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Omaha-Where the West is at its Best

IF WASHINGTON WERE HERE.

It is unsafe to undertake to say what a great man of the past would do if he were living in the present. While fundamentals may not have changed with the passing of years, conditions have greatly altered. George Washington has been dead a little over 125 years. This is the 193d anniversary of his birth. His times were different from ours in degree rather than in nature. Washington, a serious-minded boy, a studious youth, a sober, dignified man, would surely have a place in the world today, just as he had then.

Well-born and carefully nurtured as he was, an "aristocrat" of that day, he still was democratic in his relations with his fellows. He took part in the life around him. Walked among men, played with them, worked with them, shared their problems and prosperity. In every way he showed his mortal estate by his relations with other mortals. If he became a leader, it was by reason of his capacity, rather than by chance. He was not an orator, as was Patrick Henry. Not a great lawyer, like Adams, Jefferson, or Hamilton. Nor a philosopher or politician, like Franklin or Burr. Any of these men might easily outshine Washington in a special forum. But he had what has been called "the balance of genius," and no one of his many qualifications so greatly overtopped the others as to make him noted for that single characteristic.

The general simplicity of his life would be an inspiration today. The wealthiest man in the nation, keeping his own books and records, drawing up his own contracts, framing his own deeds of conveyance, and doing such other acts as now are left to employes, would be a queer figure in the modern world. But Washington would probably not only adapt himself to the changed conditions, he would find plenty of occupation now just as he did then, in the service of his country and its people. .....

His greatest legacy to the people was his unblemished character. His human qualities. If he could kneel in the snow and pray at Valley Forge, he could also swear roundly, as he did when Lee failed him at Monmouth. He could preside over the convention which was framing the Constitution of the United States, and he could also sit at the head of the table where generous, even lavish, hospitality was the rule. He had to persuade a reluctant and sometimes timorous congress to do what was necessary to win the War of the Revolution. He could also have Jefferson and Hamilton, personal as well as political enemies, sit with him as advisors, after he was made president.

Washington's name shines brighter as it recedes into the years. We may not anticipate what he would do were he here now, but we know what he did when he was here. A man bearing a great burden, made the greater by the weaknesses of those around him, he did not falter, but steadily persevered. When victory finally came, when the new nation was fairly set on its way, he asked to be allowed to go back to his farm, there to produce the grain needed for the few barrels of flour it took to feed his family. Such a man would have a place today, even among the shouting crowds in the streets. His calm force that bore him up under every test surely would prevail over the noise-makers who fill today with their futile clamorings.

DECENCY AND THE THEATER.

One fact can not escape notice in connection with the crusade for a cleaner stage in New York. That is the managers still cling to the old formula. "We give them what they want," and point to the box office records for proof. It is reported that David Belasco lost half a million dollars last year, trying to present classic drama. He more than recouped this in three months of the present season, offering pornographic plays. The conclusion is as inevitable as it is obvious. People will pay to see filth on the stage.

This brings us to the real matter at issue. To what extent is the manager the keeper of public morals? How far is he responsible for popular tastes? Admittedly, the theater's first function should be educational. If it is not that, then it has little real reason for existence, for amusement is offered in other and frequently more acceptable forms. When the factor of diversion alone controls, the vaudeville show or the moving picture has it all over the theater in its legitimate manifestation. Being an agency for education, it has a mission of high order.

The manager finds himself between the need of attracting attention, which means paying patronage, and the maintenance of a high standard, which frequently means bankruptcy. One of the perverse ideas noticed for many seasons is that the American people do not want education in large doses. Yet we have plenty of proof that plays of the right sort can be profitable. A cablegram from London tells of the warm reception given there to John Barrymore in "Hamlet." He did a profitable season's work on Broadway last year. Sothern and Marlowe have succeeded with clean dramas, so has Otis Skinner, and the list can be indefinitely extended.

The case in favor of the decent drama is too strong to be broken down by the plea that it does not pay. Omaha, in common with all the other large centers of population, proves the point. The most successful engagement of the season locally was the week "Blossom Time" put in at the Brandeis. A clean, wholesome show, that depended entirely on its merits as such. Sincere lovers of the theater, and they are yet in the majority, look ahead to the day when control of the stage will pass from the Bradys back into the hands of men of whom Augustin Daly was a type. We want a theater, virile, dealing with the truths of life, "holding, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature." But we want it clean and decent.

"PERSONAL LIBERTY" PLUS.

Proof that the minds of some have not grasped the truth is given by perusal of letters sent for publication. One writer, opposed to the Volstead law, descants on "personal liberty." He does not drink, he writes, use "dope," nor violate the Mann law. If he wanted to, he would, and it would be nobody's business but his own.

Yes, and exercising the same natural right he could commit murder, rob a bank, fire a buildings, or throw the bedding out of his room at the hotel onto the street. Then he would find out that his "natural" right was sharply limited by the natural right of others. That is where the law comes in. The law is not designed to fit particular instances or individual cases, but is of general application. So the Mann, the Harrison and the Volstead laws set a barrier to the general exercise of individual rights, of "personal" liberty, looking to the good of all rather than the convenience of the few.

This has nothing to do with whether the laws are wise or not, or whether they are effectively administered. It merely states the principle on which they are enacted.

Similarly witth the young woman who writes that she is not married, but if she does wed it will be, in the line of the old song, "with whom she pleases." The law will have nothing to say about it. Quite likely this young woman never heard of what is called the "social contract." She does not realize that because she enjoys all the benefits of organized society, she is expected to contribute something to the maintenance of that institution. One of the contributions will be submission to the laws that regulate marriage.

Thirty-odd millions of young Americans learned through the so-called selective service act that the social contract is enforcible. We did not think that lesson had been so soon forgotten. Some of the writers who feel called upon to debate with Andrew Volstead or A. Sherman Pinto appear to lose sight of the fact that the law can pry into the innermost crevices of social life. Not only that, but will. Organized society as we know it must have order. Even in Russia, where the communists are in control, rules are enforced most rigidly. Over there expressions such as those indulged in by the writers referred to would quickly get their authors into serious trouble. "Liberty's a glorious feast," as Bobby Burns asserted, but it is well not to over-indulge.

SAVING THE CLUB FOR THE TOWN.

"We have again reached the point where the business men of Omaha must stand together for the town," said Mr. W. F. Baxter, addressing the Concord club on Thursday. Mr. Baxter was primarily presenting the case of the University of Omaha, but his remarks were directed to the general problems of community advancement.

The sentiment he expressed is voiced by others, for the impulse is general. Its outstanding manifestation is the saving of the M. E. Smith & Co. concern. This was accomplished by Omaha men. It is the undertone as well as the overtone of the symphony that is now being presented by every organized group in the city. The address by W. A. Fraser of the Woodmen of the World is the theme, no matter how it may be varied in the general composition.

From this those who are engaged in the undertaking of refinancing the Athletic club get courage. "No more receiverships for Omaha," said Henry Monsky, talking to the workers, and they agree with him.

The Athletic club as an institution is worth something more to Omaha than the surface indicates. In a sense it typifies the civic spirit of the town. To allow it to go by the board will be equal to a confession that Omaha is going backward. The city has all the commercial, industrial and social advantages, prospects and prestige that were noted when the club was organizerd. Let us not concern ourselves as to what has happened. The business ahead now is to preserve the club as a center of active life. Not as an "exclusive" institution. Omaha has them. But as a club democratic in purpose and management. Where the advantages of club practices may be enjoyed along with the privileges of social communication open to all. This can be done. It will be done, for good men are determined to save the club.

AN ORGANIZATION THAT FUNCTIONS.

The Nebraska Press association, now in convention in Lincoln, is not only one of the oldest organizations in the state, but is one of the best functioning. It is a real business organization having a serious purpose, and that purpose is to build along higher professional lines. The association has its playtime, for its summer meetings, long held in Omaha, are purely social and business is barred. The midwinter meeting is the business session, at which time the members devote themselves to the discussion of serious problems.

The so-called country newspapers of Nebraska have been among the most potent factors in Nebraska's growth and development, and never were they more potent than at the present time. They may be depended upon, day after day, week after week, to spread the doctrine of optimism; to carry on despite reverses; to hold fast to the faith that Nebraska is greatest and best. The Nebraska Press association has accomplished a splendid work in inculcating better business methods, instilling a greater spirit of co-operation and concentrating effort on worth-while things. Its membership is made up of far-seeing men and women. It has benefited the public mind when it benefited itself by shackling the free space grafters, exposing unreliable business concerns and standing solidly behind sensible reform movements.

The Nebraska Press association knows without being told again that it is always welcome in Omaha. Omaha values the friendship of the newspaper men and women of Nebraska.

"Harnessing the Wind" was an editorial caption in the Sioux Falls Press that intrigued us for a moment. The reading of a few lines disclosed that the editorial was discussing the new rotor ship, not the United States senate, and we immediately lost interest.

The French Academy is discussing the advisability of admitting some purely English words to the French language. It's a safe bet that "pay up" are not two of them.

"Jam in congress is augmented by senate filibuster," headlines the Washington Post. Perhaps the senators want to preserve their little jobs.

A Chicago preacher says women should do the proposing. Wonder if he thinks they do not?

Justice to the Czechoslovaks

Mrs. Cole Pays to Them the Tribute That Is Theirs by Right of Their Historic Contributions to the Advance and Enlightenment of Humanity and Their Adaptability to the Condition of American Citizens.

There has been, particularly since the World War, much agitation and discussion anent illiteracy in this country, and to those only casually interested it has assumed that the interpretation of "illiterate" was either as used by the United States Census bureau, "Any person 10 years of age or over who is unable to write in any language, not necessarily English, regardless of ability to read;" or, according to the dictionary definition, "ignorance of letters or books; uneducated; specif., unable to read; unrefined."

Neither of these definitions at all covers the meaning of the army tests for illiteracy. These tests were psychological and were used as "an instrument to grade intelligence," and on the title page of the unofficial survey recently made it is stated: "Nearly 30 per cent of 12,556,011 men for whom statistics are available, were found to be unable to read and understand newspapers and write letters home, and were given a special examination (psychological) prepared for illiterates."

The survey cards sent out (20,000) through the office of the superintendent of Omaha schools to the teachers and pupils of the schools and by them returned to the superintendent's office, contained this request: "If you know of any Man.... Woman.... Child.... over 16 years of age who cannot write a letter in English, or who cannot read a newspaper, please write his or her Name ..... Address..... Telephone No. ...., and state whether White.... or Colored.... If foreign-born, what nationality..... Return card to ..... school."

It was understood that the results would be the names of those who might be educated in one or more foreign languages, but who could not write a letter in English or read an ((English) newspaper.

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The cards returned for the Bohemian and Czechoslovakian peoples showed that 10.8 per cent could not write a letter in English or read an (English) newspaper. There was a transposition of the letters in the printed copy making it read 18 per cent. For this error I consider myself responsible and desire most sincerely to thus publicly express my regret and offer the further explanation of the purpose and the kind of survey made.

That the Bohemians and Czechoslovaks are of a high order of intellectuality is affirmed by Emory S. Bogardus, Ph. D., head of the department of sociology, University of Southern California, editor of the American Sociological Magazine, whose text book on the "Essentials of Americanization" was used by Miss Thorngate last year in our university extension classes in Americanization. Dr. Bogardus in one place says: "They are the intellectual vanguard of the Slavic race;" in another place he speaks of Bohemia as "the brightest jewel in the Austrian crown," and elsewhere he refers to Bohemians as "literate, quick to learn, and willing to become citizens."

Edward Cubberly in his "Readings in History of Education" (page 356), speaks of their great educator, Comenius, as proclaiming that education was for the race . . . and that Comenius' (for whom one of our big public schools is named) "place in the history of education . . . is one of commanding importance. He introduces and dominates the whole modern movement in the field of elementary and secondary education . . . His spirit was essentially modern and remarkably receptive. He assimilated the ideas that were inspiring the new civilization and applied them to the schools."

In our course on "Social and Racial Backgrounds," too, was emphasized the geographical and spiritual backgrounds which furnished John Huss, Bohemia's "heroic exponent of civil and political freedom," "the George Washington of Bohemia," and the record of the fact that "Czechoslovakia had four armies fighting with the allies" during the World War.

Space did not permit in the survey, nor does it now permit any adequate acknowledgement of the many valuable contributions in art, in music, in literature, in agriculture, in mining, in the making of machinery, and in manufacturing and road building, in commerce and in spiritual ideals, and in kindly affection and ministrations in sickness and in health, which we have had in generous abundance from the newer comers to our American soil

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It does permit, however, in closing, to say that on reliable authority we are informed that 15 years ago that part of Czechoslovakia represented by Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia had only 2.15 per cent illiteracy, therefore it is with justifiable racial self-respect that they call attention to the error as printed and interpreted, and Frances Kellor (1920) in "Immigration and the Future," (page 42), writes that "The most effective, in fact, the only Americanization efforts made among the Czechs, long before the recent hysteria had seized the native-born, were the results of the Czechs themselves. . . . Not fewer than 35 English books, interpretations, grammars and dictionaries have been published. Series of lessons on the American constitution, and on civics in general, and for years our press has devoted columns to articles on the Americanism of leaders like Washington, Franklin, Lincoln and Roosevelt. Practically every masterpiece of American literature—both prose and poetry—has been translated into the Czech language and widely circulated in the justified belief that the truest knowledge of the nation of Americans can come through intimate acquaintance with its literature. . . . The Czechoslovak press of the United States published in 1919 520 releases from the United States government issued by the Czechoslovak bureau of the foreign language governmental information service, and have co-operated whole-heartedly to provide its readers with authentic and dependable information about activities of government agencies. Practically every one of them now has from one to 10 pages devoted to information articles in the English language."

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After all, has not the Frenchman, Crevecour, expressed excellently well for us the answer to his own question: "What then is the American—this new man? He is either a European or a descendant of a European. . . . Americans are the western pilgrims, who are carrying along with them that great mass of arts, sciences, vigor and industry which began long since in the east; they will finish the great circle." Dr. Henry Van Dykke tells us among other things that the spirit of America is "A history of a soul of a people learning to think for itself," and that "among those who have been most influential in the guidance of the republic, nothing is more remarkable than their agreement in the opinion that education, popular and special, is friendly to republican institutions."

And for such reasons for the upbuilding of a country and of a city, not mainly builded or maintained by human hands, nor held together without spiritual standards, was this survey undertaken, and co-operated in starting with a request from the executive committee, Omaha Woman's club, to its educational committee, who started work with 25,000 cards, furnished at cost by the Carpenter Paper company; the printing of which was donated (under supervision of the superintendent) by nine boys at the School for the Deaf; 20,000 cards (survey) were put out and returned by teachers and pupils through the office of superintendent of schools. Information secured from cards was compiled by special committee from the education department, and the only member of the co-operating agencies who worked under the University of Omaha department of sociology was responsible for the context of survey cards and the method and form in which the work took shape; for much of the work of tabulating and for the final assembling of all material into bulletin form for the University of Omaha, which published it without expectation of financial reimbursement.

The Omaha press next added to the co-operative effort by giving publicity to the findings of the survey, which, together with findings from other parts of the state will, we hope, result in adding somewhat to the desire of our members of the legislature to appropriate sufficient money for an official survey and for supplying trained teachers for all who desire and have need to acquire a better knowledge of the English language and American government.

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Finally: Very few copies of the survey had been sent out before the error was discovered; no copies have been or will be sent in the future without a correction made in ink. If any are now held by Omaha people, please join the band for a greater, kinder and a more enduring Omaha and make the correction showing that only 10.8 per cent of Czecho-Slovakians in Omaha are unable to write a letter in English or read an English newspaper; other nationalities vary in higher or lower degree of percentage; to them, one and all, let us extend the cordial helping hand, and from them let us just as surely grasp their extended hands and learn to know the real man. We should know the soul of the man and of the nations of people and recognize their contributions to us who have been longer in America, and thus by growing wiser, kinder and braver together, keep the fine ideals of the past alive to help fight the battles of today.

EMMA PIERCE COLE.

How to Build a City

Omaha—To the Editor of The Omaha Bee: We can't have pap unless we have pep. We can't milk the cow long unless some one feeds her. Too many of us want to do the milking and let the other one do the feeding. I am a plain man, but such as I am make up a good share of the citizenship of this country. I went to the Chamber of Commerce reception to the officers of the Woodmen of the World Tuesday night. It was splendid, not only in appreciation of the Woodmen of the World, but an Omaha boosters' meeting also. The boosters for Omaha ought to get together more frequently, and do the same thing more frequently. It creates an harmonious spirit. You there see who are really boosters and learn who are milking the cow and letting the others feed her. Too many in Omaha are getting without giving, receiving from business or from public salaries, without turning a hand to help; criticizing and not creating; making it hard for the boosters rather than helping them.

Omaha has a strategic position in this country, and hence in the world. It is centrally located. The inventions in the air, the air mail, the radio, the large valley in which we are located, the never failing Missouri river, which as years go by will more and more become valuable as a water supply and waterway; all such things insure us a permanent basis for growth and prosperity. We must lift where we stand! Omaha and the state must patronize home industries, all other things being equal. Other cities and state are doing so.

People can not place their large orders for goods with Sears & Roebuck and then expect a large assortment of goods to be kept for occasional purchases by local merchants in towns and cities. Women should not patronize and purchase from the winged hotel displayers of goods from nonresident houses, who have no local or branch offices in this state, and who, by their agents, run over the state and take orders for goods, and the goods are sent to the purchasers from the nonresident houses, and the purchase price paid direct to the nonresident houses, and thus they avoid taxation entirely under the interstate commerce laws.

There is only one way to prevent that, and that is to patronize your home state, cities and villages, as they can not grow if its people patronize those who do not contribute a cent to our upkeep. What taxes they escape, the people in this state must pay. The more industries in a state, city or town to a reasonable extent, the better, as trade goes where business is done, and a better assortment for the purchaser. More harmony, more boosting, more boosters, fewer knockers, fewer that milk only, more that feed, more lifting where we stand, more industries, more keeping our money at home, more saving taxes is necessary.

We often wonder what hits us. The trouble is we do not carefully think the matter over, and act as we think. When we read the attacks made upon the constitution and laws and the joy expressed in defeating the law by pardons and by persons who have sworn to support the constitution and laws, I feel timid in saying anything in behalf of our country, its constitution and its laws, but I see how difficult it is for the officers who are conscientiously endeavoring to be true to their oaths in enforcing the laws. If the opponents of our country's constitutions and laws would give more time to boosting our city and state and less to opposing the enforcement of laws, they would be of more value to the people. "A horse can not pull while he is kicking and he can not kick while he is pulling."

VERITAS.

Down Lover's Lane

By CATHERINE ELIZABETH HANSON.

Down Lover's Lane we strolled one day—
'Twas in the lovely month of May.
How beautiful the world did seem
To us! How promising our dream!
With ne'er a worry or a care,
We with songsters of the air,
Did sing while echoes in the lane
Brought back to us the song again.

Ah, yes, how well I do recall
The sad, sweet memory of it all,
And, looking back, can see today
The vision of that yesterday.
And once again in evening hours
I journey back to gather flowers
From Time's own garden—but in vain
I look for you in Lover's Lane.

I linger long in that same spot
Where once a sweet forget-me-not
You plucked and gave in boyish glee
To one shy maiden—that was me!
Ah, God, it seems the years are long
And lonely now that you are gone,
And through the sadness and the pain
I walk alone down Lover's Lane!

Time to Be On Guard

From the Milwaukee Journal.

The blue sky man has had three or four lean and hungry years. To him the news that the farmer has some money again, money from his 1924 crop, is sweetest music. The farmer has immediate use for much of this money, to pay his debts and to make long deferred purchases of things badly needed. But that will not make the blue sky man even hesitate. Laws are made and enforced, to keep the slicker from working his schemes, but no law yet tried has kept the slicker from flourishing when times are good. In the flush days around 1919 too often the farmer was persuaded that it was good business to let his 8 per cent mortgage ride awhile longer while his cash went into schemes that promised to pay, but didn't pay, 12 per cent. Didn't the gentlemanly salesman demonstrate with a fountain pen that the difference of 4 per cent was all velvet? Didn't the gentlemanly salesman explain that the big men in business all carried mortgages on their real estate and made the proceeds go out and earn fancy returns for them? Many a farmer whose fields were yielding richly fell for this bunk. That was one of the things that made the pinch of the last three years all the more acute in some sections. It is to be hoped that the many who were stung have not forgotten their wounds. On the northwest farm this coming year a gentlemanly slicker ought to be about as welcome as a drouth or a hailstorm.

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THE OMAHA BEE
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V. A. BRIDGE, Cir. Mgr.
Subscribed and sworn to before me this 2d day of February, 1925.
W. H. QUIVEY, Notary Public
(Seal)

SUNNY SIDE UP

Take Comfort, nor forget,
That Sunrise never failed us yet.
Celia Thaxter

Beloved, our text this morning is found in Luke 8:26-37, the story of the man possessed of devils which Jesus cast out and caused to enter into the herd of swine. The scene is in the country of the Gadarenes, who were swine breeders.

When Jesus caused the devils to enter into the swine, the swine rushed down a steep place into the lake and were choked.

The story of Jesus' act spread abroad among the Gadarenes. Then the Book of Books says:

"Then they (the Gadarenes) went out to see what was done, and came to Jesus and found the man, out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind, and they were afraid. They also which saw it told them by what means he that was possessed of the devils was healed. Then the whole multitude of the country of the Gadarenes round about besought him to depart from them, for they were taken with a great fear."

It was a wonderful thing for Jesus to heal this stricken man, but the Gadarenes thought only of the swine they had lost. They were doubtless glad that the man had been restored to sanity, but when it came to paying in swine they lost interest in the man and thought only of their hogs. Beloved, Gadarenes belong to no one period of time. They have existed through all generations. They would dearly love to see the heathen converted, the eyes of the blind opened, the lame made whole—but they balk at contributing any of their hogs to the good cause.

Do you remember the rich young man who came to Jesus and asked what he should do to inherit eternal life? He had obeyed the law from his youth up. He was, indeed, a model young man. But when Jesus told him to sell his goods and distribute the money among the poor, the young man turned and went away sorrowful. Like the Gadarenes he would not pay the price. "He went away sorrowful." He put his wealth above his soul's salvation. He obeyed the law outwardly, but in his heart he worshiped at the feet of Mammon.

There is no honor in being poor; neither is there disgrace in being rich. But there is disgrace in being poor because of one's own indolence or profligacy, and disgrace in being rich at the sacrifice of honesty. He who would win the race must run, and he who would have must pay the price. "What shall it profit a man to accumulate a herd of swine if by so doing he shall have set a curse upon the head of a fellow being?

"I'm Glad Salvation's Free" is a good old song. Salvation is free, but the keeping therof means sacrifice. There is no salvation in selfishness, and he who values his hogs above the souls of his fellows has need to be afraid. Jesus might have accumulated a fortune, but instead of accumulating goods He went about doing good. You may accumulate a fortune and go about doing good, but no matter how great your fortune, it will not avail one jot nor tittle in the last day unless you couple with the accumulation a division that will bless your fellows.

The world's great need today is unselfish service for humanity. Less regard for hogs and more regard for humans. Fewer self-centered lives, and more lives dedicated to the unfortunates all about us. Too many Gadarenes intent upon nothing but accumulation. The poorest and lonesomest man on earth today is the man who has nothing but money. The richest man is he who gives most of self to the service of his fellowmen. How many of you pray Jesus to depart when serving Him means interference with some cherished plan for gaining wealth?

Lip service availeth nothing. "True religion and undefiled, before God the Father is this, to visit the widows and the fatherless in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." And you may not keep yourself unspotted from the world by devoting all your time to mere accumulation of worldly goods.

So endeth the lesson. Let us stand and sing:
"Must Jesus bear the cross alone
And all the world go free?
No, there's a cross for every one,
And there's a cross for me."
And, singing with understanding minds and contrite hearts, let us go forth to dedicate ourselves anew to helpful service.

WILL M. MAUPIN.

Misguided Zeal.

"I've got to admire Constable Slackputter's zeal," said Mayor Numbers of Petunia, "but I can't say much for his judgment."

"Yes. A feller who thought he was in a hurry hopped out of his automobile yesterday at the top of Turn Turtle hill, and left it with its engine running. A kid came along and gave it a push to see what would happen, and it ran downhill, going faster and faster every minute. Slackputter ran out in front of it, waving his hat and hollering, 'Whoa!' The doctor says he ort to be all right in about a month."—Kansas City Star.

To Cut Apples.

A new device, which is not only a time-saver but adds to the appearance of sliced fruit, is a metal arrangement that with one movement cuts an apple into eight pieces of equal size. There is a tiny disc of metal-bound wood to hold the apple during the process of cutting.

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