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Side Talks by Ruth Cameron

ARE YOU GLAD YOU CHOSE THIS ERA?



"Better than a few years of Europe than a Cycle of Calvary."

"This is the last night of the old year, the most wonderful year since the birth of Christ."

That was the opening sentence of one of the New Year letters that came to me.

It is true, isn't it? And what a tremendous thought! There have been many things in the last few years to disturb and upset and trouble the majority of us.

No man (except the utterly selfish, and hardly, he) has been able to live to himself alone. Day of us have known loss and sorrow, and even to those of us who have been supremely fortunate in escaping tragedy, discomfort and change have come.

The conditions of turmoil in the world have intruded themselves straight into our private lives and changed our plans and purposes and even our daily habits.

We have had to eat dark bread, have had to endure the cruel deprivation of one spoonful of sugar in our coffee, we have had to put three cent stamps on our letters, we have had to put up with one delivery a day from the grocery store that formerly sent its team back for a forgotten cake. It has, of course, been hard upon us.

The Only Other Era Comparable. But in the balance is this fact, we have been and are living in the most wonderful time in history with the exception of those thirty-two years of which, if one had been on earth, one might have met the greatest Man.

I do not refer in this statement solely to the upheaval which has shaken the world to its foundations, though, of course, that is the single colossal fact that signalizes this era, but to all the changes, the ferment, the possibilities of this age.

What the Man of Forty Has Seen and May See. Take a man or woman, say about forty years old, and think what he has seen and is likely to see. He has seen the development of the feminist era. It dawned before his day, but woman's economic development, which makes it commonplace for women to enter any line of endeavor, has taken place within the thirty years. He has seen suf-

frage changed from a jest to something which even its opponents admit will soon be a universal reality. He has seen tremendous changes in the relations of capital and labor (and what he may see along these lines destiny alone knows.) He has seen the development of the aeroplane from the days when it was a crank's dream, classed with perpetual motion, through the days of the first tentative flight, to-day. And what he will see further in this line in the rest of his lifetime, is one of the things that makes me think life very interesting. He has seen the greatest war in history. And perhaps, who knows,--he has seen the end of war.

One Trap--One Mouse.

Breakfast-time was still a poem to the young couple, when he would sit and beam as she poured out the coffee daintily.

"Darling," she said, when they had finished, "will you do a little business for me in town to-day?"

He vowed he would do anything. "I want a mouse-trap," she told him.

"Another, pet?" he asked, in surprise. "Why, I bought you one only the day before yesterday!"

"I know you did, darling," she cooed; "but there's a mouse in that one!"

"Coughs and Colds."

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Train Stopped by Butterflies.

That insects should be able to stop a train seems, at first, impossible. It has, however, happened in several instances.

Just lately, a train going from Rome to Avezano, in Italy, was stopped by a dense cloud of locusts, which settled on the wheels and on the rails in swarms. As the train advanced it squashed thousands of them to a pulp, and this made the rails so slippery that the train could not go on.

What is perhaps more extraordinary is that a train should be stopped by worms. This has happened on the Warwick-Killarney line, in Australia. A train suddenly stopped dead, and nothing could be done to re-start it. The wheels slid round, but would not advance. The rails were found to be covered with worms, and, as in the former case, when quashed by the wheels they made the line too slippery for the train to go forward. This has also been known to happen in Europe, on the line from Brunn to Prague.

In Italy swarms of white butterflies have been known to settle on the railway lines, and so make transit extremely difficult.

Perhaps the most amusing case on record comes from French Guinea, where thousands of little green frogs suddenly took up their abode on a railway track.--Tit-Bits.

The Brotherhood of Man.

"The Universal Brotherhood of God and the Universal of Man," has been a popular phrase for some years. The persistent repetition of the phrase has accomplished some good, although it merely expresses a socialistic dream and has no foundation in fact. It possibly does help to keep an ideal before the people, but it is an ideal which frequently receives some severe shocks. It is true in one sense only, but it is generally applied in the wrong sense. It is quite proper to use the term as applicable only to man as a physical being, but it should always be so qualified.

The use of this popular phrase in a general way suggests a condition which does not, never did, and probably never will exist, at least not in this age. The phrase has no foundation in history, present day conditions, human nature, or Holy Writ. It does suggest a millennial condition which a large section of the human race hopes may some day be realized, but the ideal has no support in actual present day conditions. Before the wonderful dream is realized some great transformation will be necessary.

It is a grave mistake to suggest that "the Universal Brotherhood of God and the brotherhood of man" expresses a Christian doctrine. There is not a sentence in the Bible which conveys the same idea. It is true that God "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on the face of the earth." That is true because all men are "born of the flesh." It is, however, stated with equal clearness that all men are not "born of the Spirit." In a spiritual sense, then, which is the Christian sense, there is no such thing as "the universal brotherhood of man." From a Christian standpoint, Christians only belong to "the family of God," and they alone are brothers spiritually. Strife and war, therefore, does not injure the Christian position, as some people delight to suggest. If all men and women were Christians there would be no war. But they are not. Wars and rumors of war, therefore, instead of weakening the Christian position actually support it, and merely prove that in a spiritual sense, at least, there is no such thing as the "universal brotherhood of man."--The Sentinel.

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The Price of Perfidy.

Greece is dealing sternly and promptly with her betrayers. It is true that false "Tino" is out of reach of the law, but the crew of minor traitors who courted his favor are being brought to book one by one. Colonel Metaxas, who surrendered the frontier fortress in Macedonia to the Bulgarians, who appeared before it in 1916 with a supporting detachment of German troops, has been tried, convicted of high treason and sentenced to death.

Another disgraceful affair was the surrender by General Doumanis of the 4th Greek army corps, stationed at Kavala, to the enemy, on the flimsy excuse of seeking protection from the Allies. The Greek soldiers were disarmed and taken to Germany, as if they were a gift from "Dear Tino" to Brother Wilhelm. Now Doumanis, found guilty as a traitor, is sentenced to penal servitude for life. Other members of the former Greek General Staff, convicted of having acted in behalf of German interests during the earlier part of the war, have received sentences commensurate with their disloyalty.

"Tino," the most perfidious villain of all, goes scot free for the present, but he is a man without a country, and execrated by the whole world. His name goes down to history in infamy.--Morning Chronicle.

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