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If There Are Figures in It It Isn't So

This country makes a fetish of figures; a good statistician can win anything from a rich wife to a congressional appropriation; and the man who can unwind a few yards of figures is always listened to.

As a good liar can also be a good statistician, and as figures delight in doing their monkey tricks as much for a sinner as a saint, figures are a pitfall, but still we fall for them as sacred evidence.

For instance, it can be shown that the faster an automobile travels the fewer are injured. Five years ago there were about twice as many people killed and injured by autos, in proportion to the number of autos, as there are today; and in the last five years the speed limits generally have been increased 50 per cent.

A speed limit of 100 miles an hour, therefore, would be safer than one of 10 miles; the figures prove it.

A railroad can come limping into congress and prove by cold, inelastic figures that unless it cuts wages 30 per cent, and increases freight rates 40 per cent, it cannot possibly break even; and then along comes Henry Ford, and, despite figures and expert testimony, lowers rates, raises wages and makes a profit on his railroad.

There aren't 1 per cent of the farmers of this country who would not be proved bankrupt on any year's business if their business was figured as public service corporations figure when they are laying a basis for an increased rate; and yet not 1 per cent of the farmers of the nation are actually bankrupt.

Figures not only do not prove everything; they usually are set to doing their tricks to bolster up a lie; public service commissions would do well to remember this occasionally.

She Took Possession

She took him just a little too seriously while he stood up there with a crowd of people in back of him and the minister in front of him and mumbled those few words about—"with all my worldly goods I thee endow."

Straightway she began taking inventory and it seemed she never finished.

Under the head of "worldly goods" she counted the little cubbyholes of the old desk in the sitting room where he loved to sprawl, bills for the little knick-knacks he bought for himself, his letters from home and his pockets.

He didn't care so much about any of it except his pockets and the letters. He couldn't get any real pleasure out of standing in front of a car full of people and a brass conductor, searching the depths of every pocket for a nickel and then finding that he had none.

He didn't have a charge account with the street car company and it wasn't always easy to find a friend in the conveyance. Neither was the conductor cordial while he waited.

And then it wasn't very interesting to learn over the phone in the afternoon that there was a letter from his mother and that Nellie's two babies had the whooping cough and Fanny and Jim intended to get married in the fall, while Henry was planning to go to college.

And have the letter handed to him when he came home in the evening.

"Here's your letter, honey—don't you want to read it?" she'd gasp, while he muttered something about "warmed over stuff" and attacked the steak as the he hated it.

It wasn't that there was anything in his pockets that she shouldn't see or anything in his letters that she couldn't read.

But he missed the satisfaction of knowing that at least his rights were respected! And he missed the thrill of breaking the seal of the letter himself and sitting there imagining Fanny, that harum-scarum sister of his, trotting up the aisle with Jim and of thinking of the things he'd do for Henry while he was in college.

It was a good deal like stealing ice cream and handing him the empty saucer!

And that his wife—of all people—should be the thief!

Demon Rum's Fire

One dark night when the folks were all in bed, Old Mother O'Leary put a light out in her shed;

The cow kicked it over as she winked her eye and said: "There'll be a hot time in the old town tonight."

The Demon Rum, buried alive, must be chucking in his grave. For Chicago, preparing to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the great Chicago fire of October, 1871, discovers that the real cause of the blaze was a thirst for milk punch—and not Mother O'Leary's famous cow. The cow was secondary.

An old affidavit, signed by one William Dannel and just come to light, says the O'Learys and the Patrick McLaughlin family were joint tenants of a little house in what now is Chicago's "Loop" district.

A pretty cousin of the McLaughlins had just arrived from Ireland. This made a celebration in order. Milk punch, all agreed, would hit the spot. Same required milk.

But the cow must have been a prohibitionist. For when some one went out to milk her, she kicked the oil lamp over.

This simple little incident of family-booth started a blaze that destroyed 17,450 buildings. Seventy thousand persons were made homeless. The money loss was \$190,000,000—the biggest fire ever paid for a drink of firewater.

The Chicago fire was the greatest in the nation's history, with the exception of the San Francisco fire and earthquake in 1906.

In memory of it, October 9 is annually observed in most parts of the country as Fire Prevention day.

Theo a great disaster at the time, the Chicago fire did the United States a great good. For it started modern fire prevention methods and roused science to the inventing of fire-fighting equipment.

Outside of bucket brigades, there was practically no way of fighting fire when Chicago had its disaster in 1871. Only nine years had passed since Holly, at Lockport, New York, had installed the country's first water-works plant with water mains and fire hydrants.

It generally takes a great disaster to rouse people to adequate protection against possible danger.

The Chicago fire hastened, by years, the efficiency of fire-fighting equipment such as we have in Seattle today. It also hastened the installation of fire escapes, protective laws, and modern fire-proof construction.

Safeguards, however, without the exercise of human caution, cannot prevent all fires any more than accidents.

During the last 12 months, the nation's fire losses have averaged nearly \$1,000,000 a day.

Fully half of these are preventable by such simple precautions as handling matches and gasoline with care, and not throwing lighted cigar stubs where they may start a blaze.

Like the Chicago fire, most conflagrations start from simple things. Keep this in mind. Be cautious with flame and the things that cause it.

Fortune smiles on folks who smile first.

Hasty patterns are turning men's heads.

Some men rise by airplane; others by plain air.

Poems for your ScrapBook

From Harper's Magazine

MARINERS

BY DAVID MORTON

Men who have loved the ships they took to sea,
Loved the tall masts, the prows that creamed with foam,
Have learned, deep in their hearts, how it might be
That there is yet a dearer thing than home.

The decks they walk, the rigging in the stars,
The clean boards counted in the watch they keep—
These, and the sunlight on the slippery spar,
Will haunt them ever, waking and asleep.

Ashore, these men are not as other men:
They walk as strangers thru the crowded street,
Or, brooding by their fires, they hear again
The drone astern, where gurgling waters meet.
Or see again a wide and blue lagoon,
And a lone ship that rides there with the moon.

LETTERS TO EDITOR

Infantile Paralysis Epidemic

Editor The Star:
I desire to express my appreciation to The Star for the way in which you presented the facts of the epidemic of infantile paralysis in the state of Washington. It has gotten before the people

the fact that early precaution and diagnosis are necessary, and I am sure that the article will be of untold value in helping us control this epidemic. Yours very truly,
PAUL A. TURNER, M.D.,
Director of Health,
State of Washington.

Some Figures on the Schools

Editor The Star:
I wish to thank you most heartily for your convincing editorial, "More for Moonshine than for Kiddies" in your paper of Thursday, Aug. 18. I have been out of the city, hence my delay in writing you.

The statistics regarding teachers' salaries in Seattle which were given in the letter to which you replied, were so inaccurate as to be humorous. Instead of there being only 300 teachers in Seattle, a city of 315,000 population, there are over 1,300. Also, if Mr. Asprey would take the time to gather a few facts on the salary question from other cities he would find that many cities have a much higher salary schedule than Seattle. New York city has a grade maximum of \$3,150; Cleveland, \$2,850; Denver, \$3,000; Milwaukee, \$2,400; while several of the smaller cities of New Jersey have a maximum far above the Seattle maximum. The high school schedule in these cities, with the exception of Denver, is several hundred dollars more.

The following facts might be interesting: According to statistics gathered by the U. S. bureau of education, the average amount spent for the education of each child in the U. S. is only \$252, ranging from \$62 in Alabama to \$627 in Montana. In a country in which we blithely acknowledge that all things wait on education, the public health, material prosperity and wealth, social purity, civic righteousness, political wisdom, the strength and safety of state and nation and finally the individual welfare and happiness of the people, we have "recklessly" spent \$252 per child that the attainment of all these things may be assured. Since less than 70 per cent of all the money expended for public schools goes for instruction, only 175 of the \$252 was paid for actual instruction.

The total amount paid in salaries to teachers in the public schools in 1918 was \$402,284,516, while in 1920 the people spent for luxuries \$22,700,000,000, more than 22 times as much as they spent on education only two years before. So when we think of our local situation let us get right down and analyze it. If we compare the expenditures for education in Seattle with those for other things, the amount will be negligible. We think we believe in education. If we do, let us face the fact that the

THE WARS OF THE ROSES

BY DR. WM. E. BARTON

SUPPOSE that the Wars of the Roses were just as bloody and cruel as any other wars, but they never seem so to me. They emerge from the welter of old time conflict with a suggestion of merry heroism and picturesque competition.

Two sets of blood relations fighting each other have usually shown all the bad blood of their mutual inheritance; but two armies of cousins going into battle wearing roses, the has never seemed to me so terrible as I know all war must be.

My ancestors wore the Red Rose. They were of the house of Lancaster. And when they had properly whipped the house of York, they laid upon their subjugated enemies this requirement, that they should bring once a year to the ruling monarch of the house of Lancaster, "a white rose in the time of roses."

That was the prettiest mark of submission I know anything about. The white rose was the rose of York; they had it, and could easily bring it. The time of year was the time of roses; the requirement involved no humiliation, no hardship, just a sign of loyalty.

I could wish that all wars had ended with a little talk of retaliation. Those old ancestors of mine were level-headed as well as generous. There have been no wars since between the houses of York and Lancaster.

I am reminded of this because this summer I was in Portland, Ore. enable them to do their work joyously with reasonable freedom from financial care. Sincerely yours,
AGNES S. WINN,
2517 10th ave. W.

If any city has roses, Portland has them. And Portland is generous with them. We had not been in our hotel an hour before we had flowers sent in by friends.

I love the red rose. Thus am I true to my colors, and to my long-cherished family tradition. The red rose is our rose. But we have an eye to the beauty of other kinds as well. Now and then we like "a white rose in the time of roses."

That way of ending a war was not only pretty but permanent.

Germany exacted a terrible indemnity from France in 1871. France paid it. Never for a day did she forget what Germany had done to her, or fall in her determination to even the score. And I cannot help wondering if other nations have not made the same mistake before and since.

I am no sentimentalist in such matters. The terrible losses caused by war must be made good, and the nation that loses must pay its share, and to the full limit of its ability. But is there not a possibility that the more heavy the indemnity exacted the more terrible will be the revenge a generation or a century later?

Those old red-rose ancestors of mine knew better. They whipped the white-rose folks, and they intended there should be no misunderstanding the fact. So they demanded and collected from the defeated house of York this indemnity that ended forever all wars between them—a white rose, once a year, in the time of roses.

From the Congressional Record

MAYBE OULJA IS AT THAT!

We cannot afford to give away these (shipping board) ships or to sink them or to tie them up. We can not afford to junk this great enterprise. The man who advocates it does not represent the true sentiment in this country, and if there is any strong sentiment created to that effect I shall be convinced that "B. B." is right when he says that "we have come upon a time when electricity is doing our working, gasoline is doing our playing, and the ouija board is doing our thinking."—Senator Fletcher (D.) Florida.

WHO'S GOT THE BONE?

The trouble is, I will say to the senator, that nobody knows where the bone is in this shipping board business. It is not a bone; it is a cavity.—Senator Glass (D.) Virginia.

IT PROBABLY WAS

Rep. Focht (Rep.), Pennsylvania—By tobacco and cotton interests, does the gentleman mean the growers and producers?

Rep. McFadden (Rep.), Pennsylvania—No; these loans (by the war finance corporation) are made particularly under section 21 of the law to those engaged in the export trade.

Rep. Focht—Surely, not to the tobacco trust or any institution of that kind?

Rep. McFadden—I could not say to whom the loans were made, but they were made for the purpose of exporting tobacco, and my recollection is that it was tobacco from the producing sections of Kentucky.

Try This on Your Wise Friend
Can you make a popular proverb of these letters:
beeeehhllnoopssstttty?
Answer to yesterday's: \$30.

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THE TREATY OF PEACE

BY "INDIAN" MILLER

In the olden days Indians often made treaties of peace and alliances. These were nearly always the conclusions of powwows.

I recall a treaty of peace that was made between a Pueblo tribe of western New Mexico and one of the Apache tribes, at the end of a bloody war.

When the time for the powwow came the representatives of both tribes met at the place previously fixed upon. There were perhaps fifty from each tribe. The parties approached to within fifty paces of each other. It was seen that every man was armed to the teeth. Each one had a rifle and a fall belt of ammunition.

Every man squatted upon the ground except the head chief of each tribe. These two chiefs advanced to the middle of the space intervening between the two parties and entered into conversation in a low tone.

Meantime the two parties bandied jokes with each other, laughing heartily at them, no matter who the jokes were on. Looking back at that incident it seems very strange; men with loaded rifles held at the position of ready, joking with each other. Men who had always been bitter enemies.

By direction of their chiefs the parties drew near together, forming a circle, or rather, two semi-circles brought together at the ends. The debates began, the warriors from each side taking turns. Hot-headed young men almost succeeded in turning that powwow into a hand-to-hand battle. Ominous motions were made; the cocking of guns was heard; but old men and chiefs intervened.

The treaty was finally made; and men who had been enemies all their lives mingled freely. At the invitation of the Pueblo that party of Apaches accompanied their old enemies home to the Pueblo village; and as a token of confidence in the given word of an Indian they left their guns at various houses until they should be ready to leave. Then they scattered throughout the village, the Apaches without weapons but they were safe. They have ever since been friends.

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