The Sun

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The Red Cross Week.

The Red Cross embodies and epitomizes all that is most admirable in human nature. It is the instrument by which every man and woman and child can make potent the noblest ambition humanity can cherish—the ambition to contribute materially and substantially to the alleviation of suffering and the improvement of the condition of others.

In every normal person this philanthropic motive is constantly operative. At a moment like this its call is irresistible. A world reduced to such sufferings as have never been known to us appeals unceasingly for aid. Our own, our sons who are offering their lives for us, their comrades in our defence, and the innocent victims prostrated before the invader, driven from their homes by the inevitable consequences of that defence, or crushed by the remoter reactions at home and abroad of a cataclysm that defies comprehension, stand in immediate and pressing want of the support and sustenance that we are privileged to give, and that can come only from us.

In the face of such need, the individual stands powerless, however great his heart, however deep his purse, however high his purpose. One man against the forces that seek to overwhelm the earth and submerge mankind beneath a flood of misery is impotent. Only through union of efforts can the woes that confront us be mitigated, and the task that is laid upon us, and that all of us acknowledge, be discharged.

But no man stands alone in these times, or can stand alone. Each must work with his brothers for the common good; and to make effective his desires, to enable him to do his duty, the Red Cross provides the simple and direct means. By utilization of the channels of helpfulness provided by its organization, by joining under its banner with his fellows, each individual, rich or poor, obscure or famous, powerful or weak, can put his strength, whatever its measure may be, to efficient use, and can gratify his ambition to aid not only others, but also himself: to buttress not only his own well being, but also the well being of his children that are to come after him.

It is more than a duty, more than an obligation, to give to the Red Cross. It is a priceless privilege. Every man should give, for the sake of others; no man, for his own sake, can afford not to give. Whatever he may give, it cannot be too much. The sum of each contribution must be limited only by the ability of the giver; he may give as much as he can, but it will not be all that is needed.

The goal set by the war committee of the Red Cross in its appeal, this week for money is $100,000,000. This great sum is required for the maintenance and extension of labors in behalf of humanity to which we of America have pledged our all. We cannot fail to raise the money, for failure would be confession of unfaithfulness to our most dearly prized ideals.

Luther Burbank Gets Into the War.

The announcement made by LUTHER BURBANK that after eleven years of toil he has succeeded in producing a wheat that will yield an average of forty bushels to the acre, may be grown from Hudson Bay to Patagonia, and is rich in gluten, is to be treated with the respect to which Mr. BURBANK'S astonishing record of accomplishments entitles any outgiving from the master of his wonder working hot beds and experimental fields. It sounds incredible, but Mr. BURBANK has the habit of compelling us to believe the unbelievable. The burden of proof rests on the doubters, not on him.

Measured by bushels raised to the acre, the United States has a low wheat yield, but the number of bushels produced in proportion to the men employed is said to be high. If fifteen bushels to the acre be taken as an average, Mr. BURBANK offers a strain that will increase the product of the land by 166 per cent. Whether the man power must be proportionately increased is not disclosed. We take it that Mr. BURBANK'S results are achieved by use of the most modern methods, and with an abundance of labor. But if farmers using their present equipment could get thirty bushels to the acre, our crop would be doubled, and instead of asking us to economise on wheat Mr. HOOVER would be urging us to eat it.

Mr. BURBANK has undoubtedly made provision for the protection of the seed and for guarding his name. Miracle wheats are a sore subject with American farmers. Practically every year clever swindlers seek to palm off alleged abnormal producers on them at high prices, and much good agricultural money has been wasted on overpraised seed, or on downright frauds. The Department of Agriculture has a long and disheartening list of these impostors.

But when Mr. BURBANK says he has a master key with which to unlock hitherto unavailable treasures in the bosom of the earth, we know he is not painting rainbows. He is not that kind of a man. And how the world does need that wheat!

On the Avenue.

None of the elements of sentiment and enthusiasm was absent from the pageant which yesterday began the campaign to win the second fund of the American Red Cross. The President of the United States was there to take part in this great demonstration in behalf of the organization of which he is the head, and to inspire with his always graceful presence both the marchers and the spectators.

Nature herself seemed to have caught the spirit of the hour and to have flung upon the city all her wealth of sunshine, of clear, soft air, and of that warmth which itself is a symbol of Red Cross ministration. No psychologist would have sold the weather for five million dollars.

Yet it is neither the President, nor the soldiers, nor the sunshine, nor the bands and the cheering that the people of New York will longest remember about yesterday. It is the vision of the women that will last. Men are only the frame of the Red Cross picture. Do what men may for the cause, when an artist comes to paint a Red Cross poster he sees only a woman. This is the woman New York saw yesterday; saw her in the gray crepe of army service, in the pongee of the tropics and in the familiar white of the hospitals. They saw her also in the women who will do the good work this week of asking for money to keep the work going.

When humanity pleads through women, as she did yesterday, who that saw can withstand her appeal?

The Vanished Life of Some Southern Georgians.

As THE SUN has referred occasionally, and quoted liberally from articles printed from time to time in the *Gazette* of Tifton, Ga., reminiscent of life some forty years ago in the Wiregrass region of the Empire State of the South, it is glad to see that these little classics, all from the pen of Mr. JOHN L. HERRING, the editor of the *Gazette*, have been put in book form. They are worth preservation. They appeared originally under the heading "Saturday Night," and the title of the collection is "Saturday Night Sketches." Mr. HERRING answers the obvious question:

"Saturday night in the South is a semicolon; a breathing space between the work of the week and the devotions of the morrow. A time for the young of merrymaking; for the old, of retrospection. . . . The week's work is done and the chores of the farm are over; the stock has been fed, the wood boxes in the kitchen and big house filled, the plough gear and stocks are under the shed, and the farm has put on its Sunday dress.

"The soil of toil has been removed by vigorous application of home made soap and the Sunday clothes put on. A clean shirt, home laundered, a tie of gorgeous colors fastened with a glistening pin of the mail order kind—there were no jewelry stores to supply us; brogan shoes of serviceable cowhide, which took on renewed youth from a coat of suet and soot, carefully administered."

The sketches, and there are more than fifty of them, supply a complete picture of life in southern Georgia in the decade after the civil war—and probably before the war too, although Mr. HERRING is not old enough to speak of that earlier period with the authority of an eyewitness. What he does show us is an industrious, honest, simple lot of people, with enough piety, food and laughter to make them happy. He tells his stories with the carefulness of a good reporter, the sentiment of a native, and the philosophy of a man who does not find preaching necessary. This philosophy is reflected in the narrative of the debating society that permitted an Irishman to become its leading spirit. He insisted on a subject original and familiar:

"He discarded all offerings of time honored topics, and so dominated the committee that they reported, as subject for debate at the next meeting: 'Which is more desirable—a long watermelon or a round watermelon?' The society heard in consternation; they knew all about watermelons; therefore they could not debate them. Hence the society, as a society, met no more."

A vein of humor runs through most of the sketches. Usually it is homely but delicate. It is broad occasionally, as in the story of the Stegall boy who went to make a call, clad in the single garment—a long shirt—which Georgian lads of the '60s and '70s wore until they were ready for "long pants." As the Stegall boy sat on the neighbor's porch old man JOHNSON'S bull yearling came softly from behind and yielded to an unholy appetite for cotton cloth. The Stegall boy, according to the legend, never grew an inch from that day.

Two of the sketches are solemn, "When We Laid Jim Away" and "With the Rites of the Order"; the first a detailed description of the grim but imperative mortuary duties of a man's neighbors in a region where undertakers were unknown; the second the impressive report of the Masonic ceremony at a grave in the semi-wilderness. Some of our young realistic writers could learn by reading these bits.

The domestic sketches are the best in the book. The American Buckle, if he be now amassing material for some monumental history of our civilization, should sift Mr. HERRING'S book, for he will get a lot out of it, detailed and authentic. It deals not only with the accomplishment of the individual, but of the community work, done in turn for each individual. Cane grinding, cotton picking, shelling peanuts, log rolling, sheep shearing—all such labor was done by neighbors together in a beautiful socialism. We assume that nobody ever talked about class consciousness. Everybody was happy, cracked jokes and ate heartily when the work was done and the lye soap had cleansed the red faces. No Hoover was around:

"The dinner was of the times that knew no indigestion. Substantial bacon, collards, corn bread, boiled ham, pork, perhaps dried beef, and always chicken pie and cakes and sweet potato custards. They call them pies now—they were custards then, sweet and yellow or blue and black, according to the potatoes and sweetening, piled a foot high and cut down into squares. To top off the dinner with three or four custards weighing a pound or so each was no extra task for an able bodied log roller."

That was merely the limited diet of winter, however. In summer, perhaps at the "union sing," the Georgian got more variety at table: fresh beef and pork, huckleberry and peach pie, pound cake, jelly roll, cookies, apple puffs, crab lanterns; not to mention chicken and preserves.

When a Wiregrass man was about to marry the neighbors came and "raised" a house for him. Money was spent only for sawed lumber and nails. At the wedding the gifts were not butter knives:

"SALLY'S mother gave her a feather bed and pillows stocked from the family herd of geese; JOHN'S mother added to SALLY'S store of quilts and sheets; from his ancestors had come down to JOHN a cord bedstead of fearful and wonderful construction and great comfort; from the one legged chairmaker across the creek JOHN bought two chairs of stout hickory with cowhide bottoms, good for three generations at least; from the lumber JOHN constructed a table, and a trip to the distant store had brought plates, cups and saucers, knives, forks and spoons; a coffee pot, frying pan and spider of cast iron. These simple articles completed their housekeeping equipment. No cook stoves to bring worry or indigestion then."

These people of Georgia loved music and song and dancing. They stepped the decorous quadrille to the tune of the fiddler:

"I wouldn't marry a weeping girl,
And I'll tell you the reason why:
Her nose is always dripping,
And her cheeks are never dry."

Not everybody drank liquor, but when a strong man did drink he took it from the jug. Lager beer was a trifle for the ladies and the clergy. But now Georgia is dry. Of the home group of young HERRING he alone remains. Even the old house with the mud floor is gone. But his book preserves the memory of a good and happy people.

The Cyclops.

The subjoined astonishing theory suggested to account for the disappearance of the naval collier Cyclops, of which no trace has been found since she sailed from Barbados on March 4, was put forward in a special despatch from Washington to our neighbor the *Tribune* and printed on Friday:

"Navigators of years experience in the Navy Department, while sharing the optimistic hope of Secretary DANIELS for the return of the vessel, do not deny that a tidal wave or rough sea might have enveloped the Cyclops, causing the monster vessel to topple over and sink quickly without leaving a trace.

"The Cyclops, like her sister ships—the Neptune and the Jupiter—carried six large steel derricks on her superstructure, the framework arising more than fifty feet from the deck. These were made of heavy fabricated steel, connected with steel braces to enable them to carry the loading and unloading hoists, which operated as booms to be swung out and in.

"While the official naval report asserts that the weather during the period of the Cyclops's absence was mild, the heavy superstructure of the vessel is pointed to as sufficiently ponderous to make the vessel 'cranky' should rough weather suddenly develop and the vessel get caught in a trough of the sea.

"Unlike the destroyers and battleships, the colliers of the American navy are incapable of riding the seas with great facility.

"While destroyers can roll to a maximum of 45 degrees or more the Cyclops could not right itself if heeled to such an extent.

"Naval men who hold the theory that the vessel failed to weather a storm declare that the heavy superstructure carried would cause the vessel to capsize quickly should the sea become exceedingly rough.

"They frankly admit that there is no answer available for the sudden disappearance of the Cyclops, but none are inclined to make their statement more positive than conjecture."

In the mystery surrounding the fate of the Cyclops any conjecture is admissible, as a conjecture, but if the vessel was in fact so lacking in stability as to render this theory reasonable, it is plain that her design was scandalously faulty, and she should never have been built. Yet she was planned, built, launched and sent to sea as a model of her class. She was intended to accompany the fleet, if necessary, to endure the same weather battleships and cruisers are expected to endure; and she actually passed through numerous storms during the years of her service.

All things are possible on the sea, and no man will say that some convulsion of nature—a submarine volcanic outburst, for example—might not cause any ship to turn turtle and sink without warning. But such an upheaval could scarcely destroy every evidence of the disaster, and it is an astonishing fact concerning the Cyclops that not so much as one sliver of wreckage from her has been found, not a body has been recovered, and no person has reported a storm, earthquake or volcanic disturbance that might by logical deduction be associated with her failure to make port.

If the Cyclops was as unseaworthy as this speculation represents her, the Navy Department should never have allowed her to leave her dock. We can see no reason why her record, compiled from her log, should not be published to prove her stability; and there is every reason why the department should record now the fact that it does not sanction the sailing of death traps.

Boston 2,000 Years Ago.

Boston, Massachusetts, was inhabited by human beings at least 2,000 years ago.

The people who lived there then were fishermen.

They used axes of stone to cut down trees and fashion timber into useful shapes.

At a time when the climate of Boston was as warm as the climate of the Virginia coast is to-day, the Bostonians of the post-glacial epoch constructed a wooden fish weir at a spot under what is now Boylston street, near the Rogers building of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

These facts are not evolved out of the editorial inner consciousness, but are deduced from a communication on the post-glacial history of Boston recently submitted to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences by Professor HERVEY W. SHIMER, an accomplished paleontologist, which has been furnished to THE SUN by a fellow of the academy who resides in New York.

The Boylston street fish weir, when discovered, was embedded in a deposit of silt and shells from thirteen to fifteen feet in depth. "How long a time was consumed," says Professor SHIMER, "in the deposition of these thirteen to fifteen feet of silt and shells is largely a matter of conjecture. It has been estimated that the Mississippi River deposits a foot of mud in 200 years. A similar rate here would have required 2,500 to 3,000 years for the accumulation of this thickness." The probability of this great age for the fish weir is confirmed by the preservation of the wood of which it was composed. "It is considerably carbonized; its surface is almost black, and either wet or dry is very brittle." The weir was probably erected when the region was exposed, or almost exposed, at low tide and covered at high tide; in which event the land must have sunk from sixteen to eighteen feet since the early Bostonians took fish at Boylston street.

The weir consisted of interlaced vertical and horizontal sticks. The vertical rods appeared to have been roughly sharpened with a stone axe. Whether the form of construction resembled the fish weirs used by the North American Indians in the days of the Pilgrims we are not informed. It may be that the remnants obtained were not sufficiently abundant to permit a comparison.

At all events we may rest assured that Boston was peopled 2,000, if not indeed 3,000 years ago. Such is the story which a few sticks in the mud tell to the vision of science.

The revelations of this prehistoric Boylston street fish weir make it plainer than ever that a fish is the most fitting emblem of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

If the world should one day unite in an International Peace League Germany would unhesitatingly and joyfully join it.—COUNT VON HERTLING.

Unhesitatingly and joyfully crossing her fingers at the same moment.

Now a superman named J. J. BRIGGS has driven 7,864 rivets in the plates of a Dutch vessel under repair at the Atlantic basin in seven hours and thirty minutes, or something more than seventeen rivets each minute. Unfortunately, the names of his helpers are not recorded. They should be, for every man who takes part in such an astonishing performance deserves public recognition.

British troops cheer lustily for American soldiers arriving in Flanders.—*Newspaper headline.*

Times change. "'Our armies swore terribly in Flanders,' said my Uncle TOBY."

The late JAMES J. MARTIN was a shrewder politician, a more farsighted citizen and a more intelligent manager than Tammany Hall could endure in its leadership, and consequently he never was called to that office.

Finns want a King.—*Headline.*

It takes all kinds of people to make a world.

HOTEL BREADS.

It Would Cost the Proprietors Less if They Used White Flour.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* I have read the somewhat savage attack upon the city's hotel men by "Long Suffering Eater" and cannot refrain from a few words in reply.

His particular complaint is that the hotel or restaurant man drops white flour from his menu, serves you substitutes which are not acceptable, boasts of his patriotism the while, but does not lower his charges to the consumer.

This letter writer also makes the statement that the curtailment of portions, meatless, porkless and otherless days have been a boon to the profiteering hotel men of New York.

In the first place white flour can be purchased to-day at $6.25 per 100 pounds. The cost per 100 pounds for corn meal, rye flour, potato flour and rice flour is $7, $8, $11 and $16.50 respectively. Why on earth should a hotel man, upon relinquishing the cheaper food, lower his prices when he serves more expensive flour? Does he not deserve some credit when he maintains his prices at the same level, when by obeying the Food Administration it means additional expense to himself? White flour in the profiteering sense is much more acceptable than these high priced substitutes.

Now as regards "meatless days." Poultry is expensive and must be used in large quantities on these days. The recent fines imposed upon restaurant men who disobeyed these administration orders would tend to show that a lot of food sellers preferred to risk fines in their eagerness to serve the public, rather than to accept the opportunity to be profiteers. How does "Long Suffering Eater" classify these men? As martyrs to their love for their patrons? The hotel proprietors do not sprout wings just yet, neither are they as black as painted in "Eater's" letter. They have, as a rule, followed the administration's requests and have worked hard to make up dishes as substitutes for their patrons. They have helped very substantially in the Liberty Loan drives, Red Cross work and all other drives, and I do not think they deserve such criticism as your correspondent visited upon them. JAMES E. KNOTT.

NEW YORK, May 18.

HARK, THE LINNET SINGS.

Verse the Like of Which Was Never Writ by Coleridge.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* So many requests have been made for an autographed copy of my poem "Warblings of Springtime," which recently appeared in THE SUN, that I needs must pen these few lines to thank my unknown friends for their touching words of appreciation.

Surely it is beautiful to find one's efforts so gratefully received, and I am sure that these expressions of gratitude prove beyond the peradventure of a doubt that this world is literally starving for poetry. Enclosed is another little effusion of mine which I have selected to illume the pages of THE SUN and the *Atlantic Monthly*, entitled "Blighted Hopes."

I see that Mr. Ellshemius is still endeavoring to write verse, and were it not for the fact that my criticism would be thought to spring from professional jealousy I would say that I am afraid he will never succeed in this line of endeavor, because he seems to experience difficulty in making his poems rhyme.

BLIGHTED HOPES
(Dedicated to K. P.)

In Hoboken's sunlit harbor,
Looking out across the bay,
Stood a tall and stately verse,
Camouflaged and painted gray.

The natives gathered 'round the port
To view the ship one day.
But when they went to gaze on it
Alas, 'twas sailed away.

MARY V. RETTOP.

LINDEN, N. J., May 17.

Amiens Cathedral, May, 1918.

There hangs here on my quiet study wall
A photograph of Amiens's fair fane,
In dove gray high lights and soft shadows drab
One carven tower loftier than its mate,
In frank asymmetry that woos the eye.
Like strong sloped shoulders of the Milo's pose.
And all the wrought façade against the sky
One miracle of lovely aspirant grace,
Through arch and statue, cross and lustrous glass,
To kindle the high finials' silver flame.
A "Bible," delved in stone and rich device,
The master critic named the storied pile
That to his brooding love revealed its lore.
Seven centuries of joy to marvelling men
The shrine has brought, and still would yield
Unstinting, from the ages once called "dark"
To this that sets those former times in light
Irradiate, against its depth of gloom.
But now such loveliness is turned a curse,
And signal to dedowering lust of war.
Across the shattered land the martyred Rheims
Bleeds her mute anguish from a thousand wounds,
In warning of the unbridled pagan wrath
That roars for this fresh virgin sacrifice.
Where Amiens stands white in dauntless calm
Against the sullen, fire rent battle pall.
But not defenceless! In the vandals' path
See armies ranged in mightier hosts than once
About the Maid of Arc! Her one time foes
Now fighting troop by troop beside the sons
Of Orleans' victors and her ransomed France.
And as the wound the Maid herself foretold
That she must suffer, sieging Les Tourelles,
Impelled her warriors like a crimson flame,
So yesterday's dread word that through her breast
Loved Amiens was smitten by the bolt
Of ruthless Teuton catapult, but thrills
Her staunch defenders to more splendid wrath.
Above those raging, bloody waves of strife,
A bright palladium the fane becomes,
That may be pierced again, but cannot fall;
Fit symbol of a whole world's liberty.
What wonder that the awful "Marseillaise"
That sang the freeborn nations to the help
Of France befouled but fearless, leaped the sea
Full veiled, and like a storm wind fanned the spark
That smouldered perilously in the torch
Upheld by gift of France above new shores,
Until it flashed to full peaked fire again
To light our crowded transports to the deep?
What wonder if that desperate "aux armes!"
Summoned the gallant more than lure of love,
And turned all other gain to utter dross,
So they might keep their "rendezvous with death"
In allied ranks beyond the glistening foam?
And now o'er stricken fields, where glory crowns
The boyish brows that shrank not from the thorns,
There rolls sweet thunder of great organ tones
From Amiens' saved shrines, where angels sing
"These dead have kept their rendezvous with life!"

ELIOT WHITE.

PUT IT UP AND BACK IT UP!

An Old Soldier's Advice on How to Show Respect for Old Glory.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* I read in THE SUN recently an article written by W. Gold in reference to treating the Stars and Stripes with respect.

I certainly back him up in as far as respect goes, but differ with him in regard to what he terms disrespect.

Our Government, army and navy make it a rule to hoist the Stars and Stripes at sunrise and haul them down at sunset, but it certainly is not showing disrespect to the flag if it is left up all night, or else we as a nation have been showing disrespect for it in our national anthem. In the first verse we are told that it was seen "at the twilight's last gleaming," which is some time after sundown, and then was seen "at the dawn's early light," which is some time before sunrise, so it must have been up all night.

Much has been said since this world war started in reference to hoisting the flag, hanging it as a banner or against a building, and disrespect and insult to it.

It is interesting to me to read the many ideas people have, but as an old soldier I know of but one thing to do with my nation's flag: Put it up and back it up. W. H. VAN METER,

Soldiers' Home.

KEARNY, N. J., May 18.

COMPULSORY LABOR.

A Title that Puts a New Aspect on "Anti-Loafing" Laws.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Your editorial article of May 14 on the compulsory labor law greatly pleased me, as it must have all others who believe in a constitutional form of government and the adherence to the same. Five hundred thousand men died that the thirteenth amendment to the Constitution of the United States might be written. It reads:

Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

If forcing a man to work against his will for the profit of another is not involuntary servitude in the fullest sense of the word I would like to be informed on the subject. If we are fighting for democracy in Europe let us practise it here.

Our Constitution stands as a bulwark against plutocracy and bolshevikism and it would be well for those who believe that the end justifies the means to consider the matter before they try to batter it down.

If the fundamentals of constitutional law were taught, instead of fads, in our elementary schools there would be fewer laws of this character.

WESLEY N. ENSIGN.

WHITESTONE, May 18.

"INVEST THAT QUARTER!"

Thus You May Save and at the Same Time Help Uncle Sam.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* May I offer through your columns a suggestion in regard to the sale of War Savings Stamps?

"Buy a Stamp," the slogan used by the many salesmen and saleswomen now at work on the New York streets, does not seem to have the right appeal. It implies that one is to spend some money to purchase something, and is therefore somewhat alarming to many citizens.

"Invest that spare quarter," or some such sentence, that would appeal to the sense of thrift, ought to get a larger response. Get rid of the idea on the part of the prospective investor that he is spending, and make him realize immediately that he is saving and doing himself a great favor, and he is likely to take more stamps.

One stamp agent on Fifth avenue had the right idea when she called, "Lend Uncle Sam that spare quarter. He will win the war with it and return it, with interest." ROGER W. RIIS.

NEW YORK, May 18.

M. Piumepatte's Boswell on Restaurant Prices.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* When the hotel restaurant proprietors are trying to give an excuse for the increase in prices they are exposed as the most horrible example of profiteering. What if the rent and taxes are higher, if fuel and light are more expensive, if cooks and other help are paid all the way from 25 to 100 per cent. more and work fewer hours? What do we care if the price of linen, utensils, crockery and other miscellaneous articles have doubled in price. Will you please tell me what right has the hotel trade people to increase their prices when they can buy short loins as cheap as 42 cents a pound, racks of lamb at 45, or hams at 53 and all other things in proportion? I approve with all my heart the stand taken by some of your correspondents, and I fail to see why I should pay more for my meals in a first class restaurant or hotel, even if I have to pay 100 per cent. more for my bread at home.

DÉSIRÉ LESCARBOURA.

NEW YORK, May 18.

Red Tape and Soldiers' Relatives.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* I saw recently an article about a father of a soldier not getting the allotment made by his son. He is only one in thousands. What kind of a business man would send a letter directed to and addressed to a woman in Tarrytown, N. Y., asking her if she had not received checks sent to a woman of the same surname at Germantown, Pa.? This was the reply a wife of a sailor received when she wrote to the War Risk and Insurance Bureau, Treasury Department. A VETERAN OF '98.

Still in Service.

SOMEWHERE IN THE NAVY, May 15.

Why He Didn't Get In.

Officer—What's the matter?
Outlate—Case mishtaken identity; my housh don't know it's me.

Aerial Package.

Father—Well?
Johnny—Who mailed the rain?

B-You-T.

You fain would serve the nation, but—
Some obstacles remain;
You want to cut your ration, but
The fates your wish restrain.

You yearn to lend your savings, but—
Some reason makes you spend;
And you have garden cravings, but—
The powers balk your trend.

The Red Cross claims your pity, but—
Your help must be delayed;
You weep some ruined city, but—
Just now you cannot aid.

Your fervor is exotic, but
Such blight proclaims it true:
You may be patriotic, but
One-third of "but" is You.

MCLANDBURGH WILSON.

"IS THE GREAT WAR A WORLD REDEMPTION?"

A Discussion From Two Very Different Points of View of the Spirit of the Trenches and Its Influence on Religious Thought.

I.

A series of letters appearing in THE SUN, plus certain letters, etc., received by the present writer are responsible for the question in the caption. I have often asked myself whether there have not been periods in "universal history" which deserve to be called periods of world-redemption in which periods sacrifice and expiation must be made by the human family, individuals for the mass, or, individual states for the whole orbis terrarum in which something, morally speaking, has gone amiss—and badly amiss!

I find that the feeling which I have attempted to express above is not an unusual one among those involved in or deeply affected by the events of this war. I have received from a friend, for instance, the verses given below, "marked heretical"—but I cannot agree with their author who thus labels them, unless, perhaps, the first stanza may be so considered:

Not pagan, no! Yet hardly Christian—I,
Who understand not how a God may die.
But my mere human sight envision can
A great salvation when Man dies for Man—

As now he dies . . . he dies for you, for me;
Redeemer he goes forth to set us free
From condemnation, in unknown ways earned;
By him the falling blow aside is turned!

Not that One Death in ages gone sufficed—
A thousand-thousand are become the Christ!
Lo, yonder, in the four years harrowed field,
The eager sacrifice in blood is sealed!

The scarred land yields no tree—to make the cross;
Yet is man "lifted up"—to save our loss;
For us he dies; and all that we have dreamed
Of right, of Best, through him shall be redeemed.

You ask, Shall he upon the Third Day rise
And show himself again to longing eyes?
Oh, on the spirit's road to Emmaus,
E'en now the vision must be glorious!

I have also, as contributory testimony to this idea of a world sacrifice as needful, and ordained, the concluding line from a letter written by a chasseur d'Afrique of a picked body of men to do dangerous scouting duty on the western front. . . "and if I die, my death cannot be wholly useless, since it will have been because of—the cause! No one quite dies who dies for that!" I find these words of my brave young chasseur strikingly like those ascribed to another French soldier, Charles Lister (I believe), who writes in a letter home, "I am glad that you pray for me. I know now that I shall live. I do not mean that I may not die."

Lastly, an extract from the letter of a Russian woman, hurt to the heart of her by the defection of her country in this hour of deepest need. She writes: "Truly, I do not think that I forget the war for a single minute. When I awake at night this 'enemy' thought grasps me—finds me then not master in my house, and I indeed experience a dark hour. But here is my waking credo: I am, as it were, astonished at Divinity, observing the wonderful diversity in which He distributes and adds lesson to lesson in the course of this war. He seems to have a different principle of distribution with every people—every one, and He follows the line 'with consistency!' There is no denying that 'celui qui tend l'oreille' can nearly hear the divine spade digging the very earth beneath our feet and pushing us upward—forward—onward to other places, other planes. . . . We must see, it cannot be helped; we must let go our previous cravings for harmony, peace, comfort, and (there is none but a German word to express it) Gemuethlichkeit, also! Sentimentality, Romanticism even, will be abolished, life having just become a 'grim adventure.' . . . It is beyond me quite to express what I feel. But it would seem that certain cosmic laws that until now have slept in the dark depth are rising to the surface, and their awful grandeur must force man to become grander himself. The physical and the quantitative must make place for new values, those, before all the rest, that are qualitative. . . . Oh, we do not yet feel at home in this new world, perhaps never shall! But even if we persist in remaining outsiders we may as well admit that the upheaval opens new ways to humanity, compelling it to better things—that humanity which seems to have required from the beginning of its history, ever and again, something like redemption from its previous estate—which we may, if we please, regard to have been 'fallen'!"

Is the great war to prove a world redemption? EDITH M. THOMAS.

NEW YORK, May 18.

II.

Out of War Is There to Come Theological Peace and Brotherhood?

Stonewall Jackson, the Southern hero, whom Lord Roberts called the greatest soldier of history, often prayed in his tent all through the night. America would do well in her present hour of crisis to analyze and strive to emulate those qualities that constituted the strength of her brilliant military leader. In peaceful and sheltered places such as New York and Boston and Chicago one encounters much of pessimism; but not so with the boys at the front. The purest optimism, this highest proof of faith, is found on the firing line. And the faith expresses itself in actions, not in loose talk. The old days of the swashbuckler mercenary are gone indeed. In the Yankee army of to-day wordy and windy discussions on religion are tabooed. Almost every one in the trenches clings to the abiding faith that God still holds dominion and that the future is safe in His keeping.

Our pessimistic, despairing lchabods at home who think that all is awry, that God has forsaken us, should take a trip to the front line trenches, where they will learn to their astonishment that there is far more good abroad to-day than there was in the peaceful summer days of 1914. There is much of the spirit of the Galilean Master that is found in the dugout and on the firestep where men are dwelling daily on the edge of sudden death. Here we find with them qualities of soul we never dreamed of. Boys who at home seemed worthless cads, at the front show forth the most godlike bravery and devotion. In the trenches, indeed, our Lord would come into His own just as He did among the publicans and sinners of His day.

For this florilegium of refreshing religious thought and spiritual uplift, culled from one single chapter of his book, "The Real Front," we are indebted to its author, the well known Canadian war correspondent, Arthur Hunt Chute, and our cardinals and bishops, presbyters and rabbis ought to thank this journalist for his volunteer chaplain services to the great, sceptic masses at home.

Will our religious leaders understand, at last, that the history of religion has again reached one of its great, perhaps its greatest crisis; that it is time for them to bury, once and for all, their blunt theological war hatchets of old?

Our camps, these preparatory schools for our trenches "over there," have become the great national Sunday schools, in the noblest sense of the word; they are the true spiritual and moral and even political and linguistic melting pots of our nation. Why should not, on some fine Sunday morning, Cardinal Farley, flanked on his right and left by Bishop Greer and some representative New York rabbi, appear at Camp Upton, let us say, and interpret to the boys in khaki the genuine gospel of the one God, proclaimed in flaming words by the Hebrew prophets of old? While our boys are shedding their life blood in the consecrated plains and on the holy hills of the New Galilee over in France and Flanders, we at home must prepare the new world for those who will come back to us.

The hour has struck, methinks, when all the scholastico-theological quibbling of bygone ages has to be definitely relegated to the religious archives, our distinctive symbols to the museums of creeds. Who now has the right to distinguish between original Yankees and Yankees of Swedish, Italian or Polish descent, between Roman Catholics, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Jews and Agnostics? Let the dead bury their dead! What we want is a living generation of 100 per cent. Americans and 100 per cent. believers in the God of the trenches.

I hate the Hohenzollern and his despicable military and political camarillas with the same hatred a sister of charity must feel for a profligate courtesan. But who can help bowing his head in reading these lines by our author, who certainly cannot be accused of any love for the miserable wretches who are responsible for the death of nearly 12,000,000 vigorous human beings within the short space of less than four years:

Never have I been so distressed over the apparent strength of the Germans as when on quiet spring nights I have heard them singing, when their trenches were near to ours, swelling in powerful choruses Martin Luther's famous battle hymn, "Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott" ("A mighty fortress is our God"). When its strenuous song with a note of omnipotence, strikes my ear, they created in my heart a respect for our enemy's might and power which I had never felt before.

Our author has here, almost unconsciously, lifted a corner of the veil covering the camp of Amalek and Moab. These hordes of Catholic Austrians and Bavarians, Greek Orthodox Bulgars and Mussulman Turks are, by their political and military masters, driven to murder and death, under the unctuous guidance of their benighted religious and spiritual leaders, as if they also were fighting for a great and worthy world ideal.

The time will and must come when the royal assassins of Potsdam and Schoenbrunn, of Munich and Dresden, of Sofia and Constantinople, will get their reward, long overdue. The solitary, disorganized and distracted fractions of Slavdom will, sooner or later, as the recent events in the Ukraine presage, clasp hands over the body of their national arch enemy, the Teutonic race. Spain, Portugal and France, Italy and Rumania, will form some day an indissoluble Latin union, and over both the Anglo-Saxon Alliance will keep its holy watch.

Meanwhile let us, Allies, be happy in the thought that we have found in our President the man who could survey both the military and political battlefields of Europe and, another St. Paul, interprets in burning words to his own country and the world at large the new life which is sprouting from the blackened, bloody ruins "over there," at the real front of this world Armageddon, where Ormuzd will some day choke to death his infernal adversary, Ahriman. MONOMARK.

NEW YORK, May 18.

THE COAT SHIRT.

Lament of a Man Who Wishes That Buttons Were Food.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Of all trivial abominations the greatest to my mind is—if a trivial abomination can ascend to greatness—the "coat shirt." For buttons, in themselves, are an abomination, therefore a coat shirt merely serves to multiply buttonical loathsomeness, to say nothing of that horrid split apart feeling when the laundry has claimed its quota. For myself, in these war times, I am seeking a shirt that will pull comfortably over the head, close caressingly about the neck and forearms, and so leave me undistracted by a sense of buttons. Briefly, I believe I am looking for an undershirt of outward respectability.

But what's the use? The haberdasher destined, or buttoned, as he is to his lot, must have his strut before the wavy mirror of fads and fancies.

A charge against him of profiteering in buttons might avail, if buttons could be construed as a food. But, though I had a Texas congressman who insisted that the stuffing on his ranch sought his buttons in a dent consciousness of what they must face, that would hardly make such an interpretation by the judge that he, would it? JOHN WEATHER.

NEW YORK, May 18.

The Post Office Department Misspells All the Kearnys.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* As the War Department has named the camp at Linda Vista, Cal., "Kearny," the Post Office Department, as shown by the cancellation on a letter received from that camp, spells it "Kearney."

WILLIAM T. KEARNS.

LAWRENCE, MASS., May 18.