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SIDE TALKS.

By Ruth Cameron.

SIGNS OF SPRING.

I do not really love Spring.

As a season it has always awakened a sense of exasperation in me by the way it blows hot and then blows cold, advances a step and then retreats, promises and then flings its promises to the blustering March winds. Then, too, Spring always seems to me to have more melancholy than any other season, more poignancy of waking memories, more sense of loss as the years fly by, more of that eternal sense of unfulfillment which lies forever at the centre of even the happiest life.

But strange as it surely will seem to you, I do not love Spring itself. I do not love its mud and its rain. I do love the signs and symbols of Spring.

Pussy Willows, Hurdy Gurdies, Balloons, Marbles.

And by that I do not mean merely signs of growth in the woods and fields but all the signs and symbols of Spring supplied by both man and nature.

These are some that come quickly to my mind: Pussywillows for sale on the city streets; Muslin curtains fluttering at an open window, preferably with a pot of geraniums standing on the sill between.

The coming of the first hurdy gurdy and handorgan. The reappearance of the balloon man. Boys playing marbles in the school yard. A baseball nine forming in a vacant lot out of four or five boys usually.

A female it has always puzzled me at a "baseball nine" could be formed out of any number.

The Travelling Florist.

The coming of the travelling florist and the flocking out of housewives, dress and coatless in the April sun, look at the stock, to buy and to top for gossip across the fence or edge.

The first patterning in shadow on the ground of the new leaves on the trees that arch our Street.

Waking in the morning to the sound of the lawnmower (perhaps

that should be labelled "signs of Summer".

Supper Without Light.

That first night when we eat our evening meal without light. Do you remember what a great event that seemed in childhood? Somehow, whenever it comes again in the cycle of the year, I think of one year when, as we finished supper I looked out and saw the boy who lived next door coming across the lawn to play ping pong with us. It was a new game then and we played all the evening, even big brother joining in. It was a Friday and we were allowed to sit up later than usual and big brother sat down town for some candy and altogether it was one of those days that youth and a felicitous group and some little luxury make into gala days. The beautiful lawn has gone now, it is the site of an ugly house; ping pong is a forgotten game; and of the youngsters who laughed so easily that evening one laughs no more.

And that's what I mean by the poignancy of memories that wake in the Spring. Is it not the same in the Fall, you may ask? Not so much for me, somehow. Perhaps it is different with you.

The Executioner's Axe Used in Europe To-Day.

Denmark is the only European country which has retained public executions, and here the block and axe is still in use. Sweden, too, employs the headsman, but executions take place behind the prison walls, though twelve members of the public (representing the district) are legally invited to be present.

That part of Germany known as "Old Prussia" also finds a use for the axe, though here, again, in private.

In Bolshevik Russia the axe is frequently used, but unhappily all kinds of methods of inflicting the death penalty are in vogue there, and it cannot properly be said that beheading is the legal mode of execution.

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The Story of Buckingham Palace.

Few Royal palaces can boast a more interesting history than Buckingham Palace.

In a corner of the grounds still stands an ancient mulberry tree, which is reputed to have been planted nearly four hundred years ago.

In the time of the Stuarts the site on which the Palace now stands was known as the Mulberry Garden—not a garden in the centre of a crowded Metropolis, as it is to-day, but a garden within a garden.

James I. indulged in a very pleasant whim when he ascended the throne, and decided to encourage the growth and manufacture of British silk. By his orders thousands of young mulberry trees were imported into England.

Then the King gave by patent to Walter, Lord Aston, the charge of "the Mulberry Garden near St. James'" and waited for the success of his scheme.

However, all the efforts of Lord Aston and the silkworm experts failed, and the garden became a fashionable resort, or, as Samuel Pepys said, "a silly place, with a wilderness somewhat pretty."

Later it became more like a public recreation ground, though the rank and fashion of the time frequented it and it maintained its origin Royal patronage. We learn from John Evelyn that it was "the best place about the town for persons of the best quality to be exceedingly cheated at." With that reputation we leave the Mulberry Garden, and soon find the builders laying hands upon it.

Arlington House, which was built on its southern borders, was the residence of Henry Bennet, Earl of Arlington who may be remembered as one of the famous "Cabal" Ministry under Charles II. He was the man who is reputed to have brought from Holland the first pound of tea that was ever imported into England, and we may reasonably suppose that the first cup of tea made in this country was drunk with due solemnity where Buckingham Palace now stands.

Arlington House (writes Miss M. C. Carey in her book, "Princess Mary") was demolished in the year following the accession of Queen Anne, and the site changed hands, being bought by John Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham, who built a red-brick mansion upon the site.

Built for a Sovereign.

It was not until the reign of George III, that the house came in for Royal approbation, when the King bought it for £21,000 and, removing from St. James's Palace, took up residence there with his Court.

In 1755 the property was settled by Act of Parliament upon Queen Charlotte in exchange for Somerset House, and became known as the "Queen's House."

It was not, however, until fifty years had elapsed that the present structure was built from the design of John Nash, by command of George IV. William IV. could not bear it; he disliked both the building and the situation, and would not live there, so that it was only when Queen Victoria came to the throne that the Palace once more became the Royal residence in London. It was said at the time that, as a Palace, it was the cheapest in the world, being "built for one Sovereign and furnished for another."

The grounds of Buckingham Palace extend over about forty acres, about five of which are occupied by a miniature lake; there is a splendid hard lawn tennis court, and in a corner of the estate stand the Royal mews and a riding school.

April is the month in which to prepare for storing eggs.

Exploring the Sky.

In order to be able to make accurate weather forecasts it is necessary to know what is happening in the upper parts of the atmosphere. A west wind recorded by ground instruments may be only a shallow current a few hundred feet in depth; the real wind, found at heights of 5,000ft. to 10,000ft. may be north, or even due east.

To explore these distant realms of the air use is made of small balloons fitted with specially-designed instruments of remarkable lightness. Sometimes the balloons are attached to cables, but if this is done the weight of the line prevents them from rising to very great heights.

A Novel Airship.

For work in the highest attitudes, the instruments are attached to a wooden bar, to each end of which is fastened a small balloon. One of them is inflated very tightly; the other is comparatively slack.

On reaching a great height the first balloon bursts owing to the thinness of the air. The second is not capable of sustaining the weight of the instruments, and sinks gently towards the earth. The observer notes the line of its fall through his telescope, and goes out to pick it up.

Then he examines the instruments. The altimeter tells him the height reached by the balloon, and from the barometer, thermometer, and other instruments that it carried aloft he obtains information regarding what is going on up in the sky.

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Woman Suffrage.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN ASKS FOR WOMEN M.P.'S.

Mr. Augusten Chamberlain has made an appeal to Unionist Associations throughout the country in search of candidates to send "some well-qualified women to Parliament for Unionist constituencies." This is part of his plan for attaching the newly enfranchised women voters to the Unionist Party. When the eligibility of women for Parliamentary seats was under discussion, some Members assumed that the House of Commons would be speedily swamped by an inrush of Members of the gentler sex. This has proved a complete fallacy. Lady Astor, on the Unionist side and Mrs. Wintingham, an Independent Liberal, are the only two women M.P.'s, and both succeeded to seats formerly held by their husbands. Political parties have been slow in adopting women candidates, and the electors, generally speaking, appear to prefer a man to represent them.—Weekly Times.

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Men's Burgundy Wine Calf Blucher. Goodyear welt soles, with rubber heels, round toe; full fitting; a smart Dress Boot at \$7.50.

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THE TIN CAN.

I've found it quite a prudent plan to use an old tomato can in which to keep my cash; I don't trust banks," said Sextus Salts, "for burglars break into their vaults, or else they go smash. So in a can I place my wealth, and hide the same, with proper stealth, where none may seek and find; defeating thus the robber's quest, I shed my rags and go to rest with a contented mind." One night some wicked robbers came, had men who played a sinful game, unmoral, brutal guys; they found old Sextus in his bed, and roundly smote him on the head, and rudely bade him rise. "We've heard about your old tin can," exclaimed a masked and stalwart man, "and we are here for bis; we haven't time for quip and gag, we haven't time to chew the rag, so tell us where it is." What followed is too fierce to tell; the neighbors heard poor Sextus yell two paragoning away; they saw him hobbling up the street on tortured legs and blistered feet, when came the break of day. The robbers got my old tin can," he wailed, "and I'm an also ran, a has been in the hole! They baked my feet, those men of sin, they burned the whiskers from my chin, and made me show my roll!" It is an old, yet truthful tale; and still poor boots will hide their kale in case, like Sextus Salts; but I am wiser than the push, and I have stored my hard earned cash deep in the banker's vaults.

Do you want your choice of a Suit or Overcoat—cut, made and trimmed in the Spurrell way—at almost your own price? We must have work, even if we don't get profits. SPURRELL the Tailor, 365 Water Street. jan30,6od,4

What "Taboo" Means.

Our language, though derived mostly from the Anglo-Saxon and the Latin, contains not a few words which were introduced from other tongues. Among these are several representatives of Malaysian dialects. The word "taboo" is one of them.

The word comes to us from New Zealand and the Polynesian tabu, meaning sacred. The tabu was a religious ceremony and could be imposed only by the priests, but it was applied to social and political affairs and to persons, places, and things.

Its prohibitions were far-reaching and were enforced under penalty of death. They applied to almost everything, from sacrifices to the gods to the methods of preparing food.

As hot water will get the grease, if a garment is greasy, it should be soaked in cold water before washing. Jelly roll is delicious sliced and served with whipped cream.

Farmers, Attention!

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