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ART. I.—STUDIES ON THE BIBLE, No. IV. *The Exodus; Passover; Priesthood; Borrowing the Jewels.**

ONE of the leading epochs in sacred history was formed by the departure of the Hebrews from the land of Egypt. The chosen seed was originally in a succession of individuals: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. In the children of Jacob the visible church expanded into a family. The sojourn in Egypt consolidated the separate clans into the unity of a common life; and the exodus transformed twelve tribes of bondsmen, apparently helpless, into a nation of kings and priests, powerful in numbers and resources, compacted together by a community of race and traditions, and inspired by the sense of an exalted destiny.

In order to obtain a clear insight into the narrative of the exodus, it is necessary to appreciate what was peculiar in the destruction of the first-born of Egypt, and in the incidents

* HELPS TO THE STUDY.—*On the Passover:* Hengstenberg's Auth. Pent. 2: 294. Witsius' Covenants, B. IV, chap. ix. M'Donald's Pent. 1: 209, 2: 268-272. Kurtz' Old Cov't. 2: 294-311. Fairbairn's Typol. 2: 404. Kitto's Cyclo. Art. "Passover." Orme's Lord's Supper, 10-27. McGee's Aton. Disserta. 35. Bib. Sac. 1845. p. 405. Calvin's Harm. Pent. 1: 220, 456, 458.

The Priesthood, etc.: Kurtz, 8: 203-6. Fairbairn, 2: 244-275. Hengstenberg, 2: 329-340.

Borrowing the Jewels: Hengstenberg, 2: 417. Kurtz, 2: 319. McDonald, 2: 57. Calvin on Ex. iii: 22 and xi: 2. Rosenmüller on Ex. iii: 22. Kitto Art. "Weights and Measures." Arbuthnot's Tables. Hebrew Concordance sub voce *Shahai*.

ART. IV.—*Chaplaincy in the Army.*

AN announcement has been repeatedly made through the public press that on the evening of the 22d of last February, one of the Major Generals of the army of the United States, known, too, as a devout Christian, declared in the Representatives' Hall in the city of Washington, that the chaplaincy system of the army has proved a failure. The reasons for this announcement, as we have seen them stated, are not, however, such as would justify the conclusion either that the system as such has failed, or that it should be dispensed with, and a different provision substituted in lieu thereof, as we shall take occasion to show hereafter. But the remark has been a thousand times repeated, not only by friends but also by the foes of religion, and has both received a construction and been made to favor an application which is as opposite as light is to darkness from the mind and intention of the distinguished officer who gave it utterance. He never designed to favor the impression that the ministrations of religion might be dispensed with as useless in the camp, or that our armies in the field and the troops occupying our military posts might be left without the regular and authorized institutions of the Gospel, so far, at least, as it is possible in the circumstances to have them regularly administered; but to convey the idea (so that a remedy might be provided), that in a great measure as heretofore conducted, and mainly since the commencement of the present war, the method by which such a result was sought, has failed to secure its great and desirable end. That the remark, greatly as it has been misconstrued, meant neither more nor less than this, we think can not be doubted. The whole subject is a deeply important one, and we propose to devote a few pages to its consideration.

In the *Revised Army Regulations*, published in 1861, the chaplaincy is referred to as follows :

“One Chaplain shall be allowed to each regiment of the army, to be appointed by the Colonel on the nomination of the company commanders. None but regularly ordained ministers of some Christian denomination, however, shall be eligible to appointment, and the wishes and wants of the soldiers of the regiment shall be allowed their *full and due*

weight in making the selection. The proceedings in each case will be immediately forwarded to the Adjutant General's office, the name and denomination of the Chaplain being in every case reported. Chaplains will only be allowed to regiments which are embodied and serving together as one whole—not to regiments of which the companies are serving at different stations.

“Chaplains not to exceed thirty in number are also allowed to posts. The posts at which Chaplains may be employed will be announced by the War Department, but the *appointment* will be made by the Council of Administration.

“The Council of the post will, however, report to the Adjutant General, for the approval of the Secretary of War, the rate of pay allowed to the person selected to officiate as Chaplain, and perform the duties of schoolmaster; the decision of the Secretary on this point will be notified to the commanding officer of the post by the Adjutant General.”—*Article 24.*

In the appended “*Extracts from the Acts of Congress,*” section nine, the following occurs:

“*And be it further enacted,* That there shall be allowed to each regiment one Chaplain, who shall be appointed by the regimental commander on the vote of the field officers and company commanders on duty with the regiment at the time the appointment shall be made. The Chaplain, so appointed, must be a regular ordained minister of a Christian denomination, and shall receive the pay and allowances of a Captain of cavalry, and shall be required to report to the Colonel commanding the regiment to which he is attached, at the end of each quarter, the moral and religious condition of the regiment, and such suggestions as may conduce to the social happiness and moral improvement of the troops.”

The *second* and *fourth* of the “*Articles of War*” refer likewise to the subject, and read as follows:

“It is earnestly recommended to all officers and soldiers diligently to attend divine service; and all officers who shall behave indecently or irreverently at any place of divine worship shall, if commissioned officers, be brought before a general court-martial, there to be publicly and severely reprimanded by the president; if non-commissioned officers or soldiers, every person so offending shall, for his first offense, forfeit one-sixth of a dollar, to be deducted out of his next pay; for the second offense, he shall not only forfeit a like sum, but be confined twenty-four hours; and for every like offense, shall suffer and pay in like manner;

which money, so forfeited, shall be applied, by the Captain or senior officer of the troop or company, to the use of the sick soldiers of the company or troop to which the offender belongs.

“ Every Chaplain commissioned in the army or armies of the United States, who shall absent himself from the duties assigned him (excepting in cases of sickness or leave of absence), shall, on conviction thereof before a court-martial, be fined not exceeding one month's pay, besides the loss of his pay during his absence; or be discharged, as the court-martial shall judge proper.”

We cite these articles because we shall have occasion to refer to them in the sequel, and that our readers may be able to view them in connection with the whole subject. They have been framed with great and commendable care, and after a very full and wise consideration of the matter. And those who charge them with deficiency and incompleteness, would better evince the propriety of their claim to sit in judgment by first making themselves acquainted with the facts in the case, and then by propounding a code in which the alleged deficiencies are supplied. We are quite satisfied that had these regulations been strictly adhered to, and faithfully executed in their true spirit, and according to the design of those who framed and those who adopted them, the system of the chaplaincy would never have been in any proper sense of the terms regarded as a failure.

As to both the propriety and importance of having an earnest and godly minister of Jesus Christ appointed to each of our military posts, and to accompany every regiment which is called into the field, as it has been, on deliberate consideration, recognized by our Government, and as there certainly can be no question on the subject in a Christian community, so it is obvious that any one either in the State or army, who should, at the present time and in the existing state of things, pronounce the measure a failure, would assume a responsibility in view both of the Government and country, which would place him in no enviable position, if such announcement were found to be based on insufficient data, or on hasty and premature conclusions. Such a judgment is undoubtedly premature in the existing state of affairs, and based upon occurrences which have transpired since the war begun. In the somewhat hurried and extemporized condition of our national

affairs, civil and military, the system of the chaplaincy has not had and could not have had a trial sufficient to warrant any such pronouncement. When our enemies in Europe pronounce, as they have recently so often done, that republican institutions are a failure; and that the war to preserve the Union is a failure; and that the Union itself is a failure, basing the representation on the occurrences of the past two years, we have unhesitatingly replied to them that the wish is doubtless father to the thought; inasmuch as the new complications which have arisen, although they have severely tested republican principles and institutions, have not by any means decided the question as to their durability; and that our enemies are quite premature in their conclusion that the events of the last two years have proved either that our war to preserve the Union, or the Union itself, is a failure. And when our enemies, moreover, have sneered at the unmilitary appearance of our soldiery at the outset, and at the want of military knowledge, as well as the actual incapacity of many of the officers who had been appointed to command companies, regiments, and brigades; what has been the response? And still further, what would the response of the country have been, if from such facts some high officer, either civil or military, had announced that the attempt to equip, train, and officer the American forces had proved a failure, and that several brigades, a large number of regiments, and very many companies were almost destitute of competent officers? We should have told him, and told him very plainly, that in the sudden and great emergency in which we were called to act, we have done the best we could; that many who had received the appointment of Surgeon, Captain, Colonel, and even General had received little or no military training, and were unacquainted with the profession of arms; and that it was, therefore, entirely premature to conclude, on the grounds asserted, that our military system was a failure; that if he thus sought to remedy the evil, the declaration was unguarded and unnecessary, injurious to the cause of our country, and helpful only to the cause of our foes.

The parallel between this case and the one in illustration of which it has been cited is sufficiently obvious, and need not be further drawn out or dwelt upon. For the same thing that is

true of the other officers of the army is true also of its Chaplains. Among them, likewise, were those who were wholly unfitted for their station. None of them, moreover, had been accustomed to military life, or to labor in the camp; and some were appointed in direct contradiction to the aforesaid military statutes, not being clergymen in any Christian denomination, or even professors of religion. Others were incompetent on the score of education; and others, who loved their work as ministers of Christ, and were in all respects well able to perform it so far as knowledge, piety, and intellectual ability are concerned, found their health fail under the pressure of official responsibilities; willing and anxious to do all that they could do, yet their physical system yielded before the drafts made upon it by the severe labors and hardships of the camp and field; as is true also of many other equally able and patriotic officers of the army. These facts being known and indisputable, it may well be asked why, and for what reason, is the chaplaincy to be thus singled out and pronounced a failure? And why should data, insufficient for such a conclusion in every other case, be deemed sufficient in this? Can satisfactory reasons be assigned for such a procedure? We think not.

That the brave and gallant defenders of our country and constitution should, on entering the army, be deprived of the institutions of religion, is an idea utterly abhorrent to all the feelings of a Christian community, and would not be seriously tolerated for a moment in our country. The Chaplain may not be able in certain circumstances to perform all or even half that his heart is set upon to accomplish; but if a true servant of his Divine Master and devoted to his work, he will watch his opportunity, and by God's blessing, his field, however unpromising it may appear at first, will yield its fruit. The value of the mere presence of a godly minister in a regiment, even though the untoward circumstances hereinafter to be referred to, should at times deprive him of the opportunity of preaching, except to a few, is truly great. Those who profess faith in the Saviour will be greatly cheered and comforted by his presence. He is there to counsel them and all, and to intercede for his charge at the blood-bought mercy-seat; to counsel and direct and attend upon the sick and wounded, and to

bury their dead. And can any suppose these to be trifles, and matters of no serious importance to the brave men who, for the time being, have severed all the ties and upyielded all the comforts of social life for the hardships of the camp and field, and to imperil health and life itself in defense of their country? The fact that the chaplaincy, as connected with our present vast army, has failed to accomplish all that was hoped from it, is sad to contemplate. But the reasons of that failure are not to be traced, we apprehend, to the supposed inutility of the office itself; and if they can be accurately pointed out and laid before the public, as they were in the case of the incompetent officers before referred to, we question not for a moment that the Christian community will not be backward to devise means for a remedy. And this is our design in proposing the few thoughts which we have to offer on the subject.

Very inadequate ideas have been entertained (and often freely expressed) by the Christian public itself, in relation to the whole subject of chaplaincy in the army. And many even of those who have sustained that office, as before remarked, seemed not to be aware of its duties and responsibilities. And while the importance and actual necessity of the office, are, as we have shown, fully recognized by the Government, and freely conceded by the public; its nature, duties, and responsibilities have not unfrequently been discussed in the most vague and indefinite manner; and conclusions vitally affecting the whole subject, drawn from the most inaccurate and insufficient premises. And this is in fact the true state of the case at present. Hence the necessity is apparent for obtaining definite and accurate ideas on the subject. For until they are obtained by the public, its action in the matter (should it act at all, as we trust it will), may as easily be in a wrong as in the right direction. And while they undertake to give counsel who practically know absolutely nothing of the matter; and while their counsels are applauded and their suggestions attempted to be carried into effect, all idea must be abandoned of arriving at intelligent and practical results, together with all hope of providing a sufficient remedy for the alleged failure aforesaid, and for rendering this arm of the service as efficient as it should be.

But we shall take occasion to refer to this point again on a subsequent page.

The office of the Chaplain is not that of a pastor, strictly speaking, and in the ordinary sense of that term; though it does involve all the sacred obligations of that office in reference to the care of souls. But there neither is, nor can there be in the existing state of things, anything equivalent to a church organization, a bench of deacons and elders; an administration of the sacraments, and of ecclesiastical discipline; or any investing of the office with that authority which is most cheerfully conceded to the pastor in his own communion, and which he is expected to exercise. And never were the wholly inadequate views entertained on this subject by many of our Chaplains more strikingly exhibited than the effort which they made in the Army of the Potomac, at the commencement of the war to inaugurate in the regiments a sort of church organization. The effort evinced a commendable zeal, but a zeal without knowledge in the true sense of the terms; and as any one at all practically acquainted with the duties of the chaplaincy, could scarcely fail to see, must result in disastrous failure. We say *disastrous*; because as it was wholly out of the question for any such attempt to succeed, so the office of the chaplaincy by being brought thus into association with it, the failure of this unadvised movement, could not, by many, be otherwise construed than as a failure of the chaplaincy itself. But the failure of this, and of any and every similar movement, and the fact, moreover, that there have been and still are unfaithful and incompetent incumbents of the office, prove no more against the importance of the office itself, than the fact that there have been a failure of some of our military plans of operation; and that there have been and still are unfaithful and incompetent officers in the army, would prove the military department of our country to be a failure; or the fact that there are unfaithful and incompetent pastors and missionaries, would prove the pastoral office to be a failure; and that the whole missionary enterprise should be abandoned. The extreme shallowness and inconclusiveness of such attempts at ratiocination would be at once detected and exposed on any other subject than that to which they have thus been applied.

We might in like manner proceed to show, also, that as the Chaplain is not in strictness of terms a pastor, neither is his office that of a missionary, if we employ this term in its ordinary sense and application, but this is unnecessary. Our design in adverting at all to such a train of remarks, is simply to present, in brief, a view of the mistakes which have been made, and which must inevitably be made in every effort to obtain a stand-point from which to contemplate and decide upon the duties of the chaplaincy, by viewing those duties and obligations through the medium of some other organization or institution. In England, or in any country, where a denomination is nationalized, there is less difficulty in finding resemblances and drawing analogies; and in the light of them deducing conclusions and prescribing specific duties, plans of operation, and the like; but the attempt to do anything of the sort in respect to the armies of our country, can not but result in confusion and disappointment.

The proper position of the Chaplain in relation to the army is clearly and fully recognized in the aforesaid acts of Congress and articles of war. He is to be a recognized minister of Jesus Christ; and as such is to preach the Gospel, and to labor in the best way he can for the spiritual benefit of those who have been committed to his charge. He is supposed to understand the duties of his office as a minister of Christ, and to be able to decide for himself as to the best and wisest method of performing them. Hence there is no attempt at dictation; and the whole matter is wisely left entirely to him. We say wisely; for the gifts of the ministry, and consequently the modes adopted for performing their work in this sphere, are as diverse as they are found to be in the missionary field, or in that of the settled pastorate itself. He is appointed to the office as a minister of the Lord Jesus Christ. As such he receives from the Government his commission, and enters upon the field to do the work of his Divine Master. He can go in no other capacity, and in no other capacity can he be regarded as possessing authority. The work is assigned to him, and is before him, and he is to decide for himself as to the best method of performing it. And woe to him, if through negligence, or disinclination, or anything else under his control, he fail to perform that work! No one else can share his

responsibility, and no one, therefore, should presume to dictate to him in respect to the discharge of that responsibility—a thought which it would be well for some to remember, who, without any knowledge whatever of the subject, have been rather more forward than propriety would permit, in propounding their crude suggestions.

As to the asserted failure of this office during the past two years to accomplish what was expected from it, let the question, as already intimated, be adjudicated according to the same principles which are applied to the analogous cases to which we have also referred, and we ask nothing more. Candor itself must admit the justice and equity of this suggestion, and must also concede that the announcement of any such inference from such premises, was as illogical as it was premature. If the chaplaincy has not accomplished all that was expected of it during the last two years, how does this prove that the chaplaincy in the American army is a failure? We do not attribute the sentiment as thus expressed to General Howard, but are referring to the illegitimate use which has been made of what he did say. And in view of the matter, therefore, let it be remembered and considered, that the nation was taken entirely by surprise in regard to the existing war. A necessity suddenly arose for immediately collecting immense armies from the walks of private life. Many entered the service as private soldiers and as officers, who were not only unprepared for the discharge of the duties devolving upon them, but many who both in an intellectual or moral point of view were incapable of fulfilling them, and of course they failed in the effort. Such, too, was the character of many who entered as Chaplains, and of course they likewise failed in their department; and instead of expressing surprise at this, it would indeed have been surprising had they not failed.

We have not ourselves been personally conversant with such cases, and therefore can not speak of this matter from personal observation. But from representations brought before the public from sources whose veracity and candor can not be reasonably questioned, it must be admitted that not a few have entered upon the discharge of the duties of Chaplain not only with no adequate knowledge of its official

responsibilities, but who were intellectually and morally disqualified for their performance. We might specify instances, but this is hardly necessary. Some, too, as already stated, were appointed to the office who were not known as ministers of the Gospel, and who did not even profess to be such; and others who, though professing to be such, were not connected with any religious denomination. For, notwithstanding the aforesaid articles of war and acts of Congress are so very explicit on the subject, it must be recollected that at the outset those acts and articles were comparatively very little known even to the volunteers themselves, until after the regiments were already formed, and many of them in the field. It was indeed known that every regiment should have its Chaplain; but the directions in regard to his required status were not known. The Government, by a recent action, has very properly and with some success taken in hand the correction of such abuses, but let us not judge too harshly even those who were implicated therein. The difficulty in the way of supplying qualified incumbents of the office was very great. The churches themselves of the various denominations in our land, were and still are but inadequately supplied with a ministry, and it could hardly be expected that they should at once send off some eight hundred or a thousand well-qualified clergymen to occupy the office of Chaplain. At all events the abuse existed. And we may easily imagine what would be the effect upon religion and morality were the pulpits in our land to be supplied after such a fashion as the aforesaid. And is it, then, surprising that very little good and much evil has accrued to the cause of religion so far as such abuses in the army could operate? To look for any other results in the premises would be to expect grapes from thorns, and figs from thistles. And in view of this fact we only ask: Is it fair and just to attribute such a failure to the chaplaincy, when not only the true and recognized Chaplain had nothing to do with the matter, but when the failure itself occurred simply because he had nothing to do with it?

In the same connection it should likewise be remembered, as already remarked, that many excellent and able men have been obliged to resign the office on account of the failure of health in the discharge of its great responsibilities. But all

this can not surely be pleaded as sustaining the allegation that the chaplaincy is a failure; though we freely allow that so far as intellectual and moral incompetency and a failure of health are concerned, the results have not been what they otherwise would have been. There is, therefore, really no just ground on which to asseverate that the system itself is a failure.

This last topic suggests another which requires to be dwelt upon in the same connection. We advert to the difficulties which the Chaplain must encounter in the performance of the duties of his office in the volunteer army when in active service. Few who neither are nor have been associated with the army can know anything about them; and the subject needs to be brought out somewhat fully before the public, in order that it may be properly apprehended. These difficulties are multiform, and in many respects are such as are unprecedented to the Christian ministry in this land, and where immediate results are looked for, are extremely discouraging.

The army, as now existing, is assembled from every walk of life in our country. Every profession, trade, and calling, and every phase of religious belief and disbelief are represented. And with the feelings fresh from contact with social life, and with the still existing habits either of neglecting or attending on the institutions of religion, together with denominational preferences and prejudices in undiminished strength, the mass constituting a newly-formed regiment is found by the Chaplain to be in all these respects heterogeneous; and that the sole great and animating principle of union is, devotion to the sacred cause of our country. He will often find therein the pantheist, deist, rationalist, and universalist (and they in general not the most remarkable men in the regiment for taciturnity), and repeating the old cavil that the minister is only anxious about his pay; that religion is a humbug, and the like; and he will find likewise represented the Roman Catholic, and all the denominations of protestantism with their denominational preferences; and that in respect to not a few in the regiment, the denomination which he himself may represent, whatever that may be, is viewed with suspicion or prejudice; and that this is sometimes participated in not only by those who are members of churches, but who in their own denomination are regarded as truly pious and godly

men. Nor is this all; for he finds exceedingly prevalent in the army the idle and wicked notion that the duties devolving upon the soldier are incompatible with the duties of a religious life, and therefore that for the time being all attention to religion must be necessarily suspended. Hence he finds it extremely difficult, and often impossible, to learn who of his charge have ever made a profession of religion; and in his efforts to operate through the professed members of Christ's family, to get up a Bible-class, prayer-meeting, or evening-lecture, he is frequently frustrated. He must struggle on alone, very often, in all such efforts; and often when he brings such means of grace into operation, and begins to see the effect in the reëkindling of the fires of love to Christ in hearts that had been in a state of declension, the whole thing is for the time being arrested or broken in upon, by the necessary details for a march, scout, picket duty, and what not.

And then there are many of the men, who, though they would on no account consent to have the regiment destitute of a Chaplain, are yet backward about identifying themselves with him in his efforts; and require to be dealt with by a tact which is by no means the usual gift of the ministry, desirable as it certainly is. And the opportunity for private personal conversation can rarely be had, and in a manner never where the individual himself does not desire it. You visit them in the tents, and mingle with them at other times, but they are always in groups; except when sick or wounded in the hospital. True, a man of little sense and no experience in dealing with souls, would find no difficulty in any of these things; but the devoted and earnest and considerate minister of Christ can not but be brought often to a stand as to how to proceed, and what course to take in such circumstances; and deeply feels the necessity for constant prayer to the Fountain of all love and wisdom for direction. And then, moreover, agreeably to the military statutes, a Chaplain is not allowed to a regiment until its organization is in other respects complete. This provision, though important and perhaps necessary, yet in its operation can not but greatly enhance the obstacles in the way of a Chaplain's accomplishing the results at which he aims; that is, to bring the men under the saving influences of the Gospel, and to become instrumental in their conversion

and salvation. For it not unfrequently happens that the organization is not complete, until after a large proportion of the companies which constitute it have been for weeks or even months engaged in active service in the field. Where it is possible for one who may anticipate an appointment to the chaplaincy of a regiment, to be present with the officers and men from the incipiency of its organization, which has sometimes been the case, and if the Chaplain's heart is truly in his work, the effect is marked, and decided, and delightful to contemplate. As pious men enter the regiment, they rejoice to find an opportunity to take their place in the prayer-meeting, Bible-class, at the evening-lecture, and at the public regimental service on the Sabbath; and also to coöperate with the minister of Christ (whom they expect to become their Chaplain) in everything whereby the spiritual interests of the regiment may be promoted. And this becomes the abiding disposition, and the work of conversion and sanctification still goes on, and its effects are perceived among the men everywhere. But when the reverse of this occurs, as it so frequently has in the exigencies of our war in the West, and when the companies, as fast as they are formed, are hurried to the field of carnage and death, the transition to a lukewarm condition in regard to divine things becomes fearfully easy, as facts so abundantly evince; the relish for the prayer-meeting and the other means of grace in a great measure ceases, and even attendance on the regular and prescribed Sabbath services gradually becomes a matter of mere form. The men having been for weeks or it may be months engaged in active service, fatiguing marches, and other duties which often greatly exhaust the vital energies, and being in the meanwhile deprived of all opportunity to attend the service of God or to enjoy the aforesaid means of grace, become in a lamentable degree habituated to the neglect of them, and when finally a Chaplain is assigned them, and when he enters upon the discharge of his duties, they regard the whole matter with indifference, and excuse themselves from taking any active part therein, or even from any seeming coöperation. Other ideas have taken possession of their minds, and they now pretend to have arrived at the conclusion that a profession of religion is incompatible with a soldier's duties, "not that

they have abandoned religion, as they say, no, they have merely suspended the performance of its duties for the time being, and when they leave the army they purpose to return again to the full performance of them." The effect is, the restraints of religion being thus thrown aside, the slightest temptation is found sufficient to enable sensuality and vice to resume their reign. We have known and been conversant with instances of this sort, the contemplation of which might make even angels weep. It can be easily seen how such a state of things must embarrass the faithful servant of God, and paralyze his efforts to do good. And then, further, if such are the effects upon the mass of those around whom the restraints of a religious profession have been thrown, when they are brought into the condition aforesaid, how fatally must the same causes operate upon those about whom there are no such restraints, but who have been moral and church-going people, respecters of religion and the like? The subject need not be dwelt upon, as every reflecting mind may easily imagine what the result would be. And in such cases we find instances innumerable, that all desire to attend the worship of God, and even all real interest in the matter of religion, have passed away from the mind and heart. And then, to complete the picture, it is necessary only to refer to the fact that the custom observed in the regular army and at the military posts of assembling the men and marching them to the place of worship, has been very extensively discontinued in the volunteer service; and that it is left optional with the men and officers whether to attend divine service or not.

The nature of the obstacles thus thrown in the way of the Chaplain, in his efforts to perform his work, may easily be understood and appreciated. For, as every man of observation and experience knows, the bare attempt to compel men against their will or inclination to listen to religious instruction, or to appeals made directly to them on religious subjects, can rarely be so made as to secure their serious attention; and, above all, when made in the presence of sneering and ungodly companions, is the sure way to frustrate the object at which we aim, and to awaken on the part of him we address either resentment or disgust.

We allude to these things, as already stated, merely to place

before the public the facts as they exist, and not for the purpose of discouraging any faithful God-fearing man from entering upon this field of labor. And it is the farthest from our intention to furnish excuses for negligence and indolence to any who may be already occupying the field. The difficulties and obstacles are great and formidable, *but they have been and they can be successfully encountered and obviated* by the faithful minister of Christ whose heart is in his work.

The difficulties to which we have referred may be found existing more or less in any portion of the army; but in the cavalry service (with which the writer is connected), there are often peculiar sources of discouragement, which perhaps can not be more appropriately presented than by referring to his own personal experience.

The regiment (MERRILL'S HORSE) of which he is Chaplain, and which, since the commencement of its organization in the summer of 1861, has been operating in North Missouri with great efficiency and success, was not completed, and of course had no Chaplain assigned to it until a large proportion of the companies of which it is constituted had been called into very active service in the field. And before he could signify his acceptance of the invitation to the chaplaincy, and enter upon the discharge of its duties, the men had in several severe actions encountered the enemy in battle. From what has been already stated in reference to this matter, our readers may easily perceive the result. The men, being without a spiritual counselor, and having little or no opportunity during that period to attend divine service, had become in many respects quite indifferent to the whole subject. Then when the regiment was fully formed, its companies, on account of the state of the country, were necessarily in some degree separated in order to occupy various important positions for the time being, with the view of operating most effectually in quelling the spirit of insurrection which was rife through the whole of the section which had been assigned to them. During the greater part of the past year some five or six stations were thus occupied, and at each of them the most active and decided operations were continually necessary. The youthful but thoroughly accomplished and heroic commander of the regiment, who from the very outset had, with

an assiduity unwearied and untiring, trained and disciplined his men, until they could be brought to operate with a terrible efficiency, which has made their name a terror to the disloyal element in the district; and having to a great extent introduced the *regime* of the regular service into his regiment, it can be easily supposed how severe in such circumstances must have been the labors devolving upon the men in standing guard, picket duty, and in scouting, foraging, fighting with and pursuing the enemy often for days or weeks at a time; and it can easily be imagined how difficult, under such circumstances, a Chaplain's duty must become.

He must, moreover, visit all parts of the regiment, passing from place to place where its companies are for the time being stationed; and this, on account of the disloyalty of a large portion of the population, could rarely be performed without considerable escort, which, in our small camps, would enhance the fatigue and toil of the men. And then, oftentimes after making persevering efforts to interest a sufficient portion of the men in the subject to constitute a Bible-class or prayer-meeting, you find on going to the appointed place that the majority of those who thus began to evince an interest in these matters have been detailed suddenly for a scout or some other important service, or that their turn has come for picket duty or to stand sentinel; while frequently we are placed in circumstances where there is no house of worship, so that on stormy days or in winter we are forced to employ a tent, which can, of course, accommodate but a very limited number; and thus we are forced to go over our work many and many times, and often when we imagine that it is getting under way, all our plans are rendered inoperative for a time.

In further illustration we here add an extract from a letter written by the earnest and devoted Chaplain of Harris' Cavalry, in the Army of the Potomac, and which was published in the New York Evangelist of March 19. After dwelling upon the general subject of life in the camp, he proceeds to say:

"The greatest hardship of the soldier's life in winter is picket duty. For instance, our whole brigade recently assigned to Colonel Killpatrick, left their comfortable quarters a few mornings ago, and went out on

picket duty for ten days. A cold wet snow filled the air, clung to and dampened everything. It settled on one's hair and neck, melted and ran down his back, producing a general feeling of discomfort. As the men formed preparatory to marching, their uniforms of blue rapidly changed to white, and as they filed off in the dim morning light they presented a shadowy ghost-like appearance. When you realize what it is to march eighteen or twenty miles in such a storm over horrible roads, and then form a cordon of pickets twenty miles long in a wild, desolate country, you have some idea of the not unusual experience of a soldier.

“When he reaches his destination, it is not a disagreeable journey over, and comfortable quarters in which to dry and refresh himself. All his conditions of comfort are carried on his person or strapped to his saddle, and he is thankful even for the shelter of a pine woods. Immediately on arrival, without time for rest, a large detachment must form the picket line, and stand over on the alert from two to four hours at a time, be it day or night. It should not be forgotten during these long winter evenings when the stormy wind sweeps and howls around your comfortable dwellings, that among the wild woods and hills of Virginia, or on the plains of the far West, the patient sentinel walks his desolate beat or sits like an equestrian statue on his horse, thus forming with his own chilled and weary frame a living breastwork and defense for your homes. Pray for him, that during these long lonely hours of hardship and danger our merciful God may excite within his mind thoughts of that better life and happier world where the weary are at rest—where even the names of enemy and war are forgotten.”

These and similar facts may give some idea of the difficulty of maintaining anything like regular and stated religious services among the men, or of operating according to any fixed plan whatever, much less of following out the stupid suggestions of those who, without ever having seen a camp, undertake to prescribe the manner in which everything should be performed. And when there is taken into consideration how great is the influence of custom or habit in keeping up religious observances in social life itself, and that in the army and in the frequent absence of stated religious services the influences brought to bear in social life cease more or less to operate, its ties being in a certain sense severed for the time; and how all the aforesaid obstacles must tend to frustrate the efforts of the Chaplain to accomplish that kind of work which is needed for the spiritual benefit of his charge, the difficulties which beset his path may be to some extent appreciated.

We do not wish to dwell upon this point with unnecessary minuteness, but the exigency of the occasion demands some direct and plain remarks in the connection. Let any competent mind seriously contemplate the minister of Christ entering upon such a field. There is no such thing as a pastoral relation, with its reciprocal duties and obligations, existing or acknowledged by those committed to his charge; and in respect to that charge itself, there is existing no principle of association, but on the contrary, and as regards the religious element, so far as it is actually developed therein, he finds in a great measure the denominational preferences and prejudices which exist in social life alive and operative, and with such human aids and instrumentalities to coöperate with him, he enters upon the duties of his charge, that charge consisting of one thousand men and upward, together with their sick and wounded in the hospital; and in that charge, assembled as it has been from every walk of life, and on the single principle of loyalty to the Constitution and Government, he finds along with the perhaps faint development of the religious element, utter indifferentism to religion, and all forms of faith and unbelief, and too often those who profess the name of Christ not only unwilling to coöperate with him in his efforts, but disgracing religion by the most shameful backslidings, and justifying themselves on the plea that the life of a soldier is incompatible with a religious life; and while they rarely are willing to be approached by a clergyman, he has little or no opportunity to converse with them alone and privately, except when they desire it, and no method by which they may be brought, even on the Sabbath, under the preaching of the Gospel, attendance thereon being left entirely optional with themselves. In view of all these, and a hundred other things which could be enumerated, all requiring tact and time and perseverance and the most unfaltering energy to obviate, is it strange that great results have not already accrued from the Chaplain's labors? or that many good and eminently qualified men should hesitate to enter upon that office? or, that of the noble band of faithful men who have entered it, not a few should have found their health utterly fail in the work? and that others should at times almost yield to discouragement? And is it surprising, moreover, that when this

accumulation of the most formidable trials and obstacles is enhanced by the expressions of impatience, or of implied censure, and even sometimes of denunciation through public meetings or the press, from persons professing to be friends of the Redeemer and his cause, who yet are as ignorant as a post of the whole subject they pretend to discuss, is it remarkable that not a few able and faithful men should have become hopeless of accomplishing anything for Christ in such a field?

It is high time that the Christian community should cease to countenance this spirit of intermeddling, which, without effecting the least good, works evil, and only evil, and that continually; and as it ought not to be passed over in this general discussion of the whole subject, so we shall here improve the occasion to administer a rebuke which we trust may be effectual.

We have alluded to the remark of General Howard, at a meeting in Washington, and the unfortunate application which it has been made to bear, and to the fact that constructions have been put upon his language which were entirely foreign from the mind of that gallant and meritorious officer. General Howard unquestionably will admit that with the exceptions specified by us above, there is now in the army a large number of men sustaining the office of Chaplain, who, while they are, as respects patriotism and devotion to the great cause of freedom, second to no other men in the army, are as earnest and diligent and self-denying in performing the duties of their office as ministers of Christ, as General Howard and his brave associates are in performing the duties devolving upon them in their own department. Of the truth of this representation there is not room for a reasonable doubt. And, then, moreover, there are ways and methods for remedying the abuses and removing the difficulties aforesaid without unnecessarily increasing them, as can not but be done by unguarded remarks on the subject; for we do regard the remark attributed to General Howard as unguarded. And we have no hesitation to say that a communicating of the fact to the Christian community that a large proportion of the regiments of his command were destitute of the ministrations of the Gospel, with the expression of a wish on his part that they might be supplied (unaccompanied, however, by the uncalled-for and

discouraging statement that the chaplaincy was a failure) would have soon resulted in his procuring from among the best and ablest pastors in our country a volunteer supply for those regiments, until methods would have been adopted to render the supply permanent.

We attribute to General Howard no design or intention inconsistent with the sincerest and most devout attachment to the religion of Christ. We cherish his name with affectionate regard; for his life is, and, ever since his entrance into the West Point Academy, has been a standing refutation of the calumny that the life of a soldier is incompatible with a life of earnest devotion to Christ and his cause. But his remark (not as it was intended but as it has been applied) has been made the occasion for renewing in every part of the country the old tirades of abuse against chaplaincy in the army; and thus the spirit of impertinent intermeddling has been encouraged. For it has been so from the beginning, that the earnest, God-fearing, devoted men who occupy this office in our armies, have had not only the aforesaid obstacles to encounter in the performance of their work, and have found but little sympathy with them either in their charge or out of it; but, also, that they have had to stand up against "a fire in the rear," proceeding not alone from atheists and infidels and other despisers of religion, and from such little would-be wits as "Orpheus C. Cur," but from the thoughtless and inconsiderate remarks of some who are friends of Christ, and who seem to be truly desirous to promote the spiritual and eternal interests of our gallant soldiers. But, to make the whole matter perfectly plain, we shall here adduce a single instance out of many in illustration of our meaning. It is the one first occurring to mind, though others not less forcible can be presented.

At a large and enthusiastic demonstration on behalf of the army, held in St. Louis, Missouri (a report of which may be found in the *Daily Missouri Democrat*, of March 24, 1863), one of the speakers, a Mr. Brownell (reported as a "Corresponding Secretary and Agent of the Western Army Committee"), who had been spending several weeks with a part of our army in the South, undertakes, in view of such a remarkable experience, to enlighten the community on the subject of army life, duties of Chaplains, and the like, of which he

practically could have known nothing at all; and after referring with just commendation to an excellent post Chaplain in Fort Pickering—the Rev. J. Porter—he proceeds in the following strain :

“Immediately following the bloody carnage at Shiloh, almost a year since, I was privileged to assist Brother Porter and wife, with others, in unloading the City of Memphis, at Mound City Hospital. Soon after three o'clock in the morning, we went among that seven hundred and fifty, with every conceivable wound. What sights, what sounds, what looks, what utterances! Till seven in the evening, did that faithful husband and wife bend in almost parental affection over those wounded and dying men. *How many times I have wondered why there were so few such Chaplains! Is it not in large part answered, because they do not labor personally for the salvation of their men?*”

The only thing which could justify our attaching the slightest importance to such an utterance, is the position occupied by the speaker as connected with an important benevolent enterprise, the respectability of the audience, and the fact, moreover, that the remark, inane and senseless, and uncalled for, as it seems to be, is only an echo of what had been with equal thoughtlessness and ignorance of the facts, repeated substantially many times before. The remark, besides confounding the duties of a hospital or post Chaplain with those of the Chaplain in the field, openly announces that there are but few of the noble band of our faithful and devoted Chaplains who possess the very ordinary humanity to bestow in a like case to the one referred to, equal and affectionate attention upon their wounded and dying brethren! If this be not its meaning, then the remark is without meaning, and is a mere senseless and inane utterance, perverting and misapplying a fact in order to fabricate an occasion for joining in the clamor which ignorance has been attempting to raise against this class of officers in the army. But if, on the contrary, this be its meaning, as it seems impossible to doubt, then it is one of the most unfounded and atrocious calumnies that was ever uttered against a minister of Christ. And on behalf of the faithful and self-denying band of godly ministers who have freely left the comforts of home to minister to our noble soldiery amid the perils and discomforts of the camp

and field, we pronounce it an unmitigated falsehood and slander. A spirit which can in this manner either thoughtlessly or maliciously assail these servants of God, overburdened as they already are by toil and care in the discharge of their responsibilities, should not only receive no countenance among Christian men, but should be sternly rebuked out of existence. Many of our men receive and read the published accounts of such proceedings. And though it be true that such statements and declarations can do but little injury among those who are acquainted with the facts, and who sympathize with the Chaplain in his toils and labors; they do immense harm to those whose consciences begin to trouble them on the subject of religion, and who are ever on the alert to find reasons to justify their neglect of its claims, and of the appeals made to them by the faithful minister of Christ. In a like manner, also, it affects the openly impenitent. A general charge is made, as in this case, that Chaplains are unfaithful. These men being willing to think so, do not trouble themselves to inquire whether the charge is true or not, but taking for granted that it would not be made without reason, act accordingly; and from the time that this idea gains possession of them the power of the Chaplain to do them good is gone forever. And thus a slander, thoughtlessly uttered, effects all the injury which it could do, were it to proceed from deep-seated malignity.

It is quite in place to add here, also, that in most of the voluntary societies of Christian benevolence, the mere official is too often prone to forget his place. He forgets that he is not the society itself, but only its servant for the time it may choose to employ him. Not a few of the Christian enterprises of the age have been impaired in their efficiency and brought to the very verge of ruin, by the attempts of their officials to intermeddle with matters which are quite beyond or beside the scope of the duties assigned to them. The spirit is similar in manifestation to that which so often shows itself in churches; where certain individuals, often the least qualified and most illiterate, undertake to think and act for the rest—pastor and all—so that a pastor's labors must be performed in exact accordance with their senseless notions, or he is denounced as unfaithful; and from that time forth must encounter the full

amount of their hostility. In such a case who can doubt that such an intrusion is an outrage? Every pastor feels it to be so. The church has intrusted its work to him, and he is responsible for its performance. If he needs counsel he will ask it. And in the exercise of common privilege, he will prefer to seek it of those whom he thinks are really able to impart it. The attempt to force it upon him on the part of those whose ability to render it he can not but regard as more than questionable, is of very little use except to introduce confusion and disorder. So, too, as respects the matter before us.

Much has been frequently said in the same connection, and with equal want of discrimination, about "laboring personally" with the men for their salvation. And rules are not unfrequently laid down for guidance in the matter by those who, on the score of practical knowledge, prudence, or remarkable preëminence in any of the Christian virtues, are the least qualified to advert to the subject at all. But any one who will cast his eye over the aforesaid specification of the obstacles in the way of the Chaplain, as he enters upon his field, with ten or twelve hundreds of men under his charge, will not need that we here stop in order to repel such presumption. The gifts of Christ's ministers are various. But every true minister will, on surveying his field, pursue that course in which he believes he can accomplish most good. The matter should be left to him, without subjecting him to the annoyance of dictation and intermeddling on the part of those who, while they sustain no portion of the mighty burden of his responsibilities, are in no way capacitated to offer him either counsel or suggestion. Should a similar intermeddling be attempted in the case of the Surgeons, Captains, Colonels, or of any other officers in the army, its authors would soon be taught, and in a way that would insure the remembrance of the lesson, that it became them to confine their attention to matters which are legitimately within the scope of their talents and attainments. Let us hope that there may be no occasion ever to refer to this subject again.

The aforesaid methods of interference have been long indulged in; and, while they have accomplished and could accomplish no good whatever, have done evil, and only evil, to

the souls of men. From the very first call for an army, a considerable class, including all the foes of vital godliness, have opposed the appointment of Chaplains, as they still oppose the like appointment to Congress and to our State Legislatures. Not a few united in the opposition who would not like to be identified with that class of persons, because they themselves profess to have some regard for religion. It will be remembered, also, how, almost from the very beginning of the present war, this spirit showed itself; and how that, to some extent, a portion of even the religious press incautiously permitted itself to become the organ for its utterances. The office was decried, and insinuations thrown out indiscriminately against its occupants. It is a principle with officers in the army, and very extensively acted upon, to pass in silence assaults upon them from the people, whom they are laboring to serve; for they would rather suffer in silence than to give the common enemy possession of the facts which are necessary for their own vindication; and, though this principle does not, to the same extent, apply to Chaplains, and the subject under discussion, we have rejoiced to find that they have so extensively acted upon it. Nor should we have referred to the matter at all, except that it was unavoidable in a full and proper treatment of the whole subject under discussion. But we have been glad to find that in general no notice has been taken of these things by the faithful and devoted band of men who were thus assailed. They have quietly toiled on amid the obstacles which beset them, looking to God to follow their labors with his blessing. Here and there death has summoned one and another from their work, either by disease or by some missile of the foe, while they were animating their compatriots in battle, or ministering to the wounded and dying on the field, while others, through utter prostration from disease, contracted by exposures in the camp and on the march, have been obliged to retire from the work they loved. But, as a class, they have prayerfully borne, in patience and silence, all that this spirit of intermeddling and calumny has brought upon them: regarding the time as not having come when the whole matter would be set right with the Christian community. That time has, perhaps, not yet arrived; but it will come, and, while they patiently wait for it, they ask the

Church to give itself more fully to the work of supplying the army with the ministrations of the Gospel.

In respect to the best method of successfully encountering the aforesaid obstacles, it may be expected that we should here offer a word. But it is obvious at a glance that he who enters upon this field of labor should be brought fully to realize that his strength and resources in doing his work are preëminently in God. If he does not realize this, he has no business here; and if he does, he shall find that he does not labor and pray and hope in vain. Let him not only stand ready to improve the opportunities which may occur, but let him seek them amid all his discouragements, and he will often be surprised to find how God will go before him and make his path plain. If I may again refer to my own experience, I may be permitted to say that, notwithstanding all the forenamed difficulties which operated long and discouragingly, we have had many most precious seasons of interest in the regiment. And, not to speak particularly of the regular and prescribed regimental services on the Sabbath, never have I enjoyed more delightful religious services than we have had in the prayer-meetings, Bible-classes and familiar evening-lectures in the regiment. Small, indeed, was the number attending at first; and though often interrupted and, as already remarked, for awhile suspended, yet still kept up with increasing numbers and interest, and as delightful as I have ever enjoyed, or expect to enjoy, on this side Heaven. We have a noble regiment, and one of the best disciplined and most effective in the service. And words would fail me, were I to attempt to describe the emotions of my soul as I have joined in the songs of praise, and listened to and united in the earnest prayers of the heroic men who had stood undaunted, in our country's cause, upon frequent fields of carnage and of death.

And here I must say a word respecting those blessed efforts of the people of God who have labored so assiduously to supply the army with appropriate reading. What an incalculably precious help has this effort proved to the Chaplain in his work! A thousand and a thousand times have I had occasion to say from the deepest recesses of my heart, "*God bless them!*" in view of their abundant and most appropriate helps. Nothing could be more appropriate. The soldier can carry but little

with him besides his necessary equipage, and those neat and beautiful little testaments and hymn books are just the thing. And then the other beautiful little volumes, whose subjects are so admirably chosen—how much good have they done, in instances without number! And, likewise, the little tracts of the same character, which, after perusal, the soldier can inclose in a letter and send as a remembrancer to his loved ones at home, to whom any such thing which has been read and sent by the dear absent husband, or parent, or brother, or child afar off in camp, is such a treasure, and is read and re-read so lovingly by all the family. Never was the spirit of Christian liberality more thoughtfully and more successfully employed in sowing the seed of divine truth. And again we say, from our inmost heart, God bless the noble men and women who have thus thought of and cared and provided for the brave and gallant men who have so freely responded to their country's call, and stepped forth to the fields of battle and of death to defend her from the foe.

A Chaplain, moreover, should make it a great point to secure, as soon as possible, the confidence of the men of his regiment in his integrity of purpose and unfaltering desire to do them good. Let them become fully assured of this fact, and that he is one with them in hardships, privations, and perils, and he can, in a manner, do anything with them.

It was a most unfortunate circumstance for the chaplaincy of the whole army, and to which reference was made with terrible effect by the public press, when, more than a year ago, sundry Chaplains in a portion of the Eastern Army, which was about to move on to battle, concluded that it was not necessary for them to accompany it, and acted accordingly. It is true that the Chaplain, no more than the Surgeon, is necessarily required to go upon the field of battle; but it is, at the same time, true that the Chaplain who, in the sphere of obvious duty, will allow a regard to personal safety to determine or influence his actions, has no business in the army. He who would hesitate to accompany the brave men of his regiment when they are moving forward to bleed and die, if needs be, for their country, and, lest he should be exposed to danger, allow the wounded and dying to remain without the ministrations of religion, had better resign his office and go

home. The idea of a minister of Christ thus fearing death, and in such a cause, and shrinking from the post of ministering to those who need his ministrations, and that, too, when multitudes, who are not even professors of religion, go forth joyfully to face death in the sacred cause for which we war, is too humiliating to be dwelt upon. In such an hour, a knowledge of the fact that the Chaplain is near at hand is always a great satisfaction to the men. If he prefer not to go into the field of battle and minister to the wounded and dying as they fall, he yet should ever be near the Surgeon to whom they are brought. And it would have been far better for the army, and for the cause of our country, had those brethren all been slain in the attempt thus to do their duty, than that they should have adopted the resolution referred to. I know of nothing which so effectually opened the hearts of the men of my regiment to my efforts to do them good, as little events like the following, which I trust I may be pardoned for briefly alluding to, in the way of illustration: On several occasions when, at some of our stations, we were momentarily expecting an attack from an overwhelming force, said to be close upon us, I have lighted my pipe (for, to my shame be it spoken, that I have not yet abandoned the unjustifiable practice of smoking) and moved deliberately along the line of battle, conversing familiarly with the men, or addressing them in words of cheerfulness and animation. On one occasion, as I remember, after some new recruits, who had never met the enemy, had been received, the camp was suddenly aroused at midnight, and the men called upon to form immediately for battle, in view of an impending attack; and the gallant officer who commanded that portion of the line where the new recruits were stationed, observing that they appeared to be somewhat excited, called my attention to the fact, and requested me to speak with them. I did so, and, after addressing them for a few moments, found them not only calm and ready, but eager to evince their zeal in the hallowed cause of their country. These and a few other incidents, somewhat similar, wherein, also, duty called upon me to act, have not only removed the effects of the influence of such examples as the aforesaid from my regiment, but have given me an influence over the most

inapproachable of our men which it would have taken a long time to obtain in any other way.

As regards the specific duties of the Chaplain, the law under which he is appointed has, and, we think, wisely, said but little on the subject. He receives his appointment as a recognized minister of the Gospel, is supposed to understand his duties as such, and is expected to perform them. The spiritual interests and welfare of the regiment, so far as a clergyman can take them in charge, are intrusted to him; and the sick and wounded are, in the same sense, committed to his oversight. It is not only not to be supposed that an authorized minister of the Lord Jesus Christ could be at any loss how to proceed in such circumstances, but it is to be supposed that he would know, and that he would need little or no instruction in the matter. And hence, as already stated, the Government is concerned in appointing him to the field to do the work of a true and faithful clergyman, and not in prescribing his duties. In a late earnest appeal to the churches, by the New York Committee of the United States Christian Commission, to supply the army more fully with the ministrations of the Gospel, it is said that "the law under which Chaplains are appointed, defines no position, gives no protection, and *prescribes no duties*; so that the best men are liable to discouragements, under unfavorable local influences, and the religious interests of the army must be imperfectly provided for, until the law is modified." But we can not think that the representation is justified by the facts. For, as to his position and duties, they are those which appertain to him as a minister of Christ. The Government recognizes him as sustaining this position, and commissions him to perform its duties in the army; and, in the same connection, earnestly recommends all officers and soldiers to attend Divine service. Our enemies, also, are enjoined, by the highest official authority, to respect the Sabbath, and the hour for Divine service has also been suggested. By his commission, he is an officer of the army; his pay is indicative of his rank; and he is authorized to place any one under arrest who should attempt to interfere with him in the discharge of his legitimate duties. At least so we have always understood and acted, and no one has ever ques-

tioned our full right to do so. That the "Regulations" respecting the chaplaincy may be improved, is, no doubt, true; but we do seriously question whether the attempt to prescribe its specific duties would result in anything but embarrassment and confusion. The truth is, the men themselves not only fully understand the position of the Chaplain as a minister of Christ, but expect him to perform his duty as such. And it is a grievous mistake to suppose that he will forfeit his influence with his charge by strict and undeviating faithfulness in the discharge of those duties. Such is not the fact, though the reverse, however, is true. They expect him to be faithful; and no congregation in the world is more quick to discern any lack of faithfulness, or any inconsistency in deportment. The Gospel commends itself to every man's conscience in the sight of God; and the Chaplain who will not only preach the Gospel, but exhibit it in his intercourse with his charge, can not but effect great good among them. They do not expect him to connive at sin, or wink at immorality; but to reprove, rebuke and exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. A contrary course will at once end all his influence as a minister of Christ, and effectually check all his power to do them good. I have now been with the army since December, 1861, and though, as all will testify, I have never hesitated to rebuke vice and sin, I have yet to receive the first unkind or insulting word from any one of the regiment, with the single exception of a man who was intoxicated, and knew not what he was doing.

And then, finally, to conclude what we have to say respecting the difficulties of this field of labor and the best method of surmounting them, it will be observed that when the aforesaid obstacles have been surmounted, the exhausting drain upon the Chaplain's time and energies has, in a measure, just begun. For when his labors and prayers and watchings begin, by the divine blessing, to produce their result, and the men begin to evince an interest in the subject of religion, he feels that notwithstanding all he has heretofore done, his labors and anxieties are but commencing. For now will the perpetual calling upon him at his tent for private conversation and counsel, and the desire expressed for religious services

and visits at the tents (other conveniences being out of reach), and his vain attempts to visit and converse with all who desire it, he finds incomparably more to do than he can perform. And with all his anxiety to do his whole work, he will feel that some are neglected. He must be at his tent at the hours when the men generally are off duty, to receive their calls; he must visit them at their tents; he must be at the hospital, for the sick and wounded can not be neglected; he must prepare for and attend his Bible-class, evening-lecture, and the prayer-meeting. He must likewise prepare for his regimental service on the Sabbath day, and for the services in the hospital; for a regiment is not the congregation for any man to attempt to address without thoughtful and adequate preparation. Often is the Chaplain compelled to exclaim, "Who is sufficient for these things!" and full often have I felt like sitting down and weeping to find so little accomplished of all that I saw needing to be done, and which I had in vain endeavored to perform.

I have not overdrawn these representations. And now, in view of them, and the multitude of other and not less important facts which I have been compelled to omit, the question comes up before the Christian Church and public, What is to be done in the premises? The army has not only been greatly overlooked by a large portion of the Church as a benevolent field for enterprise, but the nature of the field itself has been greatly misapprehended. The question has to a considerable extent arisen in the public mind, whether the chaplaincy system had not better be abolished, and be made to give place to some other provision which might better secure the desired result. It would, perhaps, have been wiser first to have determined whether there is or can be devised any such substitute. As we are not willing, however, to share the responsibility of those who are attempting to abolish it, we shall in conclusion offer a few remarks on the general question, expressive of our views.

No proof can be derived against the system (as we have sufficiently shown), from the fact that insufficient, incompetent and even immoral persons have been appointed to the office. Such a state of things was perhaps unavoidable at the time of

its occurrence, and will pass away with the emergency which called it into being, and it can require but little care hereafter to prevent a recurrence of the like.

One of the worst and most reprehensible suggestions in relation to the matter, and which is the more surprising as emanating from a professed minister of Christ, is that preaching the Gospel is only secondary and of comparatively little account in the army. If this be so, then there is no necessity why ministers of the Gospel should leave their charges in order to occupy the office of Chaplain; a faithful colporteur would answer as well. But we have not space to enlarge on the point, further than to say that while it is God's plan "to save men by the foolishness of preaching," there are multitudes in nearly every regiment, who will pay no heed to religious services which are not conducted by a recognized clergyman. We may regret this, but such is the fact.

We hold and maintain, without the slightest hesitation, that the bare suggestion, come from what source it may, that our noble and gallant army might be on any account whatever left without the regular and authorized ministrations of religion, is criminal in a high degree. Why should it be so left? Is it because of the expense attending the effort to supply them? The man who, taking all things into consideration, should venture to assert such a thing, would deserve to be branded with undying infamy. Is it, then, on account of the obstacles in the way of properly cultivating the field itself? But this is no reason, as we have fully shown. Will the Church herself, then, plead that she is unable to supply those ministrations; and that the army, therefore, must be left without them? Nothing would more surely indicate that the spirit of Christ no longer dwelt in his Church, than the announcement of a conclusion like this. What Christian mind could for a moment tolerate the thought that the heroic men who, at their country's sacred call, have so freely stepped forth into the deadly breach to defend her at the hazard of life itself, may be left in such circumstances without the stated and authorized ministration of the means of grace, not because it is really impossible to supply them, but because it would require on the part of the Church some considerable effort and sacrifice to do so? In

the name of our gallant army itself, and on behalf of the loved and cherished ones whom they have left at home, and in the name and on behalf of our innumerable wounded, and sick, and dying; and of the multitude who are yet destined to perish before this cruel strife shall end, we protest against such a thought, and against the lukewarmness with which the whole matter has been in a great measure regarded. And let the precious memory of our heroic and martyred dead put to shame and lasting silence the spirit of utilitarianism which would still attempt to place obstacles in the way.

We thank God that at length there is on this subject a movement, and in the right direction. And we rejoice that the noble body constituting the CHRISTIAN COMMISSION, whose unwearied toils and sacrifices for the good of the army will ever be remembered as conferring honor upon the age and country, have also taken this matter in hand. The late stirring appeal made to the churches by the New York Committee of that Commission should be deeply pondered by every church and clergyman in the land. The plan which it proposes, though designed only to be temporary in its operation, is yet the very best thing to be done in the present circumstances, for it both admits and calls for immediate action; and while it is in operation, time will be afforded to the Church herself for further deliberation, and to devise means for meeting the requirements of the case, which shall be at least more lasting and permanent. We append the plan itself, in the conclusion of what we can now offer on the subject (for our article is already by many pages longer than we had designed), and trust that its recommendations will receive the prayerful and prompt consideration of all the churches and ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ in our country:

THE NEW YORK COMMITTEE OF THE U. S. CHRISTIAN COMMISSION propose the following plan, earnestly requesting its immediate consideration by clerical bodies, Pastors and Churches, and respectfully urging the promptest action:

1. The voluntary enlistment of at least one minister of the Gospel, of talent, position, and approved adaptation to this special service, for each brigade in the army—say 300 in all—during a period of two or

three months each. Every city or large town can spare one Pastor, at least—and *the best one*—for this noble work ; his pulpit being supplied by his ministerial brethren of the same or of different denominations in rotation, or otherwise. Each considerable ecclesiastical body can thus detail a representative for the army.

2. Each volunteer Chaplain may be accompanied by a layman from his own or a neighboring congregation, under appointment as a Delegate of the Christian Commission, who shall aid in the distribution of the Scriptures, tracts, newspapers, and camp and hospital stores, and in holding meetings, or visiting the sick and wounded.

3. The service thus proposed should be gratuitous ; but the Christian Commission will defray all expenses of Pastor and Delegate going to, returning from, and while on the field, and furnish all needed publications, stores, and other means of usefulness. On this system :

The Army would have a demonstration of the benevolence of the Gospel, and of its ambassadors. The very presence of a reputable, experienced preacher of Christ in the camp, on the one errand of salvation, with no earthly reward, would be a living sermon. Able and earnest appeals to the consciences of officers and men, sobered by the exposures and disappointments of war, from esteemed Pastors whose congregations have *lent* them for this mission of Christian charity, and whose motives to effort could not be questioned, must have great power. It would infuse new animation into the army. There is reason to believe that such labors would be universally welcomed by officers and soldiers.

The Pastors and Churches might expect a blessing on their joint self-denial.

The Country needs the example of Christian patriotism and devotion to so grand a spiritual object, as a counterpoise to the selfishness and spirit of faction so unhappily prevalent.

The Christianity of the country needs, for its own invigoration and revival, such a demonstration of unselfish vigor as would be afforded by the simultaneous devotion of three hundred of its ablest preachers to the volunteer chaplaincy service, among half a million of needy, waiting, dying souls.

30 Bible House, New York, March 3, 1863.