

Through
THE
Looking
Glass

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If you're middle age or older, you can recall the emphasis placed on correct spelling when you came along in school. It didn't end in elementary grades, but remained important right up to the night you received your diploma.

This editor still winces when even simple words are mangled, but at such times we are reminded of a salesman who wrote the following business letter.

"DEAR BOSS. I seen this outfit which they ain't never bought a dime's worth of nuthin from us and I sole them a couple of hundred thousand dollars wuth of guds. I am now going to Chawgo."

Two days later, a second letter arrived at the home office, reading thusly: "I cum hear and I sold them half a milyon...." Both letters were posted on the bulletin board with a note appended by the company president.

"We bin spending too much time hear trying to spell, instead of trying to sel," wrote the president. "Lets' watch those sails. I want everybody should reed thees letters from Gooch who is on the rode doing a grate job for us, and you should go out and do like he does."

Which reminds us of the one about the man who got a job as sexton for a cemetery. His duties included cleaning off lots, when requested, but he had never learned to read and write and was unable to identify the lots by the tombstone inscriptions.

This brought on complications, and he was fired from his position. Years went by, and he became a highly successful business man, a millionaire, no less. During a television interview, when an award was being presented to him, a commentator raved about his phenomenal record.

"I don't mean to embarrass you," the announcer said, "but where would you be, pray tell me, if you had learned to read and write?"

"I'll tell you where I'd be," the honored gentleman replied, "I'd be raking leaves in that cemetery."

Those of you who happen to be baseball fans, and some of you who aren't, know that Dizzy Dean was once a pitching great for the St. Louis Cardinals. His feats landed him in the Baseball Hall of Fame at Cooperstown.

After retirement from the diamond, he was given radio and television contracts as a sports announcer because of his colorful way of conversing. This was in the midst of the Great Depression.

Anything but a scholar, Dean murdered the King's English every time he appeared at a microphone. This created constant consternation among PTA groups, and they complained bitterly that Diz was ruining the vocabularies of teenagers who listened to him regularly.

So vehement were the ob-

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"Winter Sports—Coasting in the Country," by Granville Perkins.
From *Harper's Weekly*, Feb. 17, 1877.