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Side Talks by Ruth Cameron

ANOTHER WAY TO SHOW RESPECT

On a very foggy morning not long ago we were passing an unusually depressing cemetery (I think cemeteries vary greatly). There are some that seem to suggest peace and rest and make one wonder if, after all, it might not be a pleasant thing to "lie down for an aeon or two until the Master of all good workmen shall set us to work anew." And there are others that suggest funerals and black gloves and all the dismal formal trappings of death. Just as we passed the entrance we saw a man going in with a big bunch of flowers, evidently to lay in some grave. He looked utterly depressed and dispirited and it seemed to me highly unlikely that he would come out looking any more cheerful from so dismal a place.

"Why do people do it?" I asked the Authorman. The Authorman considered the matter and then answered: "Partly out of respect to the dead. Would you want your grave attended? Partly because it is an emotional outlet."

I Don't Want My Grave Respected.
In my turn I considered his question for sometime before I came to a conclusion. And then I answered what I really think is my honest feeling. "I don't want to be forgotten any more than other people do. But I don't feel at all anxious to have the respect paid to my grave. It really seems to me that if anyone thought of

me and wanted to do me some honor, I would honestly be just as pleased if they went and performed some kind act. If they wanted to let people know that my memory was being kept green they could tell the person that the act was done in my memory. Now really when you come right down to it, wouldn't that be a whole lot better than haunting a cemetery? I'd be just as much honored and someone else would be given pleasure."

Couldn't Flowers be Enjoyed in a Home?

"Fine," said the Authorman, "for everyone except the florists."

"Well, as to that, why couldn't the person who would naturally put flowers on a grave go and give them to someone living instead? I feel quite sure if I were a Spirit that I would just as soon come down and enjoy flowers if they were in someone's home as if they were on a grave. In fact, I think I would prefer it for I always did dislike cemeteries."

"What about the emotional outlet?" pursued the Authorman.

"It seems to me that it would be a good deal more of an emotional outlet to go and do something nice for someone, with all the warm human contact that means, than to go and mope in a cemetery. I don't think moping in a cemetery is an outlet at all. It's a blind alley not an outlet."

Who is It?

The Authorman admitted that he felt much the same way about it and so we are going to give each other's cemetery flowers to someone alive. But last night I had a new thought. I want to be remembered, but there is one person I would just as leave he would not give my flowers to. Maybe you can guess who it is.

Names and Phrases.

The expression "son of a gun" is quite common in South Wales. It is thought by some that the word "gun" is derived from the original Gaelic "gunna" (modern Welsh "gwn"), meaning a bowl; if so the expression "son of a gun" is a fragment of old Celtic mythology, the bowl or cauldron in both Irish and Welsh mythology being the source of and origin of embryonic life.

Paper 13 1/4 inches long by a little more than eight inches wide is known as foolscap, and this is the story of its name: "When Oliver Cromwell became protector, after the execution of Charles I., he caused the stamp of the cap of liberty to be placed upon the paper used by the English Government. Soon after the restoration of Charles II., having occasioned to use some paper for despatches, some of this Government paper was brought to him.

"On looking at it and discovering the stamp, he inquired the meaning of it; and, on being told, he said: "Take it away; I have nothing to do with a fool's cap!"

Proverbs being wisdom gathered by observers and concentrates into a few words it is only natural that we should find a resemblance among proverbs of various peoples. Many English proverbs find corresponding expression in Japanese sayings. Instead of "More haste, less speed," the Mikado's subjects say, "If in a hurry, go round," which is not unlike another bit of English popular wisdom. "The longest way round is the shortest way home." "Accidents will happen in the best regulated families" of English-speaking countries, and "Even a monkey will sometimes fall from a tree" in Japan. We say "Oil and water will not mix," and they say, "You can't rivet a nail in a custard." We say "Out of evil good may come," and they say, "It rains springs from the mud." Mrs. Partington's famous though futile effort with the mop becomes "Scattering foes with a fan."

Mrs. Partington, it will be remembered, was the woman who endeavored to stem the Atlantic with her broom. In the winter of 1824 a great storm struck the town of Sidmouth (England); the sea rising to a great height, threatened the entire town with destruction. In the midst of the turmoil Dame Partington was found wielding her mop, vigorously pushing back the Atlantic, of course she was beaten in the attempt.

The meaning of the word "bogus" was the subject of a long discussion in a London court the other day. Eventually the judge had recourse to a dictionary and that book, in giving examples of the use of the word, quoted the fact that there was once a judge who did not know the meaning of a bogus transaction.

A teacher told one of his scholars, a son of the Emerald Isle, to spell "hostility."

"H-o-r-s-e," began young Pat. "Not hostility," said the teacher, "but hostility."

"Shure," replied Pat, "an' didn't you tell me the other day not to say 'hoss'?" he jabs, it's one thing with ye one day and another the next."

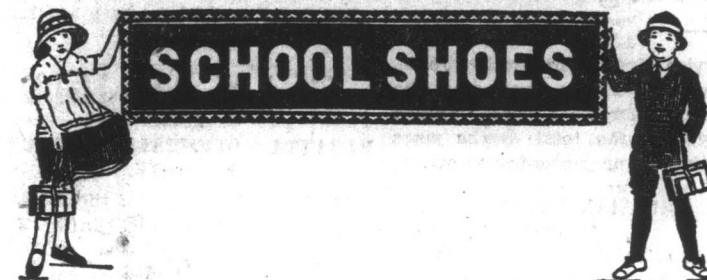
The electrician had arrived home at 3 a.m., and was quietly sneaking up stairs, when his wife called: "What's the matter? Wire you insulate?" But the shock was too great. The electrician had fainted.

WONDERING WHY.

Men send their autos roaring along the midnight street, disturbing people sleeping, destroying slumbers sweet; with automatic madly coughing, and pistons whanging loud, we hear them in the offing, the foolish, fathead crowd. There is no sense, beshrew it, in racketing along; I wonder why they do it, when they must know it's wrong. Speed fiends, in all the papers, read tales of death and wrecks; because of speed fiend capers, men carry broken necks; and to the boneyard, daily, dead men in heaves go, because the speed fiends' gaily refuse to travel slow. Cops run them down and pinch them, the while some victim groans, and Justice, which should cinch them, just fines them seven bones. Such leniency's a blunder—they pay with-out a tear, then scorch again like thunder, and kill an auctioneer. 'Tis wicked to pursue it, this vicious course and vain; I wonder why they do it—why not be safe and sane? I drive my fiery auto, a thing of brutal power, by ten and wair and grod, at fifteen miles an hour. And though for years I've driven my bus along the pave, I've sent no guy unshriven to all an early grave, I've caused no sore confusion with fender or with hood—but, haply, in conclusion, I'd better knock on wood.

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Cupid Tempts the Sailors

Curles Maples, 18, of Brooklyn, is in jail in Newark, N.J., because, according to his shipmates on the steamship Suricho, he used sand to keep Cupid from slipping. Maples was brought back in irons from Liverpool on the Suricho. He was arraigned before U.S. Commissioner Pfaff, in Elizabeth, charged with sabotage, in that he put sand in the turbine engines of the ship while she lay in dock at Liverpool. According to the story which he told his shipmates he found a sweetheart in Liverpool, and viewed with alarm the early sailing date which would separate them. Hence the sand. It laid the ship up for repairs as soon as the

engines had worked a bit. The charge was made by Captain Blumh, of the

Can't Be a Fish Story.

A bull frog that smokes in a curiously lurking somewhere in Nichevans Lake, near Petersham, Mass. When in camp there the other evening, Librarian Harlan Ballard, noted scholar and author, of Pittsfield, Mass., cast a lighted cigar in the water. Promptly a huge amphibian leaped after it, grabbed the unlighted end and swam to a rock, where it enjoyed a smoke for 10 minutes. Afterward the frog gave a concert, which indicated no illness. Mr. Ballard is trying to secure it for the Berkshire Museum, of which he is Curator.



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