

Slackers Are Not Popular Among the Quakers

Though Exempt from Fighting, the Friends Are Serving in Many Ways to Win War—Men in Red Cross, Women Knitting

A GOOD Quaker in the United States today is one who, because of his exemption from actual fighting, feels that he is in honor bound to do twice as much for his Government in other ways as he would do were he not exempt. That is the definition of a good Quaker by a Quaker, Robert Cromwell Root, Pacific Coast Director of the American Peace Society. Mr. Root recently arrived in Washington after a trip across country, in the course of which he attended many yearly meetings of the Friends in States of the Middle West. He gave to all of these meetings the above description of what a Quaker should be in wartime, and at each of them the definition was received with approval and enthusiastic response. They also approved another definition, which was that the worst slacker in the country was the Quaker slacker, the citizen who took advantage of the country's willing exemption of him from bearing arms to avoid all other forms of war service.

Mr. Root talked to fifteen or twenty thousand Quakers all told, and they, as delegates to the various meetings, represented about 125,000 more. He found no slackers. He found no group that was not doing its utmost in the way of work or money contributions to serve the country in its war against Germany. At every meeting that he attended there were prayers for the American soldiers in France and for those who are going there. In other words, the attitude of the Quakers of America in this war is that of the American Peace Society, to which most of them belong. They know real peace when they see it because it has been the chief aim of themselves and their ancestors since the days of George Fox. Practically none of this body of non-combatants has been lured into the mushroom bogus peace societies or into the German propaganda camouflage peace societies that have sprung up in all parts of the United States in the last three years.

It was in the national headquarters of the American Peace Society at Washington that Mr. Root told the story of his trip across the States in the interest of his country. This is one peace headquarters in America that the ordinary, loyal American citizen may enter without a guilty sense, as he turns the door knob, that he is doing something either seditious or ridiculous. In the first place, it does not have to explain itself or prove an alibi. As it was organized in 1828 there is no suspicion that it was founded to help the Kaiser. President Wilson has renewed his membership in it since America went into the war. Arthur Deerin Call, the executive director of the society and editor of its publications, has his office liberally decorated with American flags. From his window he can look across the building tops and see the American flag flying from the staff of the War Department, and the sight does not irritate him. In fact, he pointed to the War Department flag the other day when he was asked what the American Peace Society stood for in the present crisis. "There it is," he replied, "over on that staff, the flag flying from the State, War, and Navy Departments. We stand for all of those departments. We stand for the White House, just this side of them, which you can't see from this window. We stand for all the things that you can see from this window and for all the things you can't see that symbolize the Government of the United States."

And Mr. Root, the Quaker, nodded acquiescence for himself and all his people.

Turning from his window, Mr. Call put the same thing in more concrete form by reading parts of his statement in a recent issue of the society's *Advocate of Peace*:

"It is not a matter of theory, but a matter of fact that the world has reached a situation where the judicial settlement of international disputes is for the time impracticable. After the Government to which we owe allegiance declared itself in a state of war, the judicial settlement of the disputes between this country and



Robert Cromwell Root,
Quaker Leader Who Helps.

Germany became not only impracticable but unthinkable. That we sense this does not mean that our opposition to war is abated. Quite the contrary. We are opposed to the war as President Wilson is opposed to the war. Furthermore, as practical people interested in concrete results, we are supporting the President in overcoming the German Government for the very purpose that the war may be ended.

"It is clearly within the realm of defensible duty that when our country is in danger we should rally to our country's support. Our country is in danger now. The inevitable conclusion, therefore, is, we must rally to the aid of our country now. To embarrass the United States now would be folly, if not treason. The abolition of war is an international job. Our puny, personal quibbles have little to do with the abolition of war. International peace worthy of sensible men is a constructive and scientific international program. Individual and obstructive criticisms, especially at this time, are mostly personal, narrow, emotional and destructive. War is a universal disease. Our sentimental oppositions to this war constitute no remedy for war."

Again the Quaker from California nodded approval.

"They are the opinions," said Mr. Root, "that I found generally prevailing among the Friends throughout the United States. I urged them all to do everything possible to help in all activities for the aid and comfort of the troops, to co-operate with the Government in its food conservation program, to join the Red Cross, to buy Liberty bonds. I found that they were already doing all of these things. Quaker women everywhere are knitting and making bandages for soldiers, collecting books to be sent to the camps, and aiding the Y. M. C. A. in its work among the men in the armies.

"The biggest single effort of the Quaker is, perhaps, the work of the Friends' Service Unit for reconstruction in France. We already have contributed large sums for that and will make it half a million or more. Quakers have already gone to France as the representatives of this unit and are living there at their own expense and working without

any compensation whatever in the rebuilding of homes and the restoring of gardens and vineyards. Other Quakers are going soon to join them. Such Friends as Dr. Rufus M. Jones, Professor of Philosophy at Haverford; Isaac Sharpless, Dean of the Haverford Graduate School, and Dr. Walter C. Woodward, Secretary of the Friends Five Years' Meeting, are directing the work of this Service Unit.

"The Quakers of the country have gone into these activities without the slightest hesitation or doubt as to the propriety or consistency of their service. They all seem to feel instinctively that a double obligation is laid upon them to render what service they can in the ways that are not barred to them by their belief. They welcome the opportunity to show that a man who may not bear arms to kill another man can still be loyal and useful to his country. They do not condemn those who are bearing arms. On the contrary, they applaud the soldiers for their courage and they pray for them. They give to the men who can fight conscientiously full credit for honesty of conviction.

"Quakers, in all their meetings, not only pray for our own soldiers but for the cause of the Allies. We have been for the Allies from the beginning of the war in 1914 because the thing that the Allies are fighting to destroy is abhorrent to Quakers. We want the destruction of the German idea.

"Of course, Quakers want peace, but it must be a durable peace. We are not interested in a bogus peace that would soon lead to further war, and we are not deceived by the efforts of the German Government and its agents in this coun-

try and elsewhere to bring about a Berlin peace that would leave the Prussian autocracy in control of the fate of Europe and the world.

"We want a peace that will lead to general disarmament and the establishment of a world court, but we know that such a peace would have to be guaranteed on both sides by democracies, not by democracies on one side and by the present German Government on the other. In that respect, the Quakers of the United States are absolutely in accord with President Wilson. As between what Wilson stands for and what La Follette stands for, the Friends are with the President without the slightest question.

"Surprising as it may seem, we Quakers are optimistic right now in the midst of war, for we believe that this war is making for the peace that we stand for. It has demonstrated a great many things to the world that were not sufficiently thought about and appreciated before. It has shown that the old diplomacy, the diplomacy of the honest man who is sent abroad to lie for his country, has utterly failed, and that the world must come to the Golden Rule diplomacy of John Hay. With this awakening to the mistake of the past the people of the world will realize that they must qualify themselves for citizenship in their several States as they never have done before."