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SIDE TALKS.

By Ruth Cameron.

PERSONALITY AND ELECTRICITY.



What a wonderful thing personality is! How powerfully a vivid personality can impress itself on people even if it has to reach across a thousand miles.

The Authorman had a letter this morning that was just chockful of personality. It wasn't a letter from a friend, it was just a business letter—an answer to an inquiry about a boat.

But it was so full of interest in the subject, so brimming with life that we could feel the personality of the man who wrote it though he lived a thousand miles away and we had never met him.

A Reflection Across 40 Years.

Once had a dearly loved uncle whose sweet and gay personality made him stand out from the background of uninteresting grown-ups with which children are surrounded. A visit from "Uncle" was an event in the week.

Last week I met a woman who had known him when he was a very young man over 40 years ago. Her face lit up when his name was mentioned. "Oh, was he your uncle?" she exclaimed. "He came to our town as a minister when I was a child and how we children loved him! He used to play

croquet with us. He seemed like one of us."

And the light that came across her face was a reflection of the personality of a man she had not seen for 40 years.

David Was A Personality.

One often catches this same sort of reflection of personality when one is reading history, or the Bible. How vividly we can feel some of the personalities there. How strangely they affected those about them. David is one of these. Why is so much written about him? Partly because of his picturesque deeds, but partly because of the vivid personality behind those deeds that made people think about him.

There is almost no description of personal appearance in the Bible. Yet David gets two whole lines. "Now he was ruddy withal and of a beautiful countenance and good to look upon." I think one is more conscious of David than of any other man in the Bible unless it be Peter, another vivid personality.

Yet She Is A Tradition.

None of the works of the poetess, Sappho, has survived, and yet such was her personality as it expressed itself in her poems and her personal relations that she is a tradition to this day.

Personality is a force just as real and unmistakable as electricity—and while we know some of the things that

both can do, we know little of the nature of either. I wonder if we shall ever fully understand them both.

Dog Was Man's First Friend, Tradition Says

Soon after creation, says an old legend, a chasm broke open across the earth. Man was left on one side of it, the animal world on the other. The animals seemed undisturbed by the separation, all except the dog. He whined and ran up and down seeking a way across it. At last Man saw him, and noticed the pleading look in his eyes. "Come," he said. The dog sprang but the chasm was too wide for him. He reached the opposite side only with his front paws and hung there vainly struggling to get up. The Man put out his hand and pulled the dog up to safety beside him. "You shall be my comrade for ever and ever," he said.

This is another of those delightful stories which, if not literally true, are characteristically true and create themselves out of the atmosphere which surrounds the persons or events. True in spirit if not in fact, for all the world knows that man had no more faithful friend and follower than the dog. A superintendent of the famous London Zoo, who should be credited with knowing something about animals, declares that the dog is the only animal with a truly disinterested affection for man. Their affection and their usefulness has been recognized for thousands of years. Dogs have aided man in exploration, in defending his home, in hunting for his food and indeed, there is a record of dogs aiding man in war before the Christian era. One of the romantic developments of the Great War was the use of dogs as messengers and many are the officers who have recorded the thrills they have felt on seeing some faithful animal, Alsatian, or Little Terrier, running with a strange concentration of purpose, over shell torn land, over obstacles and through shell fire, to carry some precious messages from one force to another. Hundreds of lives were saved, and many military situations turned from defeat to victory by the courage and devotion of these animals who seemed to understand how much depended upon them fulfilling their duties.

There were other dogs who did civil service for the Great War, like "Muggins", the little Spitz dog owned by Mrs. Woodward of Victoria, B.C., who, during the war carried on his back a little money box in which he collected coins for war work. In five years "Muggins" collected the astonishing sum of \$21,000 for various war organizations in Canada. During those five years he met every incoming vessel from the Orient, running around among the passengers, jangling his money box and begging for help. He had been decorated with five war medals and two more were on their way to him when the brave little fellow died, a victim of pneumonia.

The love of a dog is something which cannot be bought with money or gifts, and be the man rich or poor, old or young, the affection which his dog bestows upon him must be earned from the heart.

A Scottish Dog Here.

Edinburg has a little shrine erected to the memory of a faithful dog friend who is known as Greyfriars Bobby. In a very old section of the city is a graveyard set aside for the public by Mary, Queen of Scots, and attached to the church which was the first one of the Scottish Presbyterian Church to install an organ. In the ancient street, that skirts the graveyard, just where half of it slopes down to a level, and the other half slopes up, there is a quaint fountain surrounded by the bronze figure of a little terrier. A lonely old man whose sole companion this dog was for many years, died and was buried in Greyfriars cemetery. The dog, faithful to his memory, followed him to the grave and refused to be drawn away. The keeper was a kindly man who took food to the dog, and gradually won his trust, so that Bobby eventually went to live with the keeper and spent his days around the grave. One day Bobby was found dead above his master and the Baroness Hurdett-Conte, hearing the pathetic story erected the fountain to commemorate it.

Like the poor old Scotsman who would never have been heard of in history except for his faithful dog, King Edward, too, had a faithful companion, a little terrier named Caesar who didn't know his master was a king, but only knew that he was a kind creature who rubbed his head behind his ears, and greeted him in a delighted voice whenever Caesar, tail wagging and expressing his welcome in short shrill yelps, jumped about his knees in his rare hours of leisure. Caesar loved to stroll about with him, or to curl up at his feet before the fire. Poor little Caesar grieved when the king died and he was allowed to march behind the great casket in the streets of London when the famous folks of all the lands gathered to do homage to the Peace-maker. It is curious now to recall that the Emperor Kaiser, the nephew of the dead king was indignant at the sight of the pathetic little figure trailing so forlornly along the road, and de-

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clared it was the first time he had been asked to walk behind a dog!

One of the tales which has come out of the old land to fascinate and enthrall children is the story of Geleert, whose grave is a place of pilgrimage in the Welsh hills to this day. Llewelyn was a Welsh Prince who had married a daughter of King John. He had one little son to whom he was passionately devoted. King John had given Llewelyn a great bound named Geleert, who used to

accompany the Prince on his hunting trips around Snowdon, and up and down the valley of the Gwelydd and through the great and wildly beautiful pass of Llanberis. One day Llewelyn went to hunt, but could not find his faithful dog. He was uneasy most of the day, and on his return was horrified to see Geleert smeared with blood. His horror struck a responsive terror into the dog, who cowed at his feet. Llewelyn, now thoroughly alarmed and frantic for his child entered his home and found everything in chaos, the cradle overturned and no sign of the boy about. In a sudden fury, he drove his sword into the heart of Geleert, believing the dog had devoured the child. Immediately afterwards he discovered the child unharmed near the body of a great wolf which Geleert had slain. In remorse Llewelyn buried the dog near the banks of the Gwelydd and erected stones at his head and feet. To-day the grave remains in a meadow, sheltered by a few trees. There is a broad path worn from the highway to the grave

by visitors who go to see the curious memorial of a dog's unhappy story.

The massive St. Bernard dogs are usually held in high regard because of the courage and devotion of their forefathers, the brave dogs who saved so many lives in the passes of the Swiss Alps more than a century ago before the advent of railways. There was a band of monks who devoted themselves to the rescue of unfortunate travellers, who in those days were forced to go on foot across the snowy Alps. They bred a specially strong kind of dog, selected from the litters the very best of the breed, giving away or selling the others who were much in demand because of the romantic story of their origin. These latter dogs originated the strain in England. The dogs were trained to

hunt for men in the storms, and usually went about their work in pairs, each carrying under his collar a small wooden case containing food and wine. When some unfortunate traveller was discovered, one dog went back to the monastery for help, and the other stood on guard. After digging the snow away from the man, if he was unconscious, the dog would spread his great body over him so that warmth would bring a return to life. The most famous of these dogs was Barry who died in 1815 after helping in the rescue of forty-two people. Barry was mounted and placed in the Museum at Berne.

B.C.'s Forest Fires Bill

VICTORIA, B.C., Dec. 16.—It cost the provincial government \$818,712 to fight forest fires in British Columbia this year, according to official figures released by Chief Forester P. Z. Cavershill. This is by far the largest amount ever expended by the government on this account.

The increase in the fire hazard is said to be partly due to the expansion of logging operations. In 1910, when fire fighting cost only \$210,000, there were 350 logging camps in operation. In 1924, however, there were 3,167 camps operating. Another explanation for the growing menace is also to be found in the fact that the number of automobiles in the province has jumped from 1,026 in 1910 to 54,799 in 1924.

The careless smoker and camper, however, were blamed for hundreds of serious fires during the past season by Major C. S. Cowan, chief of the operations branch of the provincial forest service. Mr. Cowan instanced one fire caused through careless smoking which wiped out ten million feet of timber.

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