

The Epic of the Ploughman

BY THE REV. C. F. AKED, D. D., L. L. D.

Will Levington Comfort, in his new book, "Down Among Men," crystallizes a world-movement into a single tragic incident. He sings the Epic of the Ploughman.

The masses of mankind are at last beginning to rebel against the blood-tax imposed upon them by rulers whom they scorn and hate. The masters of many legions will not be masters forever. It is doubtful whether they are masters today. Sir Edward Grey, secretary of state in King George's cabinet, has been warmly praised for the masterly policy which, years ago, kept the war in the Balkans within bounds and prevented a European conflict that would not have ended until a continent was drenched with blood.

The real keeper of the peace of Europe, however, was not Sir Edward Grey, but "The Ploughman" of Will Levington Comfort's story! The "Powers" were afraid of war. They were afraid of using the vast armaments which they have built up at such incredible expense. They were not sure of their own armies. They could not depend upon the soldier stuff they had to employ.

It is on the cards that, if ever the great civilized nations of the world bring on a war in which millions of their people have no interest, the officers will be shot down, their arms will be flung away, the men who were commanded to kill one another will fraternize in the light of day.

John Hay, when secretary of state, denounced war as the "most ferocious and futile of human follies." "Ferocious" the world has always known it to be. "Futile" wise men have always held it. And the common man, Mr. Comfort's "Ploughman," is in the mind no longer to be a party to the perpetuation of the supreme "folly" of the ages. Herein lies the hope of the world.

The curse of conscription hangs like a pall over the nations beyond the seas. But the people are in full revolt. France multiplies penalties upon the men who preach to the conscript's gospel of disobedience. Under the British flag, Australia and New Zealand imprison boys who will not submit to compulsory military training. Yet the movement gathers strength every day. While preparations for war were never so gigantic as in this hour, mankind was never nearer to the dawn of universal peace.

This is how Will Levington Comfort tells the story of the "Ploughman."

It is during the Russo-Japanese war. The Russian forces have been defeated in a pitched battle. Soldiers are running away like sheep. In vain the officers try to rally their panic-stricken commands. Luban, a young officer, who has lost his nerve, is yet trying to stay the rout. Fallows is an American war correspondent who sees and understands and compels us to see:

"Out of the grain came striding a tall soldier of the ranks. His beard was black, his eyes were blue. The man's broad shoulders were thrust back; his face clean of cowardice, clean as the grain and as the open sky.

His head was erect and bare, he carried no gun, scorned the pretense of looking for wounded. Had he carried a dinner-pail the picture would have been as complete—a god man going home from a full-testing day.

"In that moment Fallows saw more than from the whole line before. Here was a conscript. He had been taken from his house, forced across Europe and Asia to this hour. The reverse of his persecutors had set him free. This freedom was the fire in his eyes; they had torn him from his house; they had driven and brutalized him for months. And now was such a disaster as a plain man might have prayed for. He had prayed for it in the beginning, but in the long, slow gatherings for battle, in the terrible displays of power, he had lost his faith to pray. Yet the plain man's God had answered that early prayer. This was the brightness off the burning in the blue eyes.

"His persecutors had been shamed and undone. He had seen his companions dissipate, his sergeants run; seen his captain fail to hold. The great force that had tortured him, that had seamed the world in strength, was now broken before his eyes. Its mighty muscles were writhing, their strength running down. The love of God was splendid in the maker's heart; the breath of home had come. The turning in the grain—was a turning homeward.

"All this Fallows saw. It was illumination to him—the hour of his great reception.

"Luban, just insulted by the other infantryman, now faced the big, blithe presence, emerging unhurried from the grain. Luban raised his voice:

"And what are you sneaking back for?"

"I am not sneaking—"

"Rotten soldier stuff—you should be shot down."

"I am not a soldier—I am a ploughman."

"You are here to fight—"

"They force me to come—"

"Forced you to fight for your Fatherland?"

"This is not my fatherland, but a strange country—"

"You are here for your Fatherland—"

"I have six children in Russia. The Fatherland is not feeding them. My field is not ploughed."

"The talk had cracked; it had required but a few seconds; Luban had done it all for Fallows to see and hear—but Fallows was very far from observing the pose of that weakling. The



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Ploughman had held him heart and soul—as did the inflexible and instantly unerring truth of his words. The world's poor, the world's degraded, had found its voice.

"Luban must have broken altogether. Fallows, listening, watching the Ploughman with his son, did not turn. Now the man's face changed. The lips parted strangely, the eyelids lifting. Whiteness wavered between the eyes of the Ploughman and the eyes of Duke Fallows. Luban's pistol crashed and the man fell with a sob.

"Fallows was kneeling among the soaked roots of the millet, holding the soldier in his arms."

The masses of mankind have no interest in war. The millions of men, armed to the teeth, standing at attention along all the borders of Europe today, whom the kings and kaisers believe they command, are growing in intelligence every year. Conscripts they are, slaves of the hereditary military despotisms under which they were born.

But "the schoolmaster is abroad." Education manumits. First it frees the slave. Then the conscript learns he is a man. The soldier has his "fatherland." But it is not the "fatherland" of which the court lackeys prate. Soon the "ploughman" of Russia will speak to the "ploughman" of Austria, and the artisan of France to the artisan of Germany will speak a language which all hearts can understand. And one will say to the other:

"Brother across the border: I have no quarrel with you or you with me. Kings and priests are our hereditary foes. If fight we must, which God forbid, let us turn our weapons against them; then beat our swords into ploughshares and our spears into pruning-hooks and learn war no more."

LOPEZ IS NOW BELIEVED TO HAVE MADE ESCAPE
[UNITED PRESS LEASED WIRE.]
Bingham, Utah, Dec. 25.—Deep in the snow on the narrow shelves of the canyon walls, the posse seeking Ralph Lopez, the slayer of six men, passed a cold Christmas day at the Apex mine.

The discovery of an incline leading from the upper to the lower workings through which the gunman may have escaped, added discouragement to discomfort. Sheriff Smith believes the incline was not used by Lopez before the mine was sealed. It is expected the mine will be opened and searched Friday when it is hoped to find that the desperado succumbed either to starvation or to the poisonous gases generated with smudges nearly a month ago.

BASTICK CONFESSES MURDER.
[UNITED PRESS LEASED WIRE.]
San Francisco, Dec. 25.—John Bastick confessed last night to the robbery of a Southern Pacific train near Elmonte, December 1, and the murder of E. H. Montague, the traveling passenger agent who tried to thwart him. He admitted also to having tried to rob a Southern Pacific train near Oakland last month. The confession was made to Sheriff Hammel of Los Angeles county on a train enroute to Los Angeles.

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The bore makes a big hole in the day's accomplishment.

MARION HOTEL EMPLOYEES GIVEN FINE TREE BY MANAGEMENT

"Has this been a happy Christmas eve?" asked a guest of one of the employees of the Marion hotel early last evening. The answer was: "Rather not, with the folks 3,000 miles away," the speaker not knowing what the manager had in store for them.

"I have had a fine time," said one later on. "You know most of us don't have any home to go to," said another. Such were the comments among the score or more employees around the Christmas tree at the Marion last night. Manager and Mrs. J. E. Crowe had thoughtfully provided a tree which was placed in the ladies' dining room on the first floor where it was decorated tastefully, laden with presents and the Marion family invited. Kola Neis acted as Santa Claus and played his part well. He was assisted by Jack Rogers, president of the United States national bank, and Mr. Ab Magers, the popular merchant. The presents gathered from the tree were numerous, useful, humorous and otherwise. Santa Claus in his own inimitable way had a clever fitting sentiment to accompany each gift as he passed it to its owner and pandemonium reigned from the time the toy mouse was let loose among the girl waiters until the popular night clerk threw up his hands when he was given a toy pistol filled with candy.

"In this work-a-day world when we see everything through the dollar sign, it is refreshing to look upon a scene such as Manager and Mrs. Crowe furnished last night for the employees that 'don't have any home to go to,' and the employees that makes it possible for them to operate one of the homiest little hotels on the Pacific coast," was the comment of a bystander.

TREND OF TIMES—1920

BY GEO. E. PHAIR.
[UNITED PRESS LEASED WIRE.]
Madison, Wis., Dec. 25.—Another wave of reform surging that of 1913 was instituted here today by faculty representatives of the conference in their annual meeting at the W. C. T. U.

One of the most drastic measures adopted was the elimination of croquet from the intercollegiate athletic program and the institution of chess as a major sport. For some time croquet has been viewed with disfavor owing to its brutality, but today's action was due directly to the deplorable accident in last Saturday's game when Horald Fuzzelthwaite, captain of the Minnesota team, was carried from the field with a broken stay.

It was also decided to substitute the game of authors for tiddewinks, as the latter game has tendency to heat the blood and render the participants forgetful of their dignity as college athletes.

Wisconsin received a heavy blow in the expulsion of Archibald Umph, the clean-up hitter of the Badger debating team. It was discovered that he had once participated in a debate with his father over the size of his monthly allowance. According to rule 5, section 7, the said debate has made him a rank professional.

Shortly before the close of the session Professor Pusey-frost formulated the following resolutions, which will be placed before the Ancient and Honorable Order of Molluscoides for approval:

Resolved, That students be permitted to take no part in the conduct of intercollegiate games, but be required to take seats in the stands with the spectators while the faculty members play the games on paper.

Resolved, That the undignified cheering which has marred intercollegiate sport in the past be restricted, and that no spectator be permitted to applaud any louder than a whisper under pain of expulsion from the park.

Resolved, That no student be allowed to participate in intercollegiate athletics whose collar exceeds number 14 or whose chest measurement exceeds 24 inches.

The meeting closed with a stirring address by Professor Erasmus Bilgewater on "The Subjugation of the Red Corpuscle."

MINISTER MARRIED 4 TIMES BEFORE HE'S 30

Rev. William H. Ayers Running Race For Matrimonial Honors With Goodwin and Hopper.

ALSO FIGURES IN SUIT FOR ALIENATING AFFECTIONS

Exonerated on This Charge and Has Been Reported Engaged to Many Women of His City.

[UNITED PRESS LEASED WIRE.]
Boston, Dec. 25.—Married four times while still a year shy of 30, the Rev. William B. Ayers, pastor of the Park and Downs Congregational church, Wollaston, one of the prettiest suburbs of Boston, has been entered as an added starter in the matrimonial sweepstakes in which Nat Goodwin and De Wolf Hopper at this time are head-on favorites.

Goodwin's life has been one marriage after another; Hopper, too is similarly fixed—five spouses apiece. But in addition to his marital record Dr. Ayers, up to this time has figured in a sensational suit for alienation in which he was exonerated, as well as being reported engaged to at least a half dozen women at one time.

Chronologically, this is the martial record to date of the much married minister:

Married, at the age of 15, to Meta Eyforth, 16, at Wichita, Kansas, marriage annulled by the court on grounds of minority.

Married at the age of 20 to an actress at Duluth, Minn., divorced in 1906.

Married at the age of 22 to Pauline Shepard, at Watertown, N. Y., his wife dying in less than a month after the ceremony.

Last week wedded to Sarah Abigail Miller, of Newton Center, Mass.

The ceremony was a secret one at the home of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. George D. Miller, of Norwood avenue, Newton Center, Mass.

Following the ceremony the couple slipped away in a high powered automobile, leaving behind them instructions not to reveal any details of the wedding. Relatives of the bride would not even divulge the name of the officiating minister, though his identity was suspected from a canvas of Newton ministers.

Within two hours of the ceremony Mr. Ayers, riding toward the house of his bride with the necessary marriage license, denied his identity to newspaper men when first confronted and then shook them off with a "nothing to say at all" when they met him entering Miss Miller's home.

Once An Actor.

Little wonder that Pastor Ayers' parishioners and friends and Greater Boston church circles generally are keenly interested in the announcement that he has wed again. Like Nat Goodwin and De Wolfe Hopper, Pastor Ayers once followed the footlights as his profession. But unlike the much married comedians, Pastor Ayers did not stick to the stage.

Pastor Ayers first came into the lime light in the troubles that came into the Park and Downs congregation with charges made by Chester A. Boynton, who was later suspended from membership. Then came Boynton's \$25,000 alienation suit and a sensational trial in the Suffolk court. Pastor Ayers won.

This suit caused a split in the church. Then came Mrs. Helen Willett Boynton's suit for divorce against her husband.

A council of Congregational ministers had previously placed Pastor Ayers under "friendly supervision." He has continued his ministerial work quietly at Wollaston.

MERRY XMAS

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THE ROUND-UP.

Old Santa got busy with Portland's postoffice Tuesday and 250,000 letters were received in seven mail pouches, that had been held up on the delayed trains.

Emanuel H. Brannon aged 86, and a former resident of Benton county died at Colfax, Tuesday.

W. H. Egan, of Quincy, has just shipped the second car of apples raised by him to San Francisco, and will have a third for shipment in a short time.

Clackamas county has added 66 precincts to its election system, the increase being made necessary by giving women the franchise.

Snow to the depth of six inches is reported in many parts of eastern Oregon.

Plans for paving 70 blocks were approved by the Eugene council at its meeting Monday night. This would make about seven miles.

Los Angeles capitalists are considering the placing of a gas plant in Albany.

VIOLENT SPEECHES ARE MADE BY UNEMPLOYED

[UNITED PRESS LEASED WIRE.]
San Francisco, Dec. 25.—Violent speeches were being made before an outdoor gathering of about 3,000 unemployed at Marshall Square, Eighth and Market streets, at 2:45 Wednesday afternoon.

"Direct action" and the looting of stores was threatened by some of the orators.

At the city hall, about a block away,

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To all knowing sufferers of rheumatism, whether muscular or of the joints, sciatica, lumbago, backache, pains in the kidneys or neuralgia pains, to write to her for a home treatment which has repeatedly cured all of these troubles. She feels it her duty to send it to all sufferers FREE. You cure yourself at home as thousands will testify—no change of climate being necessary. This simple discovery banishes uric acid from the blood, loosens the stiffened joints, purifies the blood and brightens the eyes, giving elasticity and tone to the whole system. If the above interests you, for proof address Mrs. M. Summers, Box 1, Notre Dame, Ind.

the supervisors were in session, considering the unemployment situation. A plan was under discussion for feeding the workless until Saturday night in the meantime every effort being made to find employment for as many as possible by Monday.

ROCK ISLAND MAN QUILTS

[UNITED PRESS LEASED WIRE.]
Chicago, Dec. 25.—The resignation of John Sebastian, third vice president of the Rock Island lines, was announced today to become effective January 1. A successor will be named within a few days. Sebastian was one of the best known railroad men in the country and had been with the Rock Island for 36 years. He retired because of poor health.

SENATE PAGES ARE GIVEN BIG DINNER BY MARSHALL

[UNITED PRESS LEASED WIRE.]
Washington, Dec. 25.—Sixteen smiling faces were gathered around a large table yesterday afternoon in the national capital and sixteen boys smacked their lips with delight at the splendid Christmas dinner provided for the senate pages by Vice President Marshall. Senator Chilton presented each of the pages with a knife and Senator Martine gave each of the boys a sum of money.

The baseball season has ended, but the joy riders will work the old hits and run game all winter.

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Best for Sore Throat, Bronchitis, Tonsillitis, Croup, Stiff Neck, Asthma, Nouralgia, Headache, Congestion, Pleurisy, Rheumatism, Lumbago, Pains

and aches of the Back or Joints, Sprains, Sore Muscles, Bruises, Chills, Frosted Feet, Colds of the Chest (it prevents Pneumonia).

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If your druggist cannot supply you send, 25c or 50c to the MUSTEROLE Company, Cleveland, O., and we will mail you a jar postpaid. Miss M. Speers, graduate nurse, St. Petersburg, Florida, says: "I have found it excellent for everything that has to do with colds or rheumatic affections. I am a professional nurse, and this product is better than anything I ever saw."



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