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, be he where and whatever he do is not actual fighting, feels that he is in honor bound to do twice as much for his Government as his brothers in arms. He does not neglect his duty, that is the definition of a good Quaker by a Quaker. Mr. Root, the Secretary of the American Peace Society, and the Chief of the American Peace Society, in Washington, after a year of labor in the course of which he attended many meetings of the Friends in this country, is of the conviction that all Quakers do not agree with this definition of what a Quaker should be in wartime, and that the majority of them have not been 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 man 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 135,000 men and women without any slacker. 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 he addressed 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 they know the chief aim of themselves as their ancestors did, that is the peace of the Gospel. For some time now it has been heard in the hush of the hush peace societies or the German Tramp 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-minded America that the ordinary, loyal American citizen may enter with a guilty sense, as he turns the door knob that is doing something either ludicrous or ridiculous. In the first place, it does not have to explain itself or pass any sort of annull. As was organized in 1828, there is no suggestion that it was founded to help the Kaiser. President Wilson has renewed his membership in it since America went into the war. Arthur Dean Clark, the executive director of the society and editor of those publications, has its office liberally decalcoated 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, that flag flying over the State, Navy, and War Departments. We stand for all of those departments. We stand for the White House and the 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. He gave a war the same thing that the same kind of American exceptionalism as the same thing 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 its judicial settlement of international disputes is for the time impracticable. After the Government to which we owe our existence has itself, in a state of war, the judicial settlement of the disputes between this country and any compensation whatever in the re-

building 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. Woolard, Secretary of the Friends Five Years' Meeting, are directing the work of the Service Unit.

"The Quakers of the country have gone into these activities without the slightest hesitancy 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 soldier for his courage and they pray for them. They give to the men who can fight con-

sequently full credit for honesty of conviction."

"For all these meetings, not only pray for our own soldiers but for the boys of the allies. We have been praying for the Allies from the beginning of the war in 1914 because the thing that the Allies are fighting for is more in the present as a German enemy. Our prayers are for the destruction of the German idea.

"Of course, Quakers want peace, but it must be a durable peace. We are not interested in a logan 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 Austrian autocracy in control of the fias of Europe and the world."

"We want a peace that will lead to permanent disarmament and the establish-

ment of a world court, but we know that such a peace would have to be guaranteed on both sides by democracies, not by de-


nocracies 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 Presi-
dent Wilson. As between what Wilson stands for and what La Follette stands against, the Friends are with the President without the slightest question."

"Surprising as it may seem, we Quakers are optimists 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 appreci-
ated before. It has shown that the old diplomacy, the diplomacy of the honest man who is worst afraid 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 present generation will realize that they must qualify themselves for citizenship in their several States as they never have done before."