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SIDE TALKS.

By Ruth Cameron.

CAN THERE BE A GREATER MISTAKE?

"But I'm so afraid that if I do I'll regret it." A neighbor of mine has been hesitating on the verge of an important purchase for several weeks. Two or three times she has almost committed herself and then she has drawn back at the last minute. It isn't that she has any good reason to doubt the value of her purchase. It is only that it is an important step and that she is temperamentally afraid to take it. And when anyone asks her why she hangs back, she says the words I have quoted above.

"But I'm so afraid that if I do I'll regret it."

It's a natural and universal fear, isn't it? A Joy Killer and a Mistake Breeder. There are none of us who haven't felt it sometimes. And up to a certain point it's a commendable fear and saves us from hasty mishaps. But beyond that point it is a dangerous fear, a joy killer, and a mistake breeder.

As I look backward it seems to me that it is the things I haven't done that I regret more bitterly than those I have. There is a certain neighborhood. I almost hate to pass through because there is a house in it that always reproaches me. I could have bought that house eight years ago for

a figure that I knew was reasonable even then. The only reason I didn't buy it was fear. To-day, well, I won't tell you how much more it is worth to-day than it was then, because I simply can't bear to try to estimate it. It makes me too mad at myself.

But prices might have gone the other way, you tell me and I might have been sorry that I bought it. Yes. They might have, but the price was reasonable even for those days and one must always take some chance.

But You Won't Get Anywhere If You Don't.

People who are always taking chances come to grief sometimes, of course, but it is equally sure that no one will get anywhere in life who does not take some chances. I've always loved that sentiment of Stevenson's, "We can forgive mistakes, but not even God can forgive the hanger-back."

It always seemed to me that phrase describes Roosevelt, and one whom I regarded as a spiritual ancestor of Roosevelt's—the disciple, Peter, who was always first to speak when Christ called.

It seems to me that if Christ cared more for one of his disciples than the rest it was for Peter. True, Peter did not call himself the disciple whom Christ loved, but there are many other signs that point that way.

We all need some of the Peter in us if we are going to be whole men. We shall make mistakes, of course. But could there be a greater mistake

than the fear to move lest one regret that move.

He Will Lose His Harvest.

"He that observeth the wind shall not sow and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap."

He will not lose his harvest by wind or rain, to be sure, but he will lose it just as surely.

Have courage for life if you want to get the best there is out of life. Of course regrets for the things we do are sometimes bitter, but not more bitter than our regrets for the things we didn't have the courage to do. Have courage for life, don't be afraid of it, and you will have your reward.

A Great Declaration Against War

The Methodist Episcopal Church of America Makes Some Notable Affirmations Against War, and Calls for a World Conference to End War.

A Great Decision.

A great decision against all war has been taken by the great Methodist Church of the United States at its recent General Conference at Springfield, Massachusetts.

The decisions reached were expressed in uncompromising terms, and will doubtless give a lead to other churches which have not yet declared war against all war.

"The final action on war taken by the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States," says the Christian Century, "is one which places this church unitedly against war, in what is by far the strongest and most definite pronouncement on the subject which this church has ever made, and one which calls for definite action of an immediate nature, in the calling of a conference of the religious forces

of the world to consider plans and methods for making the impact of united Christendom against the evils of war."

of the world to consider plans and methods for making the impact of united Christendom against the evils of war.

Qualified War.

"After two weeks of the most careful thought and study of the whole matter, the committee on the state of the church brought in a majority report, which was not only a strong statement of the responsibility of the church, but also contained the declaration that we as an organization separate ourselves from war and take no part in its promotion." This majority report is so brief and compact and clean cut that it is printed on page 588, and should be studied if one is to gain an idea of the significance of the war discussion.

"The minority report was exactly the same as that of the majority, with the all-important exception that it added a qualification to the separation of the church from war in these words: 'Unless indisputably in self-defence or in defence of humanity.' This exception, of course, is the usual loophole, leaving the way open for participation in any war, and weakens, if not entirely nullifies, any statement which can be made."

Not the Usual Thing.

"The majority report was adopted by the committee by a vote of two to one. When it was presented, and a vote involving a division was imminent, a strong movement developed, inspired principally if not wholly by those favouring the minority report, to have the whole matter committed to a special committee of thirteen, to be named by the bishops. To those who expected anything with real teeth in it to come from the conference, that looked like the end—the usual, weak-kneed evasion.

"A committee was appointed, but it did not do the usual thing. It presented a document which won the support of the entire conference, including those who were emphatically in favour of the majority report. It is an indictment of war which contains a practical and constructive step of large promise."

"The main points in the report are these:

"1. A determination to brand war by having America take the lead in an aggressive campaign to teach the nature, causes and consequences of war. The glorification of war must end.

"2. To hold the cause of peace dearer than party allegiance and tolerate no dilatory or evasive attitudes on the part of those who represent the church constituency.

"3. The President of the United States is asked to summon another conference of nations to consider more drastic reduction of armaments."

"4. A demand is made for the immediate entrance of the United States into the Permanent Court of International Justice. Participation of the United States in a league of nations will receive the active support of the church."

"5. It is proposed that the Methodist church assume responsibility and appoint a commission of twenty-five authorized and instructed to call a conference of the religious forces of the world to consider plans and methods for making the impact of united Christendom against the evils of war."

Stand Against War.

"Two points are particularly worthy of emphasis. The first is that the report contains one sentence which logically involves the strongest stand against war which any Christian may desire to take. That sentence is: 'Governments which ignore the Christian conscience of men in times of peace cannot justly claim the lives of men in time of war.' That is emphatically, in the literal sense of the word, a radical statement about war under which the most sincere Christian conscience can operate to the full limit."

"The other point is the appointment of a commission of twenty-five members authorized and instructed to call a conference of the religious forces of the world to consider the best plans and methods for making the impact for united Christendom against the evils of war. That proposal was taken in deep earnestness, and a commission will be appointed immediately. If such a conference can be called by the co-operation of many branches of the church of Christ, it will meet one of the most urgent of the world's needs in this hour."

"The whole course of the general conference in regard to war has given many reasons for encouragement. For one thing, it afforded a very definite check upon how far the sentiment against war throughout the churches of America has been growing at a rate never before approached. The Methodist conference indicates that that sentiment has been more widespread than any, even the most optimistic, had hoped. It is not merely in the minds of the leaders. It is permeating the entire church."

"In its proposal for a conference of all religious forces to challenge all bodies of Christendom to a co-operative endeavour which may prove a deciding step in Christian history."

rosgrain ribbon is a darker shade under the armholes and neckline of a one-piece dinner frock of crepe de chine. A wide panel at the side is looped at a low waistline.

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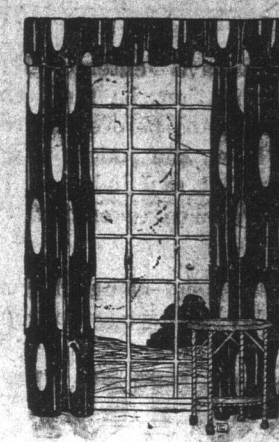
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