

Precis Of The Bible

By Blanche Jennings Thompson

(The title of this article, Miss Thompson of the Benjamin Franklin High School faculty, Rochester, is nationally known for her books for children. Miss Thompson tells here of writing her latest book on the Bible.)

The nearest young man had taught graphically the story of the expulsion of Adam and Eve from paradise. Now the second graders were laboring to draw with their crayons a picture of the dramatic scene. But what was this on Jimmie's desk? Here was a large automobile with what was obviously intended for the back seat and two doors in the rear.

"What a day! Boy, I'm tired!"

"But, Walter, you said yourself that God drove Adam and Eve out of paradise."

There are a good many people

not much better off than Jimmie when it comes to knowledge of the Bible. That is why I wrote "The Oldest Story." In the beginning, however, I did not intend to start out on so ambitious a project. I planned to use only the adventure stories. It seemed as if children brought up on Superman and The Shadow might give a little attention to someone who got so mad that he tied three hundred foxes together by the tails, fastened the foxes loose in his enemy's cornfield. His hand is heat a story that a woman will count with in a general's tent, cut off his head with a battle-axe, carry the head home with her, right through the enemy lines, ought to be able to hold her own even with Mata Hari—so I wrote the adventure stories.

Then Mr. Bruce (and when I say

Mr. Bruce I mean either Mr. Frank or Mr. Williams because I never feel exactly sure which one of them does what) decided that he wanted the whole of the Old Testament. So I wrote that. Then Mr. Bruce decided that it would be nice to have the New Testament, too. So I sighed and went to work on that. If you ever had to write even a brief précis in high school and remember how you tore your hair, you will realize that making a précis of the whole Bible is quite an undertaking. Well, then, the new revision of the New Testament came out, and after meditation I decided that it would be a good idea to bring my text into some approximate conformity to the new revision—and like the Little Red Hen, I did.

Honestly, my hope is that adults will read "The Oldest Story" as well as young people. While the language is simple, it is not childish, and Kate Heredy has made lively drawings to illustrate the text. The Oldest Story is not just a few Bible stories—it is the whole Bible, condensed. \$2.50.

'Fr. O'Flanagan's Ride'—A Hoax By A Master

The well known Kansan, David D. Leahy, city editor of the Wichita Eagle, and correspondent of the Associated Press, died recently at the age of 65.

He made his mark in many ways—as a constructive and energetic newspaper writer and editor, as a political figure of some importance, as a historian, and as an almost perfect raconteur. But it is possible that Dave Leahy's legend will always chiefly cluster around that exuberant period when he was the greatest connocter of newspaper hoaxes in the nation.

'Father O'Flanagan's Ride'

Probably the greatest of the Leahy hoaxes was what might be called "Father O'Flanagan's Ride." The name does not matter—it was that of an Irish priest, and may have been O'Connor. Whatever it was, this was the Leahy masterly method of building it up:

The New York papers received word that a famous cattle rancher, who acres by the hundreds of thousands spread out across the Texas Panhandle, was dying. He had lived a sinful life, and as he contemplated his own dissolution, he decided he must confess his sins and be absolved by a Catholic priest he knew living in Wichita.

The rancher, despite his unwholesome career, had succeeded in winning the devotion and loyalty of his cowboys, and they started to ride to Wichita, taking with them relays of horses, which they left at strategic spots along the road, so that Father O'Flanagan could have changes of mounts.

The story ran on for days. It told of the arrival of the mourning cowboys, and of how Father O'Flanagan kirtled up his cassock and stepped into the saddle. Down the long trail rode Father O'Flanagan. At the depots established by the cowboys he changed mounts and galloped on with the dust coating his clerical garments. At night times the cowboys would set fire to hay stacks along the trail to light Father O'Flanagan

along the way.

New York crowds hung about the newspaper bulletin boards where maps of the country were placed, showing the trail and the progress of Father O'Flanagan toward his holy service of confession and absolution. It was good for columns of space—and Leahy was being paid by the column. Eventually Father O'Flanagan reached the bedside just in time and the rancher's soul was properly ushered into the other world.

It is hardly necessary to say that Father O'Flanagan (if that was the name), the rancher, the cowboys, the ponies, the flaming haystacks and all the other parts of this drama, were products of the Leahy imagination.

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ON THE HOME FRONT
with RUTH WYETH SPEARS

Bring Toys Into the Warmest Room in the House

It's nice to dream about a nursery where children have all their clutter and playthings but this winter we will be thinking about ways and means for everyone to have their special interests, hobbies and pleasure right in which ever room that may be heated easily. That is the way it was done in the "good old days"; and there is certainly no reason that we can't do it now with a few special ideas of our own in the way of efficiency and comfort. Why not make a toy chest that may be wheeled into the room? And why can't the lid be used for a play table?

You may have scraps of plywood or composition board that may be used for this chest; or you may have a piece of



your unused scraps have been rejected for government work because of slight imperfections. Enough of these "Government rejects" are filtering into the market to keep amateur craftsmen going. Even the wheels of this chest are cut out of wood, and here is a good chance to use some of those odds and ends of bright paint that you have saved from time to time.

NOTE: Mrs. Spears has prepared directions for making this chest with wooden wheels, folding table top, with full size patterns and color guide for the stenciled decorations for the sides, ends, top and wheels. Price of pattern, which is No. 252 is 10c plus 5c to cover mailing costs. Address: Mrs. Spears, Drawer 124, Redford Hill, N. Y.