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IMPROVING THE BIBLE.

Once upon a time Robert G. Ingersoll was quoted as saying he could write a better book than the Bible, whereupon Rabbi Wise remarked: "Well, Bob never has." It is doubtful if Colonel Ingersoll ever said it, but there have been men of every generation who thought they could improve upon it. Of such the same remark could be made that Rabbi Wise made when he heard of Colonel Ingersoll's

One of the most remarkable literary feats of all times was the Translation known as the King James Version. Later version have shown but little change from that remarkable translation, and no perceptible change in the beauties of its language. Just why anybody should attempt to "put the Bible into modern language" is difficult to understand. They ean in no wise add to its literary beauties, and in every case they have detracted therefrom. Imagine If you can some man daring to attempt any improvement upon the incomparable Sermon on the Mount. or adding to the parable of the Good Samaritan. No lawyer with any regard for his reputation would attempt to improve upon the masterly pleading Paul made in his own defense before Agrippa, and no logician regardful of his fame would attempt to improve upon the Apostle's sermon when he saw the ultar erected to "the Unknown God." The man who would try to polish up the Parable of the Sower would have the temerity to try polishing refined gold and painting a lily.

The literary beauties of the Bible have been at once the admiration and despair of modern writers. Its character sketches have never been equalled, its poetry has never been approached and its imagery has never been touched by men. Whether looked upon as an inspired book, or merely a collection of myths and fables, the one fact remains undisputed that as literature it stands unequalled. It sounds all the heights and depths of humanity and touches man from every standpoint of his nature.

Certain portions of the Book of Books may be put into simple language for the very young, but no one who does so does it with the idea of improving upon the original. He who attempts to improve upon the book that has stood the test of the centuries merely indicts his own intelligence.

SOME MIGHT NOT HAVE HAPPENED.

A statistical report on the number of fatal accidents during the year in the United States shows the number occurring in Nebraska to be low. During the year 1923, 766 persons met accidental death in this state, which places us second to Mississippi, which state has the lowest ratio per 100,000 population. This fact, of course, is very gratifying.

But the record is not complete, and will not be until the causes of these deaths have been passed in review and some conclusions drawn from them. How many could have been prevented? A safe conjecture is that a very large proportion of the total number would not have happened had ordinary precautions been taken. Coroner's verdicts to the contrary, a fatal accident is seldom unavoidable. Such an event implies carelessness on the part of somebody. Often the victim is to blame, but more often it is some one else.

The work that is being carried on by the safety committee will de much to minimize the appalling toll that is annually taken because of the great American habit of not thinking. One of the first efforts of the committee is to induce people to think, to watch, to "stop look, and listen." A melancholy consolation is afforded by the report which states that only one-fifth of the total fatalities were caused by automobile accidents. That relieves to some degree the popular vehicle. In Springfield, Mass., for the month of November it was found more people were killed by falls than by motors.

One sure way of reducing the total is for everybody to exercise more care in proceeding about orfinary business. This may cause slowing up a little, but a moment's delay here may purchase immunity from an eternity somewhere else. Most fatal accidents are unnecessary.

AFTER THE OIL IS GONE.

One group of oil men asserts that America's supply of mineral oil is rapidly being exhausted. Another group, probably as well informed, tells us the oil will last another hundred years at present rate of consumption. Probably neither knows a great deal about what is underground. All that is certain is that each year sees an increased demand for oil, while it is a fair presumption that in time the end will be reached. There will be no more oil.

One bit of comfort may be derived from the promise that a very good substitute for gasoline is derived from coal tar. Other sources of power will be developed. Always there is alcohol, which may be had from any sort of vegetable matter, if only we could trust ourselves to use it in the old car as

fuel and not consume it as a beverage. The 1925 output of automobiles was up to expectations, and the makers are planning on a bigger year in 1925. Calls for more gasoline. New oilburning locomotives and steamships are demanding further supplies of crude oil each day. Industrial and domestice use is extending. Whichever way one

turns, the increased requirements for oil may be noted. Civilization just now floats on a sea of oil.

Will a century be long enough time in which to readjust affairs so that something else may be used in place of oil? The prospect need not worry the owner of an oil well, but it may interest men of science or those who plan on being here after the last drop of gasoline has run through the carburetor and the last drop of oil has been worn out on a fast turning journal or burned in a fire box. Until then, we might as well go on using the oil we have while it lasts.

"THEY HAVE NOT LIVED."

O. O. McIntyre, who writes so entertainingly of New York life for The Omaha Bee, now and then injects a great truth into his articles. A day or two ago he wrote a paragraph about the blase children of Gotham millionaires who have exhausted life's thrills before they are well into their 'teens. He describes them as children who rarely smile, and says:

"Their life is a round of tutors and well-bred conversational blah. Not to have been chased from a watermelon patch or to have dug a cave in the banks of the creeks means just one thing. They have not

"They have not lived." All of life's thrills exhausted before they have started life. They have everything that money can buy, but the greatest things in life are not purchasable with money. Money can buy the luxurious bath in a marble mansion, but it can not buy the joy of the swimming hole down in the old creek, where boyhood democracy is at its best. Money can buy the costly electric joy, but that toy can not yield the thrill that comes to the boy who makes his first kite with his own hands and sees it sailing aloft at the end of a string held in his own fingers. Money can buy the choice box seats at the opera, but no amount of money can buy the thrill felt by the small boy who earns his way into the circus by carrying water to the ele-

Paris, and Rome and Venice can never hold for the poor little rich boys the joys and the thrills that come to the rich little poor boys who roam the woods, gathering nuts, listening to the songs of the wild birds, testing new-found herbs and roots. chasing rabbits, trying to understand the chatter of the squirrels and giving ear to the rustle of the crisp autumn leaves under foot. Money can buy the choicest viands in Gotham's cafes, but those viands never taste to the poor little rich boys as do the roasted eggs and potatoes and ash-covered bacon tastes to the rich little poor boys who wander through the fields and the woods, fish the little streams and feel the soothing mud squashing up between their wriggling toes.

The boy who never has a chance to run wild and free, who never has a chance to make pals with a yellow dog, who is deprived of opportunity to participate in the democracy of the playground, has been started off wrong. "They have not lived."

STATE'S RIGHT TO SELF-DEFENSE.

Michigan's supreme court has upheld the syndicalism law under which Charles E. Ruthenberg was convicted. The decision virtually says that the state has a right to defend itself against conspiracies aimed at its existence. The so-called Bridgeman conference, for attending and participating in which Ruthenberg was arrested and tried, was not the assembling of a political party. It was a secret meeting, whose existence was not supposed to be known. Those who attended disguised themselves, assumed names not their own, and surrounded the entire affair with such an atmosphere of mystery as might have been comical if it had not held the element of criminality. It was in defiance of the authority of Michigan, which had passed a law forbidding such affairs, and Michigan is found to be right in punishing violators of that law.

When Foster, Ruthenberg and their associates came out into the open with the Workers Party, they lost most of their prestige. Likewise, the ceased to be a menace. Whenever such movements as theirs are brought to light, and their true nature made clear, the danger is materially diminished. A vast difference exists between Foster openly appealing for support for an impossible political program and Foster plotting behind closed doors to overthrow the "capitalistic" government.

Michigan is following the line of reason. Open will be permitted. Secret organizations aiming at will be permitted. Se cret governments aiming at control of politics or government are not to be tolerated. On this principle all can stand. Even the communists can claim a hearing, but only in the open. Our government is safe so long as it gives all an equal chance. And each state and the nation as well is entitled to act in self-defense.

A sociologist insists that the day is not far distant when men will work four hours a day and four days a week. When that time comes a lot of men will have to step livelier than they have since we

It will be generally agreed that Dr. Pinto has started something. In fact, it may be said that he has raised something. A word of four letters pertaining to punishment, sulphur and demonology.

The New York Herald Tribune says the Paris shoemaker who has landed a painting in the salon just kept pegging till he got there. Well, why not; that was his sole purpose, wasn't it?

The cherry tree story is declared to be a myth. So is the cherry that was wont to repose in the bottom of the glass.

A breed of ducks that can not fly has been discovered in South America. The breed is not un-known in this country. We call them lame ducks.

Homespun Verse -By Omaha's Own Poet-Robert Worthington Davie

THE POSTAL CLERK'S DREAM.

Yes, hopeful and cheerful! The eyes that were tearful Again wear the gleam of the past. The postoffice fellows Pound out of their cellos: 'We're out of the darkness at last"

The ghost of reflection That haunted election-The Chamber of Commerce's wild cry-Created commotion Like leaves on the ocean When liners full-laden roll by.

The bleak winds are blowing. Tis freezing and snowing. The furnace burns constant and fast-But they have arisen From darkness a-whizzin' Up into the sunshine at last.

> Dreams are visions meteoric Flashing through the endless blue Usually they're allegoric Seldom do they come true.

Oh, the Merry, Merry Christmas Time Approaches



From Our Readers

2921 R Street.

Omaha—To the Editor of The Omaha Bee: In your editorial of last evening, in advocating the gas tax for would he have been in his neighborning, in advocating the gas tax for road improvements and maintenance, you use the following words: "It is not fair to lay all the cost on property owners. Users of highways should pay proportionately for the improvements and maintenance cost." (You are speaking of roads.) "This logical sequence leads directly to the gay."

Would he have been in his neighbor. It hoods is to endure divorce must be checked instead of passing measures to dignify the nasty thing.

JERRY HOWARD.

Both Happy.

Mr. Flubdub saw a poor man. He ence leads directly to the gaso-

sumption, will you answer what your position would be on the following? Omaha Bee: Notwithstanding that the campaign is over the press is Would you apply this principle of taxation to our schools—our first item of expense—by taxing each child its tive to the Forbes-Thompson conspirshare of wear and tear on our school privileges?

Would you charge the carrying around "He may as well have it," said Mr. Flubdub. "I can't work it off on anybody." — Louisville Courier-Journal.

What Every Tourist Known the interesting the int As you are one of the main advo-cates of this new principle of taxation

by charging those who use the courts

The vanity of the newly made fich
sufficient to pay the expense of them?

Would you extend this principle to

realignment of raising their society

a question of principle, or a question of expediency? I trust you, as one of the leaders

our new lawmakers after due consid-

Tribute to a Boy.

Omaha-To the Editor of The Oma-ha Bee: John Joseph McLaughlin is and walk away.

Often have I seen him stand
amongst a crowd of boys 12 or 15
amongst a crowd of boys 12 or 15

years old, all trying to talk to him at once. All he would do would be to answer them with a smile, which said more and meant more than a boy making an hour speech. His will making an hour speech. His will power and personal magnetism seemed

Especially on the coasting hill, with that golden pompadour hair, flushed, cheeks, large blue eyes, spark ling like two diamonds, and that smile that said more and meant more than

snapped out with a twinkle of an eye. is entirely different because it af

Would you charge the parent with Smith's address before the Rotary News item. And Americans have blowouts to keep their tempers hot nine children, nine times as much as club, etc. the parent with only one child?

But lo and behold, Dr. A. S. PinWould you extend this principle of to's attack on the marriage sacrataxes by use to our courts of justice, ment caps the climax.

our public institutions and other public welfare expense accounts?

Do you understand taxation to be

of this new system, will meet these questions and others put to you, for these questions must be decided by

-TRENMOR CONE.

not with his crowd of boy friends this morning. The silent, plous boy, as he was known. The boy was never known to swear or speak a smutty words. If his playmates would start a smutty story, he would bow his head

to tower high.

How I did like to be with him.

There was a mistake made by that fast growing monster, "Traffic," which is crowding us young folks off onto a wee corner. My silent friend paid the price with his life, which was

Abe Martin

What's become o' th' feller that used t' pull out enough money t' buy a farm ever' time he bought a nickel cigar? Where do honest

nickel cigar? Where do honest people git th' idea that ever'buddy

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empresses, dukes, duchesses, princes, etc., hurts nobody, but brings ridicule

on themselves.
But when marriage is brought down

Some of the greatest writers and

heologians believe if our beloved na-

Mr. Flubdub saw a poor man. He felt like giving the poor man something. So he gave him a Canadian dime he had been carrying around

when traveling.-Cincinnati Enquirer

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SHATTUCK SCHOOL

Jake Comfort nor forget.
That Sunrise never failed us yet.

TROUBLE ON THE RADIO.

Maybe you folks will remember that about a year ago I told how me and mother went and bought a radio.
We'd worried like about the way our children carried on—
A-leavin' us alone at nights, not knowin' where they'd gone. An' so we got us one o' them new-fangled newtry things That fiddles, plays planners, saxyphones an other things. I ain't yet got it figered out t' make it stop its squawks An' coughin' an' a-sneezin' when it starts t' sing or talk.

But that ain't neither here nor there, 'tain't static worries me; It's that about th' programs we can't none o' us agree.

It ike the old-time fiddlin', an' th' songs o' long ago,

But all th' children sneer an' say, "O gee, Dad, that's too slow."

An' mother likes th' classical, them operatic things Where th' soprany soars to "c" an' then th' tener sings. But when she tunes in children say, "Such taste that mother

An' then they grasp those dinguses and tune in on the jazz.

I guess I am old-fashioned-I like carpets on my floor. But daughters say, "O, Daddy, folks don't use 'em any more."
An' so they've got a lot o' rugs just scattered here and there
So they can roll 'em up right quick an' then th' floor is bare.
Then I must lose my old-time songs an' tunes of other days,
An' mother can't git operays—we sit there in a daze
O' memories o' long ago, an' walt in patience there. O' memories o' long ago, an' wait in patience there While children dance t' jazzy tunes they grab from out th' air.

Well, sort o' confidential-like, 'twixt you an' me an' ma, We've got a little scheme rigged up, as slick as e'er you saw. Th' next time they roll up th' rugs an' start t' syncopate Why me an' ma air goin' t' dance at most amazin' rate. We're goin' t' shake a wicked foot an' wag a subtle hip. An' do th' smimmy—well, in short, we're goin' t' let 'er rip.
B'gosh we're goin' t' show them kids their parents ain't so

We're goin' t' catch up with th' times, an' with th' radio.

We wish we might personally answer each good friend who called up by telephone or telegraphed us after the radio who called up by telephone of telegraphic casting effort Saturday evening. But that is physically, and financially, impossible. The cheery messages came in by the hundreds, and each one made life brighter. Only four of the children appeared on the program; later, perhaps, the other four will perform. Confidentially, if credit is due any one for the performance it is due to Lottie Clifford. She made most of the sacrifices; all Dad has done is to keep 'em in shoes.

Col. Elmer Thomas threatens an arid New Year celebration, by and with the assistance of divers and sundry helpers. In other words, if he sees any signs of tippling he will promptly Scotch it. If he catches you it will be a rum go, but all you can do is pull a rye face and submit gracefully.

Some of these days, if we can get a week or two off, we are going on a searching expedition, the object of the quest being to see if we can find a church that has succeeded in eating itself out of debt.

L. W. Brooking of Funk, Neb., proposes a Liars' Contest. will have no attractions for us until we learn the handicaps. a show with some of the catch-as-catch-can performers we have met up with during our forty years' experience in newspaper

Referring again to the proposed Liars' Contest, we suggest that Friend Brooking sit in on some of the chess tournaments at Pete Wohlenberg's in Lincoln, Ol Doc Bixby being barred for obvious reasons.

WILL M, MAUPIN.





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