

obstacles are put in his way, and the enemy is engaged in undoing what has been done, you have no right to fall foul upon the rate of progress.

But, now, who is competent to judge whether a clergyman is successful or not? The proof that he is, or is not, is not at once and clearly visible. He deals not with matter, but with mind; not with flesh, but with spirit. You can tell at once whether a Workhouse or Infirmary is kept clean, whether the general routine is gone through, or the various departments are managed according to law and order. But you cannot so judge of spiritual work. That spiritual seed which is sown to-day may not bring forth fruit, it may be, for days or months or years. And in the meantime the patient may have passed clean away and been forgotten by those among whom his lot was cast when the seed was dropped. It is, moreover, certain that mind is much more difficult to manage than matter, and the things which belong to sense much more easy to manipulate than the things which belong to spirit. From the very nature of the case, and the materials to be dealt with, the clergyman's work is always difficult, and that of the Chaplain the most difficult of all. He has to deal, on the one hand, with those only who are prostrated by sickness, and who are, more or less, mentally weakened; and, on the other hand, he has to deal with those who are soured by disappointment, misfortune, and other ills—with some, even, who are so fast bound by the chain of their besetting sins that it is next to impossible to lift them up at all. And, added to all this, there are their depressing surroundings, their dull and monotonous existences.

Now these are difficulties with which it is not easy to cope, which are not easily overcome, be the man never so much in earnest, and the provision made never so complete. But they *are* overcome in many cases, and we Chaplains could tell of many instances of successful labours, even under these most depressing and trying conditions.

Another difficulty with which Chaplains have to contend is that of meddling and uncultured officers. The outside world have little notion of the disorder constantly exhibited by those who are supposed to keep order. In a very few cases indeed do they seem to understand the nature of their office, and are constantly attempting to extend their authority into a department with which they have nothing whatever to do. The

Medical Officer, for instance, in some cases, seeks to extend his authority into the region of spiritual things, which belongs to the Chaplain alone. He undertakes to give authority to this person and to that person to come into the Infirmary and minister unto the patients and hold religious services. If the Chaplain be passive, he does not object to this; but if he be active, he does object, and the little local papers, magnifying this small matter to suit their purposes, placard it thus, "An Infirmary Scandal—The Chaplain Again." But all the Chaplain wants is to be master of his own department, and to avoid a medley in matters religious.

The Master of the Workhouse sometimes acts upon the same line, and, of course the same thing takes place. The "Clerk to the Board" sometimes takes upon himself to give authority to clergymen and others to come in and do religious work, and the Chaplain, quite rightly, upsets his small arrangements.

But all the straining and striving constitutes a serious obstacle to religious success. What we want is officers who know their place, and who will content themselves with the duties belonging to that office. And if ever we are to get such officers, they must be drawn from a more refined and cultured class. This is necessary for more reasons than one. The Masters and Matrons, &c., have sometimes to communicate with ladies about certain cases, and they ought to be able to do this with delicacy and decency. That they cannot do this, in some cases at any rate, is quite certain. I could quote letters, written to ladies by a Master, which are most indecent; especially as the lady was not known to the writer. If they do this thing in a green tree, what will they do in the dry?

Another, and a very serious difficulty with which Chaplains have to contend is the lack of a proper church, and other religious externals. Everybody knows what a help it is to the parish priest to have a church consecrated and set apart for Divine service, and provided with all the requisites for conducting religious worship "decently and in order." But the Workhouse Chaplain, in most cases, has nothing of the kind. The place where Divine service is to be held is the dining-hall, consulting-room, entertaining room on visiting days, general thoroughfare, &c. Sometimes the kitchens are immediately below this room, and the congregation and Chaplain are treated to the odour of boiling cabbage, cooking fish, &c., and these not the best that could be had.

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