes which a corporation would have paid.

The story is the same in Old England as in New England. That country used to be the pride of municipal ownership advocates, but it has become reactionary, to use the language of the socialists. The labor party, which is openly socialist, was in the heyday of its power during the war and won control of a majority of the cities and municipalized everything in sight. At the last city elections there was an uprising in many cities against high taxes, high rates and poor service and the labor party was routed. Instead of the promised revolution the counter-revolution is now on.

When rates for gas, electricity, street cars and telephones rise, municipal ownership would give no relief; it would give a larger dose of the same medicine. We should profit by other people's experience.

Dr. Henry van Dyke's characterization of jazz as "the invention of demons for the torture of imbeelles" is sometimes applicable to other forms of entertainment than jazz. A recitation from his own works by a vers librist, for example.

Australia, which voted down conscription, has nevertheless decided to continue universal military training, which shows that pacifism is making no headway in the biggest community in the Pacific ocean.

News that Popocatapetl is about to erupt takes us back to the happy days when spelling and geography lessons were made interesting by this quaint blur on the map of southern Mexico.

Professor Einstein is to lecture in America. Whether or not he speaks in English, his explanation of his famous theory is likely to be all Greek to most of his hearers.

The center of population of the United States has been determined to be at a beech tree, but the center of interest for the small boy will continue to be the birch.

It would be easier to grow enthusiastic over defeats of the reds in Russia if we had more definite information as to the kind of people their opponents are.

It is a pleasing coincidence that a fairly early spring attends an early Easter this year. It makes the Easter bonnet question less complicated.

The citizen who has failed to note the swelling of the buds and other signs that real spring is here has missed something worth while.

Texas has an anti-cracked dish law, and if it will make it unlawful for servants to crack them it will solve a long-time problem.

Mr. Daugherty will do well if he will go out for a record for postal efficiency before he makes too many economy plans.

The income tax statement is a good lesson in arithmetic, even for the man who hasn't much to pay.

All will be forgiven Mr. Wells if he will only give us a spring that stays put once it comes.

The allies' message to the Germans, in brief, is that the time for argument is past.

The Listening Post.

Poorly Applied Charity Costs the Donor and Injures Others.

DISPLACED charity undoubtly does much harm, and one young fellow who is not wise but too soft-hearted is just about convinced. It came about in this way. His first experience was with a boy he had met several times. One night this chap sought him out and told a story of having come down from Hood River and of being stuck for an extra day. He cashed a $10 check to tide the boy over. It was returned and a few days later the forger was arrested in Seattle. He had victimized several merchants. The case was hushed up in some way and later the victim saw the young fellow walking about Portland streets, enjoying life but with this forged check yet unpaid.

This should have been a lesson but the amateur philanthropist fell again. It was an ex-Canadian soldier this time and the game was simple, for the easy mark had served several long years with the northern troops in France. So he arranged to fix things so that the hungry comrade could have a place to sleep and a few meals until he could get work. Later he discovered that the ex-soldier was living in a drugged heaven—not a care except to go on the street and panhandle for his cash which he spent for cocaine. This cost our soft-hearted friend another covey of hard-earned dollars.

But this is not all, for the sap's wife is certain that the brotherhood must have a visible Indian sign on her spouse, like the chalk marks the 'boes placed on the houses in the old days. Anytime they want to put anything over they seem to select him. Finally came the plausible fellow, also wearing a Canadian discharge pin, with the tale of a lost bank account. Another phony check, this time for but $5.

All three victimized the would-be humanitarian while they profited, and he now sees that he has done each of them harm. The first chap is living high, wide and handsome, the second spent his cash for "hop," and the last should not have to go to work so long as he can locate suckers. Which reminds us of a card that hangs in front of the paying teller in one of the city banks:

Honor your father.
Honor your mother.
Honor your flag.
Don't honor the checks of strangers.

* * *

Even watch a class in dancing at one of the academies? It is a hodgepodge collection that answers the ad "Learn in eight lessons, special terms during Lent." The predominant feature is the old people, not middle-aged ones but real ancients, gray-haired and bowed with years. So complete is the rage these days that it seems to neglect none. There are rough-necked men in soiled shirts, possibly longshoremen, and their partners will be dainty maids seemingly yet in school, while the old and young strive to master the steps as they are explained and executed by the instructor in the center of the room.

* * *

Doughnut factories, presumably by maximum output and big purchases of materials, have been able to clip the local price to 20 cents a dozen. These places sell their product right out of the pot and it is generally hot when purchased. Yesterday's doughnuts are just like yesterday's newspaper, not in great demand, but the bakeries place them in coffee-and bars, though the five-cent coffee-and seems doomed never to reappear.

* * *

Glazed stovepipe hats were formerly the exclusive property of chimney sweeps when it came to utilization for advertising purposes, but it seems that others have seen the value of this means of informing the public and have invaded the field. Yesterday there came down Washington street a typical chimney sweep's hat, inscription and all, but the wearer was telling the world that he had 100 acres of land for sale.

* * *

Relishes all have their advocates. For instance, there is the piccalilli fiend, the chap who demands HP sauce with his viands and even he of depraved taste who drenches fried eggs with copious draughs of catsup. However, most persons admit that homemade delicacies are the peer of most factory products. This is a long way around to get down to the fact that there is a little woman in Portland who has a relish out of the ordinary. It has zest, palatability, flavor and certainly stimulates the appetite, and she says it is made of rhubarb and onions. It's a heavenly dish!

* * *

She was rather a careful old woman and as she cashed a small check she inspected the change given her and returned a perfectly good dime of new design to the teller, remarking, "There is a discount on this Canadian money; please give me American silver."

"But, Madam, this is perfectly good. It is American coinage of the latest design; one of our new liberty dimes."

"Well, if it don't beat all that I can't even keep track of our own money these days!" And she took the bright, new dime.

* * *

All is not joy even if the sun shines and spring is near. When the monthly deluge of bills came it was noted that they had gained quite a bit in a falling market. If you noticed the sulphur in the air the last few days it was likely for the reason that the new gas and phone accounts were being read.

* * *

He came buzzing around just as this was being written—the first fly—and got swatted.

* * *

Remember the 15-cent percolators that caused the riot two weeks ago Well, confidential reports have been received that some of them are being displayed in certain store windows with $1.59 tags on them. No wonder the mob. THE SCOUT.

Rule in Poker.

ASTORIA, Or., March 10.—(To the Editor.)—In playing jack-pot poker, if a player opens the pot and no one calls, is it necessary for the player opening the pot to show more than openers face up? M. R.

The usual rule is that only the cards necessary to open need be turned face up. Rules of the game require him also to spread the remaining cards face down to insure that no misdeal has occurred and that he has no more than five cards.

Home.

By Grace E. Hall.

A home is not a place in which to live,
Filled with the costly things that gold can buy;
It is not walls or windows that may give
A thrill of envy to the passer-by;
'Tis not a pile of brown stone nor of gray,
Nor stucco, nor of sandstone nor of wood,
Though all of these be counted in a way,
And each in turn be catalogued as good.

A home is more than just a place to dwell,
It is a palace peopled royally,
Where love has cast a never-ceasing spell,
And hearts are warm and beating loyally;
A place where shadows are the spirit-dead,
Those who have passed, yet linger, loath to go;
Where wind-swept vines repeat the words they said
Caressingly, perhaps, and soft and low.

The rooms are happy play-grounds where of yore
The mirth of little children was expressed,
The listening walls re-echo evermore
The words of those you held against your breast;
The laughter of the old-time jovial friend—
Perhaps now silent in the mouldy tomb—
In sweet and solemn music seems to blend
With tender heart-moods in the twilight gloom.

The spirit-warmth of those who came and went,
Is like a subtle incense on the air;
An influence that they, unconscious, lent
To that abode, to linger everywhere;
The lost, whose lips are sealed, still have a voice
Within that home, and never lose their place,
For memory makes the sad heart to rejoice
At well-remembered look and tone and face.

Nay, home is not a show-house built of stone,
Nor yet a place for empty, vain display;
It is a palace built by love alone,
And filled with dreams that never fade away;
And though a man be blessed with gold, secure,
And privileged by that wealth to idly roam,
Still must he listed be as very poor,
If he has not a hearth and love and home.

TO A MODERN PHARISEE.

Through boundless and unending space of sky
God guides his countless worlds aright.
Against some other church you rail and lie
And vent your bitter scorn tonight.
We reason, go our way, serene and strong,
Rejecting all your narrow creed;
To vast, exhaustless forces we belong:
God's love we prove in thought and deed.

In all the ages that have ever been,
Since life in human form had birth,
Men of your type have lived and died and then
Still lived their hate, a curse on earth.
Your hatred is like theirs—the same as when
They saw the Savior crucified.
The same, when at the stake unswerving men
For Christ, for right and justice died.

Around us truth's eternal ocean breaks,
Unfathomed, unexplored, unknown.
Religions made by man, which man forsakes,
Shall pass away, shall be outgrown.
No evil can exist in God's control;
Before him fade the shapes of night.
Long years may pass, but in your darkened soul,
Some day, shall shine his holy light.
—ALDEN HARNESS.

ODE TO THE PRUNE.

In bygone times with jingling rhymes
We slurred the prune delicious.
We shouted, "You're full of prunes!"
When we felt mean and vicious.
With heartless stroke we used to poke
The fruit we now are toasting,
And seemed to think that every gink
Should hand to it a roasting.
But that old day has passed away,
And now, instead of slurring,
In joyful lays we sing its praise,
With everyone concurring.
No other fruit is built to suit
Our stomachs, worn and weary,
Like famed Italian prunes that fill
With youthful feelings cheery.
The ones who toil 'midst grinding moil,
Each day their powers testing,
Will stand the test if 'neath their vest
A feed of prunes is resting.
In arid climes, in bone-dry times,
The prune comes in right handy,
When you have grippe and need a nip
Of stimulating brandy.
So nevermore we'll raise a roar
Like heedless, senseless plodder,
But, like the rest, beneath our vest
We'll store this needful fodder.
Our humble lute we'll gaily toot
In praises of this winner;
With joyful tunes we'll call for prunes
For breakfast, lunch and dinner.
—E. L. SHARPE.

DEATH.

Be it when winter storms go forth to war
And howling tempests shriek along the sky;
When ice and hail shall smite the quaking earth,
And all the elements contending are opposed;
When lightning cleaves the midnight, and the roar
Of ocean thunders mournful from afar,
And darkness like a sackcloth spun of hair,
Through which the Seven Stars may never burn,
Be wrap'd about the world; when towers bend,
And yielding to the hurricane go down;
When ships which long have battled with the waves
Break up upon the headlands and be-strew
The frothy sand with corpses—if 'tis then
My spirit shall ride forth upon its cloud,
Clear be my vision and my faith composed.
—GUY FITCH PHELPS.

SPRING.

I woke at morn and heard a meadow lark,
I thought, "'tis Spring."
This noon while walking 'neath the budding trees
I spied a crocus on the lawn. I stopped,
Then bending near gazed full upon its golden form.
I smiled aloud, "'tis Spring."
At eve the song of lark, the golden flower
Wafted together in an essence pure,
Filled my whole being to their call awakening.
My sweetheart kissed me.
Now I know 'tis Spring.
—GRACE HAINES.