

battalion. War's changed me and changed everything in the world for me, and I think it's changed religion.

"My home's up in Oxford. Born on a farm. Worked like a nigger—you know the sort of life. Family thought I ought to be a minister and I thought so myself. Scotch Presbyterians to the back-bone. My mother used to think the people who went to the other churches were to be pitied for their blindness, and she prayed for 'em to mend their ways. . . . Fine woman, my mother—you know the kind.

"I USED to have a lot of pretty fine notions. For one thing, I was a pacifist, and I used to feel it was more important to be able to split hairs on doctrine, or church law, than anything else. Used to think that a man wasn't a good man unless he was abstracted from worldly things. Figured the world was a pretty bad place, and the one way to keep clean was to make your own little corner and put up a fence of holiness around it—to keep from being contaminated. Then, when you'd get the fence up, you'd make, as it were, sorties and raids against the devil. . . . Did some mission work once and thought I'd met Satan. That was a dream. . . . Met him afterward in London—and other places."

"When a man goes to war he finds out what his religion means to him. Believe me, if there's anything wrong with it, it'll show up one day when y' aren't expecting it to. I discovered one thing about the kind of private religion I'd been nursing—it was

this: it was mere intellectualism. I found out that a lot of the noble ideas I'd got, one where and another, were just lying on the top of my mind like loose pebbles on the top of a wall. They weren't cemented in. They weren't a real part of me. And when I got a first taste of shelling and was walking in the fear of death, I found I'd lost all my fancy notions and religion except just one or two foundation facts. I hung onto those hard and afterward I forgot all about the others. I figured out there was no use carrying any excess baggage.

"But that's not why I'm against this anti-union business. If I'm a poor sort of a Presbyterian it's nobody's fault but m' own. But this is the point: there's tens and hundreds and thousands and tens of thousands exactly like me in the army. To look at 'em in the trenches, or in billets, or on London leave, or in the convalescent hospitals—you'd think these were the worst lot of unbelieving rough-necks that ever breathed. Like as not, if some preacher who hadn't lived among 'em, came around and started talking about their souls—he got sworn at for his trouble. But that's not irreligion. It's because religion has come to mean so much to a good many fellows, that they don't want to talk about it. They're sensitive about it. They hide it away out of sight and its got to be a mighty fine man and a mighty fine sermon that won't make them feel that that man or that sermon is trifling, or out of place. There aren't as fine religious services anywhere in this continent as there are just back of the firn' line.

But firn' line parsons know better than to preach rose-water sermons, or scholarly discourses on out-of-the-way texts. What they preach mostly is Manhood—and Manhood Crucified!

"When the rest of the men get back they'll be an impatient lot, and if the churches want 'em, they'll take delicate handling. For these men are mostly men who have SEEN and SUFFERED, and what few details of a creed they do observe are mighty real to them. Think you'll find nine out of ten of 'em would agree on the essentials and it wouldn't take 'em thirteen years to draft the statement of their beliefs, either."

"Are you going back into theology?" I asked.

"No," he said.

MOVEMENTS such as Church Union and anti-Church Union are too great to be appraised by mere laymen and journalists. Yet they cannot escape attention. The foregoing is not intended for an opinion, but as an impression, or collection of impressions of the two sides of a rather important cause. In 1875 a number of churches resisted the Presbyterian union that was then proposed. But of all those who resisted only one to-day remains: St. Andrew's, of Montreal. The same may happen in the case of the anti-unionists of to-day, though one could wish such rare stubbornness and determination, a better end. It is a pity the Unionists must lose this part of their fibre, and a greater pity that the anti-unionists must part company with the spirit of Youth.

THE SEVENTH MAN

THE news that he had been elected a member of the city council seemed to add to Blake's eight-and-twenty years.

Like a tree stripped of its yellow leaves by the wind, so all his youthful fancies, his immature reasonings scampered away. It was as if, for the first time, he had gained a peep into a higher world—a man's world. He began to realize that life held a great many problems. A body of people, friends and neighbours among them, had made him their mouthpiece, and they were going to trust in him.

When the well-wishers had gone, and those who so eagerly congratulated him had grasped his hand for the last time, Blake turned from the door and held out his arms toward his wife.

"I'm—really—elected, Marjorie," he faltered. "Really elected! Why—why it doesn't seem real!"

"They've so much confidence in you, dear," she answered him, her eyes shining, her lips tremulous. "They know they can trust you. This new council is going to mean so much, so very much, for our town."

"Yes," he went on, "I've never known the people to be so interested before. What responsibility rests upon my shoulders! Why, it almost awes me, Marjorie. I—I do so want to make every man who voted for me proud of his choice! I want to gain their respect—prove to them I am worthy of this trust!"

"And you're going to, Greg!"

He held her close beside him as if to gain strength from her slim, tremulous little body. "Of course I am," he repeated.

"And, Greg," she went on, "think how that twelve hundred a year is going to help us! You can be more independent now, can't you? And if those horrid editors don't offer you enough for a story you can ask to have it sent back!"

HE laughed, but caught himself, midway. "If—only you were well and strong," he began, softly.

"There, there, Greg," she pouted. "That old doctor has set you worrying, hasn't he? I'm never, never going to allow him in the house again!"

"Yes, dear, but he said you—"

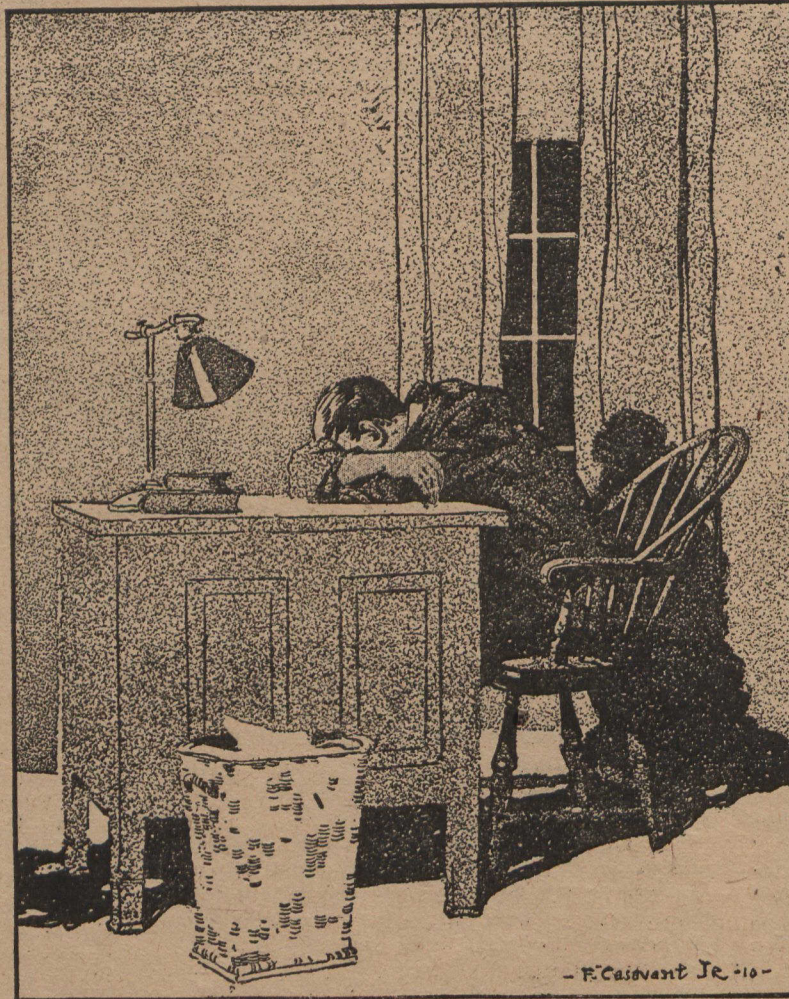
She clapped a quick hand across his lips.

"You must not talk about me another solitary instant! Why, the very idea! And on the very day you have been elected councilman, too!"

They went arm in arm into the little den—he loved to call it his study—and for a long, long time they talked and planned and built glorious castles, as

*Who Stood Between Love of Friends
and Love of Duty and How His
Choice Fell Out*

By ROLAND ASHFORD PHILLIPS



"Sank wearily before his desk, pillowing his head upon his arms."

men and women always do and always will, more so when under the enchantment of a yet undimmed honeymoon.

Gregory Blake had, from the very start, won success as a writer. His short stories nearly all sold, and at gradually increasing prices; and during the past six months he had completed his first real serious effort—a novel. Still, a human brain is an elusive thing at the best, and a typewriter an unreliable breadwinner—in comparison with a trowel

or pickaxe—so despite his frequent acceptances, editor's checks had a mysterious way of being withheld at critical moments. Blake had yet to learn—as all do who tread this path—that the way of an editor passeth understanding.

Therefore the realization of this hundred dollars a month meant everything to him.

The one blight in their first year of married life had been Marjorie's illness. Pneumonia came, and after the struggle the colour slipped slowly away from her rounded cheeks, her eyes grew big and hard, and tiny pools of grey shadow crept beneath them.

Blake watched this gradual change for months before he called the doctor.

"Bad in here," the physician announced, gravely tapping his lungs. "Very bad! She must have the best of care—and a change of altitude would be of lasting benefit."

He said other things, too, but Blake kept them locked in his breast.

UNDER this strain he laboured unceasingly upon his novel, and with thumping heart sent it away to the publishers.

They talked of this work that evening at the table.

"It will mean a great deal to me," he said. "It is my first serious thing, Marjorie. I want the world to know that I can do something worth while."

"And won't they?" she questioned, playfully pinching his cheek. "Of course they will, dear. You are meant for a great, wonderful success!"

"And then, if we can't get that naughty colour back into your cheeks again," he hurried.

"There is something greater than that, Greg," she answered, her voice half serious, half jesting.

"Greater than my love for you?" he frowned.

She nodded. "You're a public man now, dear. Your duty to your friends should tower above all else!" She took his face between her palms and stared deep, deep into his questioning eyes. "My man could never do any wrong, could he?"

"Never," he laughed, crossing his heart, boy-fashion. "Especially when such a dear little wife believes in him!"

In the quiet, sumptuous office of the Milltown Gas and Electric Company two men were in deep conversation. One of them, Mr. Hall, president, a short, grey-haired, snapping-eyed old man, held a typewritten list before him. The other, younger,