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ALBANY, OREGON, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 27

## DEMOCRACY AND COERCION

"There ought to be a law." It is one of America's famous sayings, heard a hundred times a day, in every walk of life. Legislation might be called America's obsession. We seek to cover every act of human existence with a law; we make law cover both what is in law's sphere and what is, or ought to be, only in the sphere of morals or ethics. We cannot let the individual alone to develop; we must pull him up every little while to see if his roots are just the same as his neighbor's. If they are not—well, then, "there ought to be a law" to make them the same willy nilly.

The superintendent of instruction of Michigan has declared he will seek legislation making it illegal for high school students to belong to secret organizations, on the grounds that they are "undemocratic, create snobbishness and graduate blase young boys and girls." It might be asked of the superintendent if it is the organizations or the schools that graduate the blase young folk he mentions. Because if secrecy makes for snobbishness, where is the democracy of America headed, since in the United States "joining" has probably been developed to its greatest extent in the history of the world?

Going farther, the district superintendents of education in New York City seek to refuse a diploma to any high school graduate in that city unless he or she signs a pledge of loyalty to the United States.

Surely the New York board of education will be ashamed to admit it necessary to adopt such a requirement for graduation, as the district superintendents should have been ashamed to foster it. Will the board publicly admit that it cannot inculcate, but must coerce loyalty? Will the board tell the country that the pupils it has had in its care for several years have not been taught love of their country, native or adopted? What have the schools been teaching the children, that they are afraid to graduate them as unbound, free Americans, like their fathers before them?

In loyalty a thing of words, Americanism a formula to be recited?

## YOUTHFUL WISDOM

A newspaper tells of a young man who found, when consulting with his fiancée as to their financial plans, that he was spending nearly \$100 a month in amusement. Three or four times a week they stayed down town to dinner, went to a show and ate something afterward. Sundays they took rides in hired automobiles.

The girl decided she preferred a home of her own to so many nights out. They both thought it more desirable to own a car than to rent one. So they reduced the outings to one dinner and show a week, the show usually a movie. They took walks instead of motor rides. The result is that when they are married in the spring, they can make a big down payment on their future home. A small car of their own will soon follow. The youth goes home early, and the extra sleep has increased his ability in the office. The salary is going up as well as the bank account.

Moreover, they have just as good a time.

Some of the old-fog notions are not so bad, after all. Joy may still be found in simple pleasures. Early to bed does make a man healthy, wealthy and wise if he uses the "pep" gained to good advantage. A penny saved is a penny earned, and a dinner or herbs where love and hope are guests of honor is better than any amount of fancy dishes faced through discouragement and the knowledge of a thinning purse. Wise and happy are the young folks who can discover these golden truths in time to use them.

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## GRASS PRAYERS

By Guy Fitch Phelps

I know a camp in the western hills  
Where brave men dug for gold;  
And some were young and strong as pines,  
And some were bent and old;  
And their hair was white as sheep's wool is  
When the shearer washes the fold.  
And the only woman we had in camp  
Was a hecate queen, called Bell;  
With a face as fair as a dream of God,  
And a heart that was black as hell,  
And she caught men's souls as you catch a fox,  
In the grip of her fatal spell.

A preacher came, as preachers do,  
Wherever there's earth or sky,  
Or a man to live and curse his luck,  
Or drop in the trail and die,  
And he preached to us in Brown's saloon,  
When the faro stakes were high.  
We stacked our cards and heard him out,  
For the hecate queen was there,  
With a chain of nuggets around her neck,  
And another across her hair,  
And she swore the preacher should have his chance  
In a deal that was fair and square.

But a Spanish devil drew his gun,  
And he laughed as the killers do,  
And he held a bead on the preacher's heart  
That was center and sure and true:  
"Do you think, my hearties, I'm shot enough  
To gimlet the parson through?"  
He touched the trigger—a crash, a cry,  
And I think you can guess the rest,  
For the queen fell limp as a cougar's pelt,  
Her head on the preacher's vest,  
For the bullet the Spaniard meant for him  
Lay deep in her dripping breast.

I'll not contend that her soul was saved,  
Or that it was sent to hell,  
For sins as black as the hair of hate  
Were heaped on the hands of Bell,  
And many a miner hinted things  
That only a few would tell.  
But the plute flower, as red as love,  
Weeps over her day and night;  
And the young spruce trees like surprised nuns  
Say prayers in the soft twilight,  
And the sage lily holds up its lips  
With a plea that is all in white;  
And a hundred men, since the preacher came,  
Are playing the game dead right.

## Comment of the State Press

Snappy Gleanings from the  
Press of the  
Valley

### Give It a Fair Trial—

No one will seriously object to the government making a fair trial of its powers to handle the transportation lines in peace times provided the government will go in and give good service, the Baker Herald says. In rail-roading as in everything else—when the income is not sufficient to meet the expense, the sheriff is standing close by ready to take charge.

### State Chamber Work—

With the completion of the first year of its existence, the State Chamber of Commerce may be proud of its demonstrated effectiveness, compliments the Oregon Voter. Being a business organization, it was not founded to do startling or sensational things—so it has not reverted public attention as a legislature or a political board might have done. Rather, it has plodded on its daily way, doing those things for Oregon business and Oregon development that needed to be done by.

### East Knox Butte News

KNOX BUTTE, Dec. 27 — Ada Hampton died Monday at the Salem hospital of blood poison. She is the ten year old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. H. Hampton.

This is the second death in the family within a week, having buried their youngest child last Friday. The family moved from this neighborhood to Jefferson last October. They have the sympathy of their many friends in this vicinity.

Mrs. J. J. Caswell and baby are spending Christmas week with her parents.

Mr. and Mrs. Roy Taylor of Mill City are visiting the latter's mother, Mrs. Spratt.

## Ash Swale Hunt Club To Have Big Banquet

The program committee of the Ash Swale Hunt Club are making special preparations for a rousing time the evening of the first Saturday of January. A fine banquet and a program consisting of speeches and a musical program will be featured at that time. Invitations are being sent to Albany friends and others. The club is an organization of many years standing and holds an annual Banquet each year.

### Shopping & Swapping

She walked a thousand  
Weary miles,  
Up aisles and past  
The counters.  
She picked and chose,  
And looked again  
To get for Dad and Mom  
And Bill.  
The very things they wanted.  
Her feet were sore,  
Her brain was mush,  
When she had finished shopping  
And then,  
Right after Christmas,  
Dad, Mom and Brother Bill  
Retraced the weary miles  
She'd gone a-shopping,  
And, on the quiet,  
Did their yearly  
Swapping.



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