

fairly. What a mistake! I lost a wife, a couple of years' time, and was partially disabled. To balance that I have gained a sense of understanding and of peace and contentment that nothing else would ever have given me.

I have learned patience—a patience seared in by the white-hot brand of the trenches. I believe in my fellow-man, for I have seen him die, and I know that he is better than I. I have learned charity, for I have had it bred into me by thousands of examples; not the kind of charity that gives what it thinks it can afford, but the kind that gives its very best and then shares the remainder with the next comer. I have learned not to judge by external appearances, for, as the boys say, "You never can tell." But the biggest lesson, and the hardest one to learn, that the war taught me was forgiveness. It is easy to preach; but to you who do not know what it is to be really wronged, what do you know of forgiveness, anyway? After the St. Mihiel drive I saw a chap from my home town dying from shrapnel wounds. One of his buddies, in halting words, was trying to frame an apology for some previous unkindness. Only twenty minutes from the grave, yet the lad turned around with a wan smile—"That's aw right, Ed. Say, we sure gave 'em hell, didn't we?"

Who can see these things and still decline forgiveness? Oh, I don't claim that the war made me perfect. I haven't quit smoking, nor playing cards, nor attending theaters. I still shoot pool, and I'd go to a baseball game on Sunday if I had the opportunity. I'm not a church member, and I don't lead a life that a minister would think is right. But I have confidence in my fellow-man; I know his trials, and I can sympathize without tingeing it with unjust criticism. If he does me a wrong, I can look on the act with understanding tolerance and not think too harshly of him. If he errs, I can understand; or, if I cannot understand, I can at least refuse to criticize and attempt to pass judgment. For I have learned that most of the trouble is with ourselves; the other fellow is generally right. Hats off to him!

MARTIN K. JAMES.

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

A MAN WITH A NEED

IN the war I lost myself and God, and found manhood and a greater Light. I played poker in the box car which carried me to the front, and read my Testament on the hospital train which took me to the rear.

To-day I am in love with life. Ambitions have become obscured in the keen pursuit of the pleasures of the present. Thank God the war is over! Ahead is life and love. Let me enjoy myself to-day, for yesterday was hell and tomorrow may be cloudy. And so, at least for the moment, the war has killed for me ambition.

And in the discard, too, is the fear of death. To me, up there at the front,

lacking food at times for days, casting precious sleep aside in the feverish preparations for the next assault, the idea of death seemed the mere stepping forward over an imaginary line drawn upon the sand. Life ended and death began at some unknown mark, and in my fatigue and exhaustion I felt the transition was not a fearful thing. To-day the thought continues. I look forward across the line at death, unafraid. I shall cross the line, and glance back at life with pity for my ignorance to-day, perhaps, but I do not fear the crossing.

But the greatest red-inked item in my ledger of life is my loss of belief in the traditional conceptions of religion. Having my pew near the front of the cathedral, wearing my fanciest clothes to church, public demonstrations by voice or action of my belief in His doctrines, are to me hypocrisy.

And so the war has brought me a need. I crave a religion, simple and unaffected, quiet and strong.

I hear a minister in whom I can find little to respect or follow, who has little in common with us "buck privates" in His army, and who knows practically nothing of our troubles and the things we knock against, reading words from his pulpit that hundreds of other ministers have monotonously recited, and I feel no urge. I find the need for a potent religion for strong men.

The war has left me kneeling by my bed, a better man, with a need.

Denver, Colorado.

D. B. ROBERTS.

A FORTY-YEAR-OLD FRESHMAN

BEFORE the war I was a steel-worker, making over \$200 a month. I was on the shady side of forty and had a family. When I tell you that I served under Fighting Bob Evans and Dewey in the old Navy you will not ask me why I "shipped over." I talked about ten minutes with my faithful wife (one arm around her and the other around the boy) and both, remembering the Lusitania, said "Go!"

The next day I went down to the steel mills for a settlement. At noon I enlisted and took out a \$10,000 policy from the Bureau of War Risk and at 4 P.M. was on my way to Philadelphia.

I came back from overseas disabled for the rest of my life. The prospect of returning to the mills on a rolling job at about \$500 per month was gone forever.

The Bureau of War Risk granted me a "permanent partial" disability and turned me over to the Federal Board for Vocational Training. The F. B. asked me what I wanted to take up.

Now comes the queer part of it all. I have always wanted to *write*; to buckle on the harness and go up against the magazines. Of course it is a far cry from the steel mills to the author of one of the "six best sellers"—you can rest assured that the representatives of the Federal Board tried to get that to soak into me, but I persisted that I was

game enough to try anything once. I won their approval to a liberal course in short-story and magazine writing at one of the best institutions in the United States—Washington University.

Eliminating all the trials of a forty-year-old freshman who had run away from an eighth-grade school in his teens and gone to sea, I will say that a few weeks ago I finished my first year under the jurisdiction of the Federal Board for Vocational Training. Furthermore, I have sold nearly every article or story that I have submitted to editors during that period—some of them were New York editors, at that. Some of my staid instructors want to know "how do you do it?" I tell them this: That I entered Washington University, handicapped as I was physically and otherwise, with the same determination that I had shown the day I stood with my arms about my loved ones and decided to risk all for them and the honor of our beloved country.

The war took away my ability to follow my old trade in the steel mills, but the misfortune (or fortune) of war, whatever you may wish to call it, gave me an opportunity to study for a career in the most fascinating game in the world, something that I have always wanted to study ever since I was a boy.

As a general summary I will say that, though disabled for life, I am happy in the thought that I helped to avenge the Lusitania and did my part to uphold the honor of the old flag; that I am permitted through the liberality of the Government to study the art of writing; that I may in time use this accomplishment in defense of my comrades of the war, if need be, and perhaps help mold the future of our country; and by the grace of an all-wise God was allowed to return and live in peace and happiness with my brave wife and boy, who really suffered more than I during those months of anxiety.

In conclusion let me add that my creed is optimism, always with a bright outlook to the future, and the dawning of a universal peace.

VERNE VICTOR BARNES.

Maplewood, Missouri.

PUBLICANS AND SINNERS

BEFORE the war my attitude on questions of morality was of a very Puritanical, uncharitable sort. To me a man who drank was wholly base; profanity condemned both men and women in my sight; even cigarette smoking lowered a man considerably in my estimation, while a smoking woman was hardly a human being to me; the idea that loose women could possibly possess any sense of right and wrong or be in any way worth while was never given lodgment for a moment in my brain. To me certain things were wrong and people who indulged in them for any cause whatsoever thereby forfeited any claim they might have to respect or to affection. The gambler,

the rounder, the lying beggar, the woman of the streets, the hot-tempered brawler, were all in the same category of the despicable lost to me.

Now I see things differently, and the change has been wholly due to my experiences and associations in the war. In the Army I found that hard drinkers and fast livers and profane-tongued men often proved to be the kindest-hearted, squarest friends one could ever have. I remember that our old supply sergeant was perhaps the most profane man I ever knew. He gambled immoderately and spent considerable time and money with fast women. Yet he it was who fathered the company war orphan whom we adopted. He it was who gave up his rest and sleep many a time to minister to our wants or to attend to the details of our comfort. He it was whose last cent was always the property of the man

who needed it as much as it was his own. He it is who is the most faithful friend I have ever had or ever will have.

Similarly, I knew women whom we would call "fallen" and indecent who nevertheless still sustained in their hearts all the kindness and loyalty and straightforwardness a woman can possess. More than one *cocotte* was ready to give her life for France or in the service of those who fought for France.

And so I came to change my idea of the good and the bad, until the ultimate result is that my test of man and woman is simply whether or not they are "on the square," loyal, kind, and ready to do unselfish service. For myself I do not care to indulge in the so-called vices, but the war has made me believe that these, after all, are not the true test of character. The drunkard is my brother and my friend if his heart is good. A

square gambler whose heart is kind and who can be a true, unselfish friend is as good as the best to me. No woman who has still the great ideals of loyalty and unselfish kindness will ever meet condemnation at my hands for our most condemned sin.

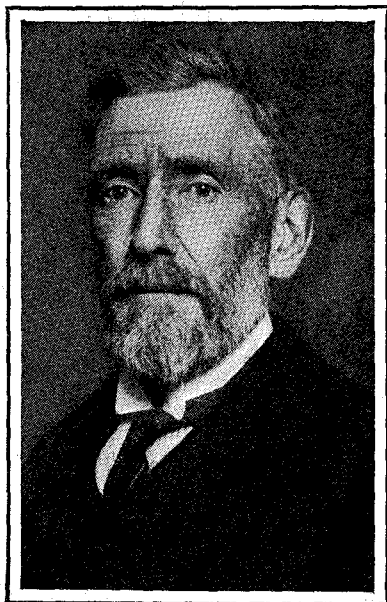
Whether to say that the war broadened my code or whether to say it burned out the inessentials and gave me a vision of the really worth while qualities of character I do not know, but that I am glad of the change goes without saying. Perhaps I am mistaken, but this change in me has, I believe, been one of the great things in my life. It has given me a vision of the meaning of the brotherhood of man that could have come from no other source than the associations thrust upon me in the war.

S. OMAR BARKER.

East Las Vegas, New Mexico.

CAN THE PEOPLE OF IRELAND UNITE?

BY ELEANOR MARKELL



(C) Paul Thompson
SIR HORACE PLUNKETT, SPONSOR FOR THE
DOMINION RULE PLAN

OF all the states of western Europe which I have visited since the war none was so prosperous the summer following the armistice as Ireland. In the south the farmers had reaped enormous war profits from the sale of their produce, and the fishermen in the previous year alone had cleared \$5,000,000. In the north her great industries, including the largest shipyards, linen mills, tobacco factory, and rope and cable works in the world, were running at maximum capacity.

There was on deposit in the banks and post offices of Ireland \$625,000,000. They were exporting more than they were importing.

With all these evidences of prosperity before them, Irishmen in a material way had little of which to complain. Politically there was a spirit of compromise

in the air, at least in southern Ireland, which was encouraging. All the leaders—Sir Horace Plunkett, sponsor for the Dominion Rule Plan; Stephen Gwynn, of the Center party; Arthur Griffith, the directing force of the Sinn Fein movement; and Ian MacPherson, then Chief Secretary for Ireland—were all honestly seeking grounds for agreement.

And if I found in the north, at Belfast, the same old determination to take no part in a unified government for Ireland with a Catholic majority, the same old cry that Home Rule would be Rome Rule, still labor in the north was co-operating with labor in the south, farmers from the north and south were working together in the co-operative societies, and a considerable Unionist block in Dublin was co-operating in business and municipal politics with Nationalists and Sinn Feiners, irrespective of party. It is true, everything was tentative. There was an atmosphere of apprehension; Home Rule was in the committee stage. What form would it take? The indications were that Ulster was to be favored above the rest of Ireland. Sinn Fein was openly rebellious; the other groups—the Nationalists, the Center party, and particularly Sir Horace Plunkett's party—were trying to bring pressure to bear on the Government to bring forward a compromise bill which could be agreed to by all.

But on the whole conditions in Ireland in 1919 were better, economically, politically, and the feeling was better than perhaps at any time in the English occupation of seven centuries; yet probably never worse than in 1920.

Contrast the prosperity of that year with the economic strangulation of the country resulting from the threatened paralysis of the transportation system brought about by the refusal of the railway men to run trains carrying soldiers and munitions. Contrast a week of my



Wide World Photos
ARTHUR GRIFFITH, THE DIRECTING FORCE OF
THE SINN FEIN MOVEMENT

stay in Dublin in 1919 with the closing week of November, 1920, when forty-eight persons were killed and seventy were injured in one forty-eight-hour period and the seventh day found Arthur Griffith, the moderate Sinn Fein leader, in jail along with other leaders of the republican movement. Ambushes, raids, reprisals, and street fighting complete the week's history. The larger places—Dublin, Belfast, Londonderry—were the scenes of mob violence, and the smaller towns in terror as a result of the vengeance taken by the police force, the Black and Tans.

The history of that designation, Black and Tan, throws a light on the situation. Mindful of the disastrous experience of 1913, when British regulars refused to fire on Irish rebels in Ulster, the British Government has not sent its crack