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Side Talks by Ruth Cameron

"THAT'S DIFFERENT."



A friend came to me the other day in a bitter mood. Her husband had put her in a very hard position. Having accepted a week-end invitation from friends of theirs (and especially of hers) he had changed his mind about wanting to go. And she, he said, must get him out of it. They were people to whom she felt under obligations; she didn't think his reasons for changing sufficient; and she rebelled at the idea of lying, as she would have to lie, to spare their feelings.

That Made Her Maddest.

"And the most maddening part of it is that last summer when some of his friends had invited us for an evening—not a week-end, mind you—and my dearest girlhood friend, that I hadn't seen for four years, was going to be in town that one evening, and I wanted him to excuse me, he was awfully indignant and made such a fuss that I finally gave it up."

"Why don't you remind him of that and how he felt then?" I suggested. "Do you know what he'd say?" "No." "That's different." "But how could he say it was different? I should think it was almost the same, except that you had more excuse."

It's Always Different in His Case.

"So should I," she said, "but I know just as well as I know the sun will rise to-morrow morning, that he will say that. And he will have some reason to give and there won't be a blemish on his chance of my making him admit anything different. He's hat way if you try to switch a thing round and apply it to him as he applies it to other people. He can always tell you a reason why it's different in his case. I never yet knew him to admit that there wasn't some circumstance which made it different from him. And sometimes in spite of all his good points, and I know he is a lot of them, it seems as if I could not stand that."

Did you ever know anyone with that form of mental blindness, Reader-friend? And if you have, did you ever know anything more exasperating? It gives one such a feeling of helplessness, such a feeling of not being able to get at a person.

Things Sometimes ARE Different. Of course things sometimes are different. Circumstances do alter cases, and there may be times when what looks like a reversed condition is not one at all. (It may even have been true in the case of this tale of woe that the woman was unconsciously suppressing or colouring facts in a way that altered the aspects of the case.) And there are people who have a mental blindness in not being able to understand this. "I suppose the only thing one can do is to try very hard when one says 'that's different'—not to be swayed by personal feeling—and equally hard not to be swayed by personal feelings into unjustly resenting the other person's 'that's different.' Of course that does not save one from the other person's mental blindness, but after all one is not responsible for that."

A Militant Poet.

Gabriele d'Annunzio is held to be Italy's greatest living poet; but outside his own country he is not known so much as a poet as he is known as an agitator and adventurer, whose bold achievement has added one more to the many difficult problems Europe has still to solve.

The new kingdom of Jugo-Slavia desired to possess Fiume, the valuable port on the north-eastern Adriatic, and Italy wished to have it, and while the rival claims were being debated, the Italian poet, with a small volunteer army, seized and still holds the place.

Fiume is a most charming city. It is picturesquely situated in the Gulf of the Quarnero, on the slopes of the Julian Alps. Half of its 50,000 inhabitants are of Italian descent, and the other half of southern Slavonian origin. In the town proper, there is now an unmistakable preponderance of Italians. Nobody seems to be oppressed by cares, except the "Comandante," d'Annunzio, who must provide the population with food,

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money—and poetry. The works in the harbor are lulled to sleep, and industrial establishments are at rest. The workmen get for their support 13 liras (equal to \$2.20) a day from the workmen's relief fund and the 500 legionary soldiers receive the same pay as the regular troops of the Italian Army.

D'Annunzio, poet, novelist, dramatist, politician, and soldier, was born at Pescara, Italy, in 1864.

He enjoyed excellent educational advantages, graduating from the University of Rome. In 1898 he was elected a member of the Italian Chamber of Deputies, and when Italy entered the war he joined the forces, served at the front, and was wounded in action. When peace was being negotiated he launched the Fiume adventure, the end of which is not yet within sight.

As a writer he has been very industrious and some of his poetry ranks high. His plays, too, have been successful.

A blue taffeta bodice has the design outlined in silver. For girls' dance frocks, the large side easels of full are popular. The French use the high collar extensively.

Dresses for street wear resemble coats.

COST OF MOTORING.

Excuse me while I shed a tear and raise a loud lament; the price of tires has climbed, I hear, some twenty-five per cent. I have to buy four tires this spring, or run her on the rims, and I am saddest when I sing these cost-of-scorching hymns. The cost of gas is rising, too, the gas that runs our boats; and every time my car goes "choo!" it burns up seven groats. And oil is going up with gas, the oil we all must buy; and so I pause to say "Alas!" and say it with a sigh. And sparkplugs cost a bone a throw, that once were fifty cents; and motorists, submerged in woe, are sulking in their tents. They gaze upon the wind-swept hill they can't afford to mount, for every mile runs up a bill that breaks their bank account. They view the long inviting road where they would like to speed, but they are chained to their abode by cost of things they need. They cannot tour the moorland track, or journey anywhere, unless they're willing to get back to Shanks and his old mare.

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The New Greek Regent.

(From the Boston Transcript.)

The selection of Admiral P. Contouriotis by the Chamber of Deputies as regent of Greece marks clearly the general control which Premier Venizelos exercises over political developments in Greece. Contouriotis is the present Minister of Marine, and in 1916, as commander-in-chief of the Greek Navy, he stood staunchly by Venizelos in the efforts which the latter made to have Greece join the cause of the Allies. An influential member of the party opposed to former King Constantine, Contouriotis may be expected to block any attempt of the Constantine faction to restore the deposed monarch to the Athens throne. It is by no means certain that Prince Paul, younger brother of the late King Alexander, will accept the conditions which go with the offer to him of the Greek throne. These conditions are very definite and specific and are designed to render impossible a future claim to the throne on the part of the deposed Constantine, or any candidate put forward by the Constantine faction. If Prince Paul does accept the Greek throne he will do so only after a formal renunciation has been made by Constantine and Prince George, Duke of Sparta, of their respective claims. These are the conditions which the Greek Government, in accordance with the orders of Premier Venizelos, has attached to its offer of the Greek throne. In formulating these conditions, the Greek Government is inspired by no feeling of animosity towards Prince Paul. It is merely registering the will of a majority of the Greek people, who want definite assurance that the Germanophile Constantine faction have been eliminated, once and for all, as a potential factor in Greek politics.

Cigars and Character.

A man's character may be told from the way in which he smokes cigars, says an enterprising scientist. He who smokes his cigar deeply in his mouth is of a nature resolute, skeptical and abrupt; one who bites off the end of his cigar is careless, thoughtless or listless. When the cutter is used to nip off the end the smoker may be considered a man of caution. The user of the amber holder is a delicate person. The man who smokes his cigar to the end is a faithful friend, a constant husband and of a persevering nature. If one is in the habit of throwing away the cigar when only half smoked, he is in danger of being considered fickle, blasé and a trifler.

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MUTT AND JEFF

MUTT MEANS WELL BY JEFF, BUT WHAT'S THE USE!

—By Bud Fisher.

