

# Albany Daily Democrat

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W. L. JACKSON  
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RALPH R. CRONISE

Editors  
and  
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## FRANKLIN ON THE CONSTITUTION

There may have been more brilliant men in American history than Benjamin Franklin, but by common agreement there has never been an American statesman more conspicuous for his practical common sense.

There are scarcely any of his speeches or writings that are not rich with instruction for present day Americans. Here is an extract from an address he made at the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia in 1787 when after long laborious work and almost endless controversy the document had finally been whipped into shape.

"I confess" he said, "that there are several parts of this constitution which I do not at present approve but I am not sure I shall never approve them. For having lived long, I have experienced many instances of being obliged, by better information or fuller consideration, to change opinion even on important subjects which I thought right but found to be otherwise. It is therefore that the older I grow the more apt I am to doubt my own judgment of others."

"These sentiments, sir, I agree to this constitution, with all its faults, if they are such; because I think a general government necessary, for us and there is no form of government, but what may be a blessing to the people if well administered."

I doubt too, whether any convention we can obtain may be able to make a better constitution. For, when you assemble a number of men to have the advantage of their joint wisdom, you inevitably assemble with those men all their prejudices, their passions, their errors of opinion, their local interests and their selfish views. From such an assembly perfect production be expected."

"It therefore astonishes me to find this system so near perfection as it

does; and I think it will astonish our enemies who are waiting with confidence to hear that our councils are confounded, like those of the builders of Babel; and that our states are on the point of separation only to meet hereafter for the purpose of cutting one another's throats."

Thus I consent, sir, to this Constitution, because I expect no better and because I am not sure, that it is not the best.

The opinions I have had of its errors I sacrifice to the public good."

"On the whole" he concluded, "I cannot help expressing that every member of the convention who may still have objections to it would with me, on this occasion, doubt a little of his own infallibility, and to manifest our unanimity, put his name to the instrument."

It is hardly necessary to point out the obvious application of this utterance to the constitution of the League of Nations.

## BOY SCOUT WEEK

The President has issued a proclamation setting aside the week from June 8 to 14 as "Boy Scout Week."

The proclamation recognizes the truly valuable services of the Boy Scouts during the war, and urges every possible extension of their society and their activities throughout the country in the coming times of peace. The President says, in part:

"The Boy Scout movement should be not only preserved, but strengthened. It deserves the support of all public-spirited citizens."

"There are approximately 10,000,000 boys in the United States between the ages of 12 and 21. Of these only 375,000 are enrolled as Boy Scouts."

"Every nation depends for its future upon the proper training and development of its youth. The American boy must have the best training and discipline our great democracy can provide if America is to maintain her ideals, her standards and her influence in the world."

"I earnestly recommend that in every community a citizens' committee under the leadership of a national citizens' committee be organized to cooperate in carrying out a program for definite recognition of the services of the Boy Scouts of America and a survey of the facts relating to the boyhood of each community, in order that provision may be made for extending the Boy Scout program to include a larger proportion of American boyhood."

The vision of ten million young Americans, trained in citizenship and service, should arouse enthusiasm in the fullest. Boy Scout week should find every community actively engaged in helping to extend this great movement, valuable alike for the good it teaches and for the mischief it prevents, so that it may ultimately include all the boys of America.

## HOW LANGUAGE IS ENRICHED

New Words and Phrases Most Frequently Have Their Origin in the Patter of Thieves.

It is necessary that the language of a nation should be refreshed and strengthened now and then by the introduction of new words and phrases, and, as betrays democracy, these spring from the soil; not one of them descends upon us from the Olympian heights, observes the New York Herald. Neither scientific nor scholastic bodies ever enrich the common tongue with expressions so apt and full of meaning that they gain immediate and enduring vogue. The slang of the underdog college is pitifully inept and meager.

For anything that can give a new zest to the vulgar we must look to the stage, the gambling house and even to the optimum den and thieves' resort. Returning soldiers will certainly bring with them much of the argot of hell and trench of which "vocabulary" is a sample. The word "joint" as applied to iniquitous and other resorts comes from the joint of lambs from which an optimum pipe is made. "Dope" was originally the slang term for opium—hence "dope" and "dippy." Innumerable are the verbal products of the gambling house. Among the commonest of them are "four flushing," "keeping tabs," "standing pat" and "down to cases." To "give the office" or "office" some one is a very old bit of London thieves' slang.

The cause of all this is quite apparent to the thinking mind. Persons of education and cultivation have a vocabulary of their own sufficiently large and varied to enable them to express themselves without going beyond its limits. Those who are lacking in education sometimes coin words in an emergency that prove so expressive that they acquire general currency.

## In Business 55 Years—

S. I. McDaniels, veteran stationer and monument man will have passed the 55 year mark in that business next month. Mr. McDaniels entered the business in June 1864, and has been at it ever since, in the Middle West and in Oregon. He is 73 years old, but is as active as many men a great many years younger.

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