

Three Catholic army chaplains were there. They knew the situation at the other camp, whereas there was no serious case at their little camp. They had volunteered for the greater work. But army red tape had to be unravelled, and so they waited impatiently, wondering how many souls were going into eternity without the aid of the Sacraments.

Finally the orders arrived and the first train took them on their errand of love. The civilian priest broke down the day after their arrival, a victim of the terrible influenza. The epidemic was now at its height; 5000 men were sick and hundreds of pneumonia cases had developed. The newly arrived army chaplains set to work. They labored night and day, snatching a little sleep when it was possible to do so.

After five days of such strenuous work, one priest was literally forced to bed by the doctors. So only one priest remained to do the work. But now the epidemic was on the wane. For two days and nights this priest was the only chaplain, Catholic or otherwise, in that great hospital. Then the chaplains from the school at Camp Taylor came, and among them were two priests. Some cases of spinal meningitis had developed, and here, too, in that isolated ward was work for the priests.

But the epidemic had run its course. All the priests affected are now well and their weakness is only a reminder of the great things that they were able to do for God, for souls, and for the Church. They are now cheered by the wonderful knowledge, gathered from a comparison of their records with the record of death, that God in His providence so disposed the relays of priests that not a Catholic died without the reception of the Last Sacraments. A beautiful and consoling thought and a mighty compliment to the kind of work done by Christ's active and zealous ministers!

The foregoing recital of facts was made so that some practical and pertinent reflections and conclusions might be drawn from the data. First of all, a wonderful impression was created upon the doctors, nurses, and orderlies and also on the Protestant patients by the splendid act of faith that showed clearly in the demand made by the hundreds of Catholic boys, white and colored. After the first days of the epidemic, the Protestant boys were absolutely without spiritual help from their own ministers. So the Catholic chaplains of necessity became the spiritual helpers of every one of the sufferers irrespective of religion.

The kindness of the priests towards the sick, their unselfish and untiring devotion to their duty and the wonderful spirit of faith displayed by the Catholic soldiers before and especially after the reception of the Sacraments produced very practical results among the non-Catholic soldiers, both white and colored. Twenty-five of them asked and received baptism before their death.

A number of them had never been baptised before. While others did not go so far as to receive the Sacraments from the Catholic priests, still they joyfully accepted his kind office in directing their dying thoughts toward Almighty God and their last end.

Many a Protestant boy's eyes were closed in death by the Catholic priest after the soldier had made a fervent act of contrition aided by the shepherd of Christ. But, above all, a kinder feeling towards the Church and the Catholic priest sprang up in the hearts of all these soldier boys, whether Protestant or Mormon or Jewish, because of the almost Divine service of love rendered by the ambassadors of Christ in this time of sorrow and pain and suffering.

Greater, because more intelligent, was the impression made upon the doctors and nurses by the presence and work of the Catholic chaplains. A new impression had been made upon them by the insistent demand of the seriously ill soldiers for the priest. They had attended Catholic patients before. But this was something different; it was the individual Catholic sick room magnified hundreds of times, and everybody was witness to the magnificent act of faith voiced by thou-

sands of Catholics who loved their faith.

These men and women could not ignore nor forget what they saw and heard. They thought about the phenomenon and talked on it. Finally, the thought found its expression of wonderment: "What a wonderful faith to possess." The most striking example was of a major in the medical corps. He had charge of the negro patients. One must remember that half the patients in the whole hospital were Catholics. The major was especially impressed with the faith of colored Catholic soldiers.

At the end of the epidemic, he said to one of the priests: "Father, these negro Catholics have a wonderful faith: I know that they are happier than I have ever been, I envy them their faith. The priest agreed with his correct conclusion and showed him how he might possess the same happy faith. But he was not willing yet to make the sacrifice.

Unmindful of rest and food, the two things most needed in avoiding the dread influenza, the priests worked among the sick. They seemed unmindful of danger, too. The doctors thought them foolish, and some of them told this to the priests in a kindly way. But they admired them, too, as the same time. They could not understand how the chaplains could be so forgetful of their health. They seemed to forget that the number of priests was only two, while the doctors' grand total was 150. They did not realise that while they worked hard from a sense of duty, the priests labored out of pure love of Christ and the salvation of souls. It was the difference between labor from a sense of duty and labor from a spirit of love, and there is a very great difference.

The doctors admired the priests not only because they saw them assist the dying to die well but also because they came to realise the material help that was given them in bringing back their patients to health. The bright, happy smile of these ministers of Christ in the midst of so much pain and suffering, the pleasant morning salutation and the cheery word that raised the patients from the depression into which their extreme weakness had thrown them, came to be recognised as a tonic far exceeding any material medicine. The doctors were glad to see these dispensers of the mysteries of God come into their wards. They were always so happy, so consistently cheerful that they spread sunshine and gave an impetus towards recovery wherever they went. The doctors admired, wondered, they could not understand. But what priest would not be happy and cheerful even though tired and famished when he was saving souls for Christ in such abundance!

CHRISTCHURCH CELTIC CLUB.

The fortnightly meeting of the Christchurch Celtic Club was held on Tuesday evening, February 18. Mr. Jas. Curry presided, and the attendance quite filled the meeting room in the Hibernian Hall. Four new members were elected, and nine nominations for membership were received. After routine business had been transacted, a musical and elocutionary programme was presented, the following contributing:—Misses R. Rings, D. Taylor, K. O'Brien, D. Quinn, E. Behrens, M. G. and K. O'Connor, Messrs. P. McNamara, W. McConnell, P. J. Smyth, P. Greenlees, and E. O'Brien. In connection with the club an Irish class is being formed, so that the national language of Ireland may be fostered and propagated. The chaplain (Father Fogarty) is taking a very keen interest in the movement, and is arranging for the books for tuition.

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