

is, the idea of it would not even occur to him. He was as incapable of neglecting an act from lack of courage or even from a modification of courage as most men are incapable of a public act which would involve them in danger, and by the measure of the one you may take the measure of the other. Courage possessed and displayed in that degree is by definition heroic.

There was no risk he would not run, no suffering which he would not encounter: from ridicule to misconception, and from misconception to imprisonment and from imprisonment to poverty. This, the third thing necessary, gave to his talent and to his knowledge their enormous value.

All that his country has lost, and his country will not find such a combination again. Among public things it is a great thing, and we have lost a very great man. There are private things which are the more important in the decline of a State. These qualities I have described move me less than the things which I have not said of such a friend and of such a companion in arms: *tam cari capitis*.

## OUR FRIEND CECIL

(By LOUIS J. MCQUILLAND, in the *New Witness*.)

Mr. Hilaire Belloc has paid a noble tribute to the late Cecil Chesterton as a public man. I desire to lay my little chaplet of ivy beside his wreath of laurel, and to speak of my dead friend in his private relations as a good and sterling comrade, a man who went through life inspired by a sacramental feeling of confraternity.

I knew Cecil Chesterton for close on twenty years of light and shade, of storm and ease, of gaiety and gravity. Even in his very early manhood his brain was fully matured; even in his later years he kept the heart of a child. He was the simplest and least self-conscious being I have ever encountered. Whatever society he entered into, he was one with his fellows. He had an everlasting zest for life, which makes his death seem utterly unreal. For myself, I shall never feel that he has left us. The spirit of the man was so vital that it will abide with us as long as our lives last.

Cecil was the best Bohemian I have ever known. His generosity was almost ludicrous; his good humor was irrepressible. He was a tremendous talker, and it was all good talk. He took his mission in life seriously; but he never took himself seriously. He had many eccentricities, but they were all lovable ones.

I am told that the Tommies adored him. They could not fail to do so. They are great gentlemen, and they recognised a brother in chivalry.

Fleet Street is a street of cynics, in the sense that it has no sentimentalities, and that it is a pitiless judge of men and motives. Cecil Chesterton was one of the best beloved figures that ever walked along its narrow and universal way. Cecil was a great journalist; he was better than that—he was a good fellow. To the needy he gave all that he had to give; to the miserable he extended a sympathy as high as heaven and as deep as the sea. Fleet Street was the home of his heart. In it he spent all the best years of his life. In Fleet Street he found the great romance of his career in his wife, comrade and fellow-journalist, "John K. Prothero." At his wedding-breakfast in "The Olde Cheshire Cheese" all his friends of the pen were gathered round him—what a short space it is, and what an eternity, looking back again to that sunny day of wine and gladness in June, 1917.

At the beautiful and simple service in Maiden Lane on Saturday last the men who had clinked glasses with him, with laughter and good wishes, assembled to do him a last honor in a day of darkness and desolation. The Rector of Corpus Christi, who had officiated at his marriage, celebrated the Mass of Requiem for the repose of his soul. The server at the altar, in khaki, was his old friend Joseph Clayton, writer and democrat. The eloquent priest who preached his panegyric, Father Vincent MacNabb, was one of his warmest admirers,

and, in a sense, a fellow-journalist. Every single member of the congregation mourned with an intimate personal grief for the good soldier of God, who has gone to his reward.

I cannot close this rough and inadequate tribute to a prince of friends without testifying to his high service and unshaken fidelity to the cause of my country. The Irish in England will cherish while life lasts the memory of their fearless champion who lies in his soldier's grave at Boulogne.

"Time takes them all that we loved, fair lives and famous,

To the soft, long sleep, to the broad, sweet bosom of Death;

But the flower of their souls he shall not take away to shame us,

Nor their lips lack song forever that now lack breath."

## THE "KHAKI" PRIESTS

(By BERNARD J. McNAMARA in *The Record of Louisville*.)

The great epidemic of influenza is bringing to the army chaplains in our cantonments here the praise and honor that are their due. Shot and shell and gas bombs attract more attention than the hacking cough and the delirium and the hemorrhage of the influenza and pneumonia ward. But the priest who worked in the latter was just as much a hero as the one who labored amid the former. Both endangered their lives from a sense of duty, sanctified by love.

My observations were made in a southern camp during the full course of the epidemic there. There is not the slightest doubt that such observations are true of every camp in the United States. The epidemic struck the camp with a suddenness that overwhelmed the medical staff. Ambulance after ambulance hurriedly dashed up to the receiving station, and soon the magnificent base hospital was filled with an army of diseased soldiers. The fire house became a little hospital, the chapel was a sick ward, and finally a tented hospital with 1800 patients raised its head in the surrounding fields. Every place that was available was used for the sufferers. In all 8000 men were cared for at the base hospital. Very many Catholic boys were among the number.

The fever began to mount in hundreds of cases and the dread pneumonia commenced its course of death. Then the cries began in no uncertain terms: "Doctor, for God's sake get me a priest." "Nurse, I want the priest." "Tell the priest to come quickly." In such ways did hundreds of Catholic soldiers, urged undoubtedly by the grace of God, voice their urgent request. Racked with pain, burning with fever, and overcome with extreme weakness, they felt life slipping away from them and they realised that now they needed a physician for their souls, the priest. They did not ask for him, they demanded him. And the doctors, many of them with little or no faith, were impressed by what they heard and rushed to the commanding officer.

The situation was desperate. Only one Catholic priest was in that camp of 18,000 men, and to him fell the work. The old commander, a grizzled army veteran, realised that one priest could not stand the labors demanded of him. He declared in terms most picturesque and most emphatic that these boys would have priests if he could get them.

The hustling secretary of the Knights of Columbus was commissioned to get priests and get them quickly. An S.O.S. telegram to a large city seven hours distant brought a response. A true priest of God came as fast as the train could bring him. He found the army chaplain on the verge of a collapse and forced him to take to his bed. So, for four days and nights this civilian priest worked with only five hours' rest. Just ninety miles away from the large camp was a much smaller camp of 1500 men.

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