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APRIL 13, 1920.

HOW TO BRING PRICES DOWN.

The statement of government officials who have just completed a survey of the market for hides, leather and shoes that the prices of high-grade footwear will come down shortly is encouraging because of the reason revealed for the prediction. The shoe men will have to lower their quotations. The experts at Washington say, because if they do not they will not sell their shoes. The people have stopped paying outrageous prices for footwear.

Herein is disclosed the secret of how to deal with profiteers. If it is possible temporarily to do without the goods, do not pay an extortionate price; the profiteer will be compelled to come to reason. He must sell his goods or go out of business.

It was long the rule in America that the most expensive commodities were those of best quality. And Americans more and more have come to demand the best. This has led to the practice of inosture by the profiteers who placed unreasonably high prices on their wares and thus led customers to believe that they were of exceptionally fine quality. The people were slow to see through the deception, but evidence is not lacking that they have now done so.

A day of reckoning has come for the profiteers. Notwithstanding complaints against high prices of shoes, manufacturers were confident that demand for high-priced footwear would continue unabated and imported during the last 12 months a greatly increased quantity of fancy shoe leather. But the people have decided not to pay the prices asked. If consumers can thus force shoe prices down, they can also lower the cost of other unreasonably priced commodities. The remedy lies in their own hands.

WOMEN VOTERS' LEAGUE.

Organization of a non-partisan league of women voters has led some to suggest that the country may have a great women's party and that no end of complications may result. Such "fears," however, must subside on reflection that while every political party is a league of citizens, there is a considerable difference between a party and the common notion of a league, the latter frequently being formed within a party to advocate certain issues.

The women have as much right to have their leagues as the men, and none of them of any importance would be silly enough to advocate the use of the vote to divide the sexes on political lines.

The vote will not change the nature of women, although it will improve their position, and husbands and wives will consult over election matters as they do over others. Wives, daughters and sisters, excepting in the case of the few freaks who are always bidding for highlight or else acting foolishly because they can't help it, will not be found organizing against husbands, fathers and brothers.

They may have, and properly, their associations for developing sentiments for some project particularly of interest to women, but, as pointed out, this is no more than many men voters do. The non-partisan spirit is just the one in which to launch movements for reforms; having obtained the vote in this way, women may be expected to exert a good influence against partisanship of the narrow sort.

The great majority of American women can be depended upon to use the vote intelligently. The men have enough freaks in politics to cause them to go slowly about sneering at the many good suffragists on account of the foolish few.

PUTTING FIGHT INTO RELIGION.

It is only fitting that there should be a series of religious revivals throughout the country, such as the Bob Jones revival here, just at this time—and just at this time, to serve as an awakening, along with other things, to the significance of the great inter-church movement, with which the world is being confronted.

Of the need for a religious awakening in America there is on every hand frank admission. The backwash of war has left a nauseous amount of moral wreckage. A general weakening of fiber is apparent. In business, politics and personal affairs men are lax judges of their own conduct. The unselfishness of war has been replaced by the intense selfishness of peace. The spirit of service has given way to the lust for getting. Some measure of our national indifference to the creed of right living may be found in the report of the "Christian Herald" that the increase in the Protestant church membership in the United States in 1919 was the smallest in 30 years.

Mobilization of many denominations in the inter-church world movement is a hopeful omen. It reveals alertness to the need and the will to work hard to correct evil conditions. If the means adopted by the churches are as well designed as their plan is ambitious, great results may be hoped for. But much depends upon the selection of means.

The fight will not be won when many names are added to church rolls—not even if every American were induced to affiliate with some religious organization. It is one thing to get a man into a church; it is another to keep him there; it is still another to assure that he will profit by his stay.

How much of the decline in the church growth of

the past year has been due to the failure of the church to meet the hour's need? Conceivably much. Generally speaking, churches have been too narrow, too provincial in their appeal, have not kept pace intellectually with their communities, and have had too little courage. There has been too little theology of the militant type. If the church is to appeal to red-blooded men and women of today it must put on its fighting clothes and strike out fearlessly on the burning problems of every-day living.

That the church has been a bit too reclusive and academic is not so much the fault of the clergy as of the congregations. If every pastor in the United States were to put the rigor of conviction and moral courage into every utterance, the life of the nation would be shaken to its foundations. As it has been, one crusading preacher may succeed chiefly in losing his job. With all clergymen united to fight shilly-shally piety, every house of worship in the land would be packed to its doors. People would enter because they enjoy sensation, but they would remain because they admire vigorous crusading.

It is just such an infusion of fighting spirit that the inter-church world movement promises. It is just such an infusion that the nation needs. If men of the cloth were to speak from no other text than the Golden Rule for the next 50 weeks, and were to preach it fearlessly, they would purge their hearers of easy consciences. And they would never have empty pews.

The chief aim of the inter-church movement is to vitalize congregations, and the primary step must be to arouse pacific church-goers to the need of a church militant. Fight must be injected into every captain and every private in the great army that struggles for national, state, municipal, civic and personal morality and respectability. Incidentally, the men and women who invest their money generously in their religion will have a fighting stake in it.

And thereupon, we would say, they should proceed to get the worth of their money out of it—in spiritual consolation, if the term may be used in a lay newspaper, which means the acquisition of the moral courage, and the Christian determination, to do what they can to advance truth and righteousness beyond all other considerations, political or industrial, or commercial.

DIAMONDS.

Diamonds are said to have risen 100 percent during the past year. Prices are several times what they were before the war. This is not due to scarcity, for they are coming into the country in far greater quantities than ever before. Current importations of jewelry, chiefly diamonds, are said to be seven times as large as they were a year ago. The United States already has two-thirds of the world's diamond supply.

The phenomenal increase in price is simply the result of extravagant buying. It is typical of the attitude of a large class of Americans who have more money than usual and have not sense enough either to save it for their own benefit or to set a good example to others.

Such luxurious indulgence is one of the chief reasons why the cost of living falls so heavily on the majority of our people. A demand for luxuries is destructive. It stimulates unnecessary industries at the expense of necessary industries, and thus retards the production of essential commodities at a time when they are sorely needed. It encourages self-indulgence and thriftlessness on the part of those who can less afford it, and prevents the saving which is as essential as increased production. It sets an artificial standard of high prices, which extends to nearly everything, giving manufacturers and merchants warrant for exacting exorbitant profits.

Diamonds are all right, and highly desirable in their way; but they will not take the place of food, clothing, shelter, transportation and other basic essentials of life.

JOHNSON'S PREDICTION.

"Great Britain will be 'dry' by 1930," says W. E. (Pussyfoot) Johnson, whereat the London newspapers which a few years ago would have greeted such a declaration with hoots of derisive laughter soberly discuss the probabilities.

This change of front is a most remarkable demonstration of the gain of temperance sentiment in England since the advent of Mr. Johnson, whose mission it is to lead a campaign to rid the nation of strong drink. No such sudden change of front has ever been registered by the press of England on any great public question. Newspapers that last summer hailed Johnson as joke now regard him as a factor of tremendous importance, as they see rallying to his colors many of the influential men and women of the empire.

It does seem as though the prohibition leader has cut out a hard job for himself in ridding England of strong drink in 10 years, but then it was not so long ago that many Americans grinned broadly at the enthusiasts who rallied to the cry, "A Saloonless Nation in 1920," and lo, we are in the midst of it.

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Other Editors Than Ours

A BLOW TO "DEFORMED" SPELLING.

(London Free Press)

After giving the scheme its support for several years, the Modern Language Association of America has withdrawn its official approval of simplified spelling. "Lack of public enthusiasm for the new stand" is given as the reason. Presumably the simplified spelling board, which formerly bombarded the newspapers with propaganda matter, is still in existence, although little has been heard of it since before the war, which naturally curtailed numerous activities of the kind. It spent a good deal of money, contributed by Mr. Carnegie, and it is not recalled that he remembered the board in his will. But there was an original endowment which should yet be available, so the promotion of the movement need not languish.

The mistake made by the spelling reform enthusiasts was in attempting too much at one time. Language is a product of evolution, of slow growth, and its scheme cannot be changed overnight through agitation. It is easy to point out plenty of cumbersome, illogical spellings in our language, but orthography and logic have little in common. If spelling generally were to be brought into line with modern notions of "efficiency" and time-saving, a wholesale, revolutionary reorganization of the language, upsetting virtually all the recognized forms and variations, would be necessary.

A conservative public would have nothing to do with "deformed spelling." Changes in spelling may be expected as a gradual, continuous process, such as has been proceeding throughout the centuries, but a revolution in the language is no more likely than one in our form of government.

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The Tower of Babel

By BILL ARMSTRONG

PA PERKINS

SEZ.



pick his company with more care in the future.

EVANGELIST IN SOUTH BEND TO BLOW ALL SIN—Headline in the expurgated Tribune.

Poor Bob Jones, he is doomed to die in South Bend at a ripe old age.

THEY'LL BE PLAYING BRIDGE

N.Y. TIMES

TORONTO, Ont., April 12.—The organized butchers of this city have submitted to their employers a demand that tea be served to them at 9 a. m. daily and that they be allowed 10 minutes of company time in which to drink it.

Guy McMichael, cashier at the Citizens, had Washington on the wire and was pricing machine guns, as we hastened through the bank this morning.

THE ANSWER IS SEE WHAT THE BOYS IN THE BACK ROOM WILL HAVE

NEW YORK—Mayor Hylan has added to his laurels. Bricklayers made him an honorary member of their union.

THE MIRACLE MAN HAS GONE TO CONDUCTING.

CHICAGO—Tom Johnson, who has been a conductor of the light railroads, alighted from a fast moving express train here, rolled completely under it, arose, nodded to horrified spectators and walked away unharmed.

They tell us Red Fox forgot himself, jumped up and sang with the Michigan alumni the other evening at the high school. Horace should

George Crael, like all other newspapermen, seems to have a faculty of going out and getting himself cussed at regular intervals.

IN WHICH THE MAYOR LANDS A BETTER PAYING JOB!

NEW YORK—Mayor Hylan has added to his laurels. Bricklayers made him an honorary member of their union.

THE BRUTAL FRANKNESS OF A NEWSPAPER CORRESPONDENT.

It was in this Elkhart country town where Ralph N. Smith began the battle of life that he was united in marriage to the present Mrs. Smith—Laporte dispatch to The News-Times.

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