



## Existing Organisation and Work of the Royal Army Chaplains' Department

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# EXISTING ORGANISATION AND WORK OF THE ROYAL ARMY CHAPLAINS' DEPARTMENT.

By the REV. H. W. BLACKBURNE, D.S.O., M.C., M.A.,  
Chaplain to the Forces.

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On Wednesday, 1st February, 1922.

GENERAL LORD HORNE, G.C.B., K.C.M.G., Col. Comdt. R.A.,  
A.D.C. General to H.M. the King, General Officer Commanding-in-Chief,  
Eastern Command, in the Chair.

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THE CHAIRMAN: Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Blackburne will lecture to us to-day on "The Existing Organisation and Work of the Royal Army Chaplains' Department."

When I tell you that Mr. Blackburne took part in the South African War as a trooper in the West Kent Imperial Yeomanry—served as a Chaplain throughout the Great War, reaching the position of Assistant Chaplain General of the 1st Army—winning the Military Cross and the D.S.O., you will agree with me that he is well qualified to deal with his subject. Personally I am in a position to speak of his very valuable services during the Great War, whilst his recent appointment as Chaplain to the King testifies to the high esteem with which he is regarded.

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## LECTURE.

THE Royal Army Chaplains' Department is concerned with the moral and spiritual welfare of the Army; it is the Department for Spiritual supplies, and if, as is on all sides agreed, there is a spiritual side to man's nature, then provision should be made for it in the Army. Such is the *raison d'être* of the Chaplains' Department—it caters for a part in men's lives that cannot with justice be ignored. But subsidiary to this, it may be forcibly contended that religious belief in some shape or form is of real value to an Army as a fighting machine. Such a contention has the support of many distinguished soldiers; let two be quoted whose sanity of outlook cannot be questioned. Field Marshal Sir William Robertson: "I am satisfied that definite and practical religious convictions form an essential part of every soldier's equipment." General Lord Horne: "Good morale on the part of the troops is essential to victory. It results from a variety of causes, such as sense of superiority due to good discipline and thorough training, reliable arms and equipment, success in battle, a just cause, but above all, in my opinion, from

religious sentiment and trust in God." To this testimony can be added the words of the Field Service Regulations: "Success in War depends more on the moral than the physical qualities." In the inculcation of moral qualities religion plays an all-important part.

Before attempting to explain the existing organisation of the Chaplains' Department, a word or two must be said about the organisation of our Department before the War, on the outbreak of War, and during the War. *Before the War* our Department was administered at the War Office in two sections: (a) The Church of England Chaplains by the Chaplain General, (b) The Chaplains of other Churches by a lay Civil Servant, graded as an Assistant Principal Clerk. Both these officials were responsible to the Secretary of the War Office, the official head of the Chaplains' Department, who acted in that capacity on behalf of the Secretary of State for War. Here, for all practical purposes, the organisation of the Chaplains' Department began and ended. The Chaplain General so far as the Church of England Chaplains were concerned, issued certain instructions on broad lines; and at the big Military Stations such as Aldershot, Portsmouth, Egypt, Malta, the Curragh, there were Senior Chaplains of the various denominations; but in the majority of Stations (apart from the Chaplain General at the War Office) there was no local supervision: "Everyone did that which was right in his own eyes." *On the outbreak of War*: In such a highly organised machine as the Army, such complete lack of organisation was bound to make itself felt, and especially so on the outbreak of war. In the mobilisation scheme, no decision had been arrived at with regard to Chaplains; or, if it had been arrived at, it did not appear in the mobilisation regulations. This, from the Chaplains' point of view, was a serious drawback, and those of us who went out with the original B.E.F. are not likely to forget how difficult it was to fit ourselves into a machine which had been wonderfully woven together, and in which no clear decision had been made about the Chaplains' Department. The plain facts are these. In the mobilisation regulations one Chaplain alone was mentioned, and that was the Principal Chaplain, who was included in the third echelon of G.H.Q. I have been told that this was a Printer's error; it was none the less a serious one, for it added considerably to our difficulties. It was disconcerting, to say the least of it, to be greeted wherever one went with, "Hullo, Padre, what on earth are you doing out here?" The Medical authorities, into whose arms we were thrown, did what they could for us, and provided us with homes in the Field Ambulances and in the Hospitals; but for the first few weeks of the War it was always a matter of some difficulty to get one's modest kit carried on waggons which were already fully loaded with authorised equipment, as laid down in those carefully constructed mobilisation regulations; and in which, except for the Principal Chaplain, the Chaplains did not appear. *During the War*: To trace in any detail the evolution of the Chaplains' Department during the War would take far too long; we must deal with it as best we can in a few sentences. There were 5

Chaplains in each of the original Divisions that went to France, 3 Church of England, 1 Roman Catholic, 1 Church of Scotland or Wesleyan. Until the middle of 1915 we were all under the administrative authority of Dr. Simms (Presbyterian), who was the Principal Chaplain; a kinder and more sympathetic Chief could not have been found. But in 1915 the Department in France was divided into two sections. One section included all the Chaplains of the Church of England, presided over by that most lovable of men, Bishop Gwynne of Khartoum, under the title of Deputy Chaplain General; the other section included the Chaplains of all the other Churches, and these remained under the administration of the Principal Chaplain, Dr. Simms, with two R.C. Chaplains as his Assistants. In the other Expeditionary Forces that were sent out subsequently, the plan of a single Principal Chaplain for all denominations was adhered to, and all denominations were represented amongst the various holders of this office. In January, 1916, Assistant Chaplain Generals were appointed to each Army and Main Base in France; later Deputy Assistant Chaplain Generals and Senior Chaplains (C. of E.) for Corps, Divisions, and small bases were appointed. About a year later the section of the Chaplains' Department under the Principal Chaplain was similarly organised, with Assistant Principal Chaplains, and Deputy Assistant Principal Chaplains, and Senior Chaplains (non-C. of E.). At home matters were complicated still more. In 1918 a Principal Chaplain for each denomination other than the Church of England was attached to the Chaplains' Branch of the War Office, and an Assistant Principal Chaplain for each of these denominations was posted to the Headquarters of each Command. Assistant Chaplain Generals for the Church of England had been so posted in 1916.

*The Reorganisation of the Royal Army Chaplains' Department.*—At the close of the War it was obvious to all that the Chaplains' Department needed reorganising, and it was right that trouble should be taken about it; for, in spite of many mistakes, the Department had "made good." It was seen that Chaplains could do more for the wellbeing and morale of an Army than had been before realised, and the title "Royal" was given to us by His Majesty the King, an honour greatly appreciated by us all.

The question of pay, promotion and pension was tackled first, this being a non-controversial matter except so far as the Treasury was concerned. Without going into actual figures, we can put the whole question of pay into a broad statement: it is now possible for a Chaplain to live on his pay; before the new scale of pay was issued it was not possible for him to do so. We owe a great debt of gratitude to the Army Council and to many other officers in high command for fighting our battles over this question. The Royal Army Chaplains' Department is now adequately paid. Another point which was settled quite easily was the question of promotion. This is now very largely a matter of selection, and not, as it used to be, a purely automatic affair governed entirely by length of service. Our Pensions, too, have been greatly increased. We

are now treated like the rest of the Army, and we ask for nothing better than that. Decision as to the administration of the Department was a far more difficult thing to arrive at. The situation was discussed at great length by the representatives of the various denominations, and eventually the following scheme was agreed upon by all denominations other than Roman Catholic. This Church felt unable to accept the scheme. While regretting this fact, it is a matter for real thankfulness that the whole scheme was not wrecked on that account. The following are the important points in the unification scheme agreed upon by the various Churches and authorised by the Army Order 393, 1920:—

(i) The Secretary of the War Office remains responsible to the Secretary of State for War for the General Policy governing the administration of the Royal Army Chaplains' Department.

(ii) Under the direction and supervision of the Secretary of the War Office there is at the War Office a Chaplain General and a Deputy Chaplain General. When the Chaplain General belongs to the Church of England, the Deputy Chaplain General must belong to one of the other denominations.

(iii) At the Headquarters of each of the Commands at home there is an Assistant Chaplain General, acting as the Staff Officer of the G.O.C. in Chief, and responsible for the Military Administration of the Department in that Command.

(iv) These appointments of Chaplain General, Deputy Chaplain General, and Assistant Chaplain General are made by the Secretary of State for War acting on the recommendation of the Secretary of the War Office, who will consider the personal qualifications of all those who are eligible, and who will see that all the Churches are suitably represented. The normal tenure of these appointments will be for four years, like all other Staff appointments.

(v) Pending further instructions, the administrative duties of the Royal Army Chaplains' Department in Commands and Stations abroad remains as at present, and the Roman Catholic Chaplaincy service is administered on the lines followed prior to August 4th, 1914.

(vi) Chaplains have relative rank according to the class in which they are placed, and have the right to wear military uniform with badges appropriate to their relative rank, but, as an Army Council Instruction No. 500, dated 22nd July, 1920, states, Chaplains do not actually hold these ranks, and therefore the titles "Colonel," "Major," "Captain," are not applicable to them. The correct mode of address for an Army Chaplain is "The Rev. ———, Chaplain to the Forces," or in conversation, simply, "Mr. ———."

There is considerable divergence of opinion as to the wearing of badges of rank by Chaplains when in uniform. There may be—indeed, there have been—Chaplains who love aping the officer, and who therefore glory in the stars and crowns that they place on their shoulders. Such

Chaplains make themselves altogether ridiculous in the eyes of the rest of the Army, but they would be equally ridiculous without their stars and crowns. The vast majority of Chaplains are far prouder of the fact that they are "Ministers of religion" than that they have relative rank in the Army, and though, on the whole, it is right that they should have an official position in such a highly organised machine as the Army they are perfectly content to be recognised by all ranks, as indeed they are, as "Padres" and nothing more.

Such, then, is the existing organisation of the Royal Army Chaplains' Department—an organisation for which we may be profoundly thankful, for it makes our Department a regular part of the Army and it is a step along the golden road to unity, for without minimising our denominational differences (which is always a foolish thing to do), it has given us a Department unified for purposes of administration; and if the various "Denominations" cannot trust each other sufficiently for that, then another term other than Christian must be found to govern the expression Denomination as it is used in the Army.

### *War Establishments.*

A word or two must now be said with regard to War Establishments. 17 Chaplains of all denominations are allotted to a Division, 4 for each Brigade, one Chaplain to be attached to each Battalion, 2 Chaplains for the Artillery of the Division. Regiments would then know quite clearly what to provide for. Two Chaplains for the Artillery of the Division, one for the Royal Engineers, and 2 for Divisional Troops, one of whom would be the Senior Chaplain of the Division. These 17 Chaplains are of all denominations, and the proportions of the denominations will vary according to the composition of the Division; for example, a Scottish Division would have a majority of Presbyterian Chaplains and an ordinary English Division a majority of Anglican Chaplains. Other formations, such as Army Headquarters, Corps Headquarters, Casualty Clearing Stations, and Hospitals are also suitably provided for.

When we compare the number—17 Chaplains for a Division—with the number—5—that was deemed sufficient in 1914, I think it may be claimed that the Chaplains made good in the last War.

### *The Work of an Army Chaplain.*

The title of this lecture is, "The Existing Organisation and Work of the Royal Army Chaplains' Department." An attempt has been made to deal with the organisation; we must now turn our attention to the work of an Army Chaplain. In the Standing Orders of the Royal Military College, of which I am Chaplain, my duties are stated as follows:—"The Chaplain will perform Divine Service and the other duties of his calling and be the Secretary of the Compassionate Fund Committee." I have no right to quarrel with that definition of my duties, for more than once I have been asked to suggest any alteration. But as it stands, the duties as stated are not onerous; and any Chaplain who confines himself to

his Official duties will never die of overwork. The point is the work of an Army Chaplain cannot be specifically stated. His official duties, such as taking services, visiting in Hospitals, detention barracks, and married quarters are only a very minor part of his work—important none the less, as we shall see. He should take an active interest in everything affecting the well-being of the troops, give specific instruction in religious and moral questions, take a share in the general educational and recreational activities of his station, and help the men in any personal difficulties in which they may find themselves. If it is asked to put into one sentence the work of an Army Chaplain, then this is the sentence that I would suggest: "To help men to do their present duty." Whether in Peace or in War, he should be the servant of all. The title "Minister" is one that is not much appreciated in the Church to which I belong, which, to say the least of it, is strange, for it is the most noble of all titles for a Padre; it is the title that Christ took to Himself when he said, "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister."

Perhaps the most important part of a Chaplain's official duties is the conducting of Services. Services in the Army are compulsory, and this is a vexed question. For my own part—I speak from experience as a Private Soldier and not only as a Padre—I can only say that, while thoroughly appreciating all the objections to compulsory attendance at services, I am convinced that the reasons in favour of the existing system outweigh the reasons against it. But, and this is the point with which we are now concerned, so long as the compulsory system continues—and I hope that it will—the Chaplain should take the greatest possible care in the conduct of these services, and any slovenliness or lack of care in preparing his sermon makes him guilty of wilful neglect of duty. If officers and men are to be forced to attend a service, then that service should be bright, helpful, and interesting, and if it is not, then the Chaplain is not fitted for his job.

Some of you will remember that in the Peninsular War the Great Duke of Wellington felt the need of Army Chaplains. At the request of the Secretary of State for War, the Bishops at home were asked to make a suitable selection from the clergy. The clergy so selected were sent out to the War, but only one of them was of any use to the Army. He, so the Duke reported, was invaluable, for he spent all his time with the men; the rest were all returned to the Bishops who selected them. The same holds good at the present day. To be continually with the men and officers of the units placed in his charge, to be a constant visitor to barrack rooms, officers' messes, football and cricket matches and all the various entertainments of Army life, this is the keynote of an Army Chaplain's life; it is this more than anything else that will win for him interest for and attention at the services he conducts, and enable him in the broadest and best way "to lead men to Christ."

Finally, being an Englishman, I must be allowed to have my "grouse." The places in which we Army Chaplains are condemned to hold our services is a public scandal. After leaving Aldershot in 1904,

I was obliged to hold services in Gymnasiums, Theatres, Concert Halls, and Barrack rooms, some of them highly scented with beer from the night before. In Harrismith, South Africa, we built our own Church without the assistance of a penny from Public Funds; and now at the Royal Military College we are engaged in putting up a Chapel which will be large enough to accommodate the cadets and which will be one of the most beautiful Memorials of the War—again without a penny from Public Funds. My experience is but one of many. In most of the Garrisons of the Army there is no proper Church. To attempt to inculcate the true spirit of reverence and devotion in such makeshifts as are provided, is to attempt the impossible; you might just as well attempt to teach riding without a riding school or gymnastics without a gymnasium. As a nation we are all out for ideals, and thank God that we are, for without ideals a nation must cease to be. But ideals cost something. If, then, religion is to be a really living thing in the Army, and if we Chaplains are to do the work we all want to do, then let us have decent places for worship, where reverence, devotion, and true Christian sentiment can be properly taught, and where by the outward eye the young men of our Army can be made to see the value of religion.

#### DISCUSSION.

MAJOR-GENERAL W. H. ANDERSON, C.B. (Commandant of the Staff College) : Lord Horne, Ladies and Gentlemen, I think it is only right that a discussion of this nature should be initiated by a soldier and not by a member of the Royal Army Chaplains' Department, and I therefore hasten to rise before some of my clerical friends on each side of me do so. I wish first of all to make a personal explanation, which I think is already known to Mr. Blackburne. I have told Mr. Blackburne that I was the Secretary of the War Establishments Committee at the War Office between 1906 and 1908, and in that capacity I was very much responsible for the co-ordination of the war establishments of the different units of the Expeditionary Force for service abroad. Before I vacated that position I got together some figures in the form of a table, giving the total number of troops that would leave the country in case an Expeditionary Force of four or six divisions was sent. Up to that time we had not been told the new establishment for the Army Chaplains' Department, and on looking at the table, one of my clerks said to me, "There are no chaplains included in it." The book had to go to press, and as I was anxious that it should not be printed without any reference to the chaplains in it all, I removed the "remarks" column from the table, and I substituted the words "One Chaplain General." I said, "That at any rate will draw attention to the matter, and we shall get it put right later on." That I think explains why only one chaplain was down officially in the original war establishment to accompany the Expeditionary Force. The fact that chaplains should accompany the original Expeditionary Force was not entirely forgotten by those who were responsible for the organisation of that force.

I would like to ask Mr. Blackburne one or two questions, the first being with regard to the advisability or otherwise of chaplains wearing rank badges. My own personal opinion is that they are very advantageous as giving an official grading. The main point, however, for consideration is whether that rank badge in any way prejudices the chaplain himself in his relations with the men. The



chaplain is the only officer in the Army who is able to go and talk to the men quite on an equal basis, as man to man. If any other officer with rank badges on his shoulder goes into the barrack room and talks to the men, the relations are still those of the soldier to his officer. That is not so with the chaplain. I would like to know Mr. Blackburne's opinion as to whether the chaplains wearing badges of rank of captain, major, or colonel prejudice them in their relations as men to men, with the men whom they meet in the barrack rooms. That seems to me to be a very important point, because, if it does, I think we ought to give it up. Another question I should like to ask him is with reference to the compulsory services. I belong to a regiment which, before the war at any rate, wore red coats and white facings, and the fact that the men had to clean their tunics, pipe-clay the white facings, belt, and so on, to go to compulsory services, undoubtedly affected them very much in their ideas of church parade. Now that we are in khaki that objection does not arise, as there is so little for them to clean; but if we ever go back to red coats and white facings, it means that a man who does not want to go to church in the ordinary course has a grievance that he has to spend so much time cleaning himself up in order to go to church. Personally, it seems to me that in a country which does have an official religion, special sanction should be given by the Army Authorities for church parades, and that therefore the men should go to church parade just like they go to any other parade. Speaking from my own experience, I do not believe there is any great feeling on the part of the men against compulsory service on Sunday. There will, of course, always be certain men who will object, and "the lawyer," as we call him in the Army, has obviously got a case against being ordered to go to church.

There is one other point that I should like to refer to. Mr. Blackburne mentioned the shocks that the chaplains received on joining their divisions on mobilisation. I think they had greater shocks afterwards. I myself remember the case of a very distinguished divine who had preached at an army service, and while lunching afterwards with the officers, a young officer leaned across the table and said, "I say, Padre, that was a pretty rotten sermon you threw off at us this morning." That sort of criticism is not easy to bear by gentlemen who have had a University career and have then taken up the post of chaplains. The Army Chaplains, however, accepted that sort of criticism. They were the friends of the officers, and I think I may say far more of the men. What they did for us in France was so very valuable, that I do think we should do all we can now in the Service to get the number of chaplains increased, and to see that they are closely identified with the units themselves. Some time ago the regimental doctors were done away with, and those soldiers who are old enough to remember the regimental doctors say that the relation between the medical officers and the fighting branches has not been so warm or intimate as it was when the regimental doctor went round among the men. If that result was produced when the care of bodily health was centralised, it is far more important that our mental and moral health should be improved by having the close and intimate relation with the fighting troops which is obtained when Padres are definitely allotted to a particular unit.

THE REV. H. J. FLEMMING, C.M.G., C.F. : I would like to say one or two words in regard to what General Anderson has said. First of all as to criticism, what an extraordinarily wholesome thing it was for the eminent divine. One of the great joys, I think, of the chaplain's life is that he does receive a certain amount of kindly and very wholesome criticism. If his sermons are dull and tedious he can quite easily discover at once what his congregation thinks of

them, especially if he is serving with mounted troops. It is very good for him. With regard to the wearing of badges of rank: before 1914 I should have been most emphatically against the adoption. I remember Mr. Blackburne saying somewhere about 1912 or 1913 that if uniforms and badges of rank were brought into the Chaplains' Department, that, for his own part, he would see nothing for it but to "throw his hand in." I am equally emphatic for them now, but of course my experience is very limited at the present moment. I have found them no hindrance whatsoever in the field, absolutely none, with all ranks of men. As far as I can judge, they would be no hindrance now, but since 1918 I have been working with the gentlemen cadets, and the staff sergeants, and the few other ranks who are at the Royal Military Academy. Therefore that is not quite a fair test as to whether the badges would be a positive hindrance to me in going into an ordinary barrack room. I do not believe they are, because in talking the matter over with my colleagues at Woolwich Garrison, I know that they do not find them a hindrance in any way. As to compulsory services, I absolutely endorse everything Mr. Blackburne has said. I would like, however, to suggest one thing. I do not know if you noticed that at a recent medical conference, when cases of shell-shock were being discussed, the doctors mostly concerned with such cases said that they were far more rare among the soldiers of the old regular Army, and they put that down chiefly to their training. I believe that in that training the compulsory service unconsciously played a very important part. I would like to bear one small bit of testimony. I joined a brigade on the Aisne. We were allowed to hold our services there in a ruined church, and night after night that little church used to be packed with the men of the brigade who were in reserve. By the chance of travel I had no kit at all; I had no service books; but the men used to come in with candle ends, and I used to give out the hymn verse by verse, and they knew it. That is the point—they knew the service, because in the years of preparation for war the prayers and hymns had all become familiar to them, and words which they had listened to or repeated hundreds of times without much conscious thought suddenly became full of meaning when they were face to face with grim reality. I believe the compulsory service played its part in preparing men for the very grim facts of war.

THE REV. F. J. WALKEY, O.B.E., M.C.: May I, as I am the Chaplain of the 4th Northampton Territorial Regiment, and served with the men in Egypt and Palestine under Colonel Brown, be allowed, as an outsider, to say a few words. In thanking Mr. Blackburne for his lecture this afternoon I would also, as a Free Churchman, like to make an acknowledgment of the adequate place that the Army Authorities gave to Free Churchmen during the war. Many of our Free Church denominations were guilty of sad neglect of our friends in the Army before the war, but the Army authorities gave us a very adequate place among the chaplains during the war, because they realised that there were large masses of Free Churchmen who needed to be ministered to.

I should like, if I may be permitted to do so, to say a word in reference to a point that Mr. Blackburne raises in connection with the facilities for worship provided for troops in barracks. When I was appointed as an Assistant Principal Chaplain in Egypt, under Rev. E. R. Day, the Principal Chaplain, I had a great deal of work to do after the Armistice in Cairo and Alexandria. The Free Church Chaplains freely recognised that the garrison churches were the common property both of the Church of England and of the Free Churches, but it was not always practical politics to arrange the services in one common building such as the garrison church, due to the fact that many Church of England Chaplains arranged a

succession of services from early in the morning right on to 11.30, when it was impossible for the Free Churchmen to hold their services. We freely recognised that the Church of England had the greater right to the use of the garrison churches because of their larger numbers, but the provision made in Cairo and in Alexandria for Free Church services really amounted to a scandal. It was simply abominable that we should be asked to go and hold our services in odd bits of rooms upstairs in out-of-the-way places. Their condition, and the disturbance taking place all round about, made it almost impossible to hold services in such places. It really ought to be a subject for enquiry, because our men ought not to be asked to go to such out-of-the-way places for divine worship. No provision was made for us, as I think it should have been. If a proper report were made concerning the provision of places in which Free Church troops should worship, I think some step forward would be taken towards making adequate provision for our men.

I would also like to say a word or two concerning the question of chaplains and their rank. Personally I found no difficulty at all in the Northampton Regiment in going freely among the men, in spite of the badges of rank. I think it all depends on the chaplain himself. I have known chaplains go into a barrack room and demand that the men should rise on his entrance because he was an officer. That of course is altogether wrong. So far as I am concerned, I found that the men freely responded to the presence of a chaplain if that chaplain was a man in their midst, and one who sought their highest interests in every respect. I think the value of rank to a chaplain is that it enables him to move among the officers. Sometimes officers are not willing to give chaplains their position as officers in the Army, and among officers it is sometimes valuable to a chaplain to have rank, in order to take his place among them, as of right. One point of importance that should be mentioned is that greater care should be taken in the choice of chaplains. Personally I think more care should be exercised in the type of chaplain that is appointed. As a Free Churchman, I candidly acknowledge that there were some very unmanly men sent out to Egypt and Palestine who did not do us credit as Free Churchmen, and I knew many unmanly men belonging to other denominations. I see no reason why the Army should not insist that some test should be given to chaplains that they can talk to men, that they are manly, and that they have some knowledge as to what should be said to men. I remember on the Sunday before the second battle of Gaza, the advance being made on the Tuesday, the 17th of April, we had our last brigade parade service. All the officers and chaplains knew that the engagement would be a very severe one, but we had a chaplain in our brigade who preached a sermon to his men on that Sunday morning, two days before action, on the subject of swearing! He told the men that every time they swore they prolonged the war. The 19th of April, the Thursday of that week, was our fatal day, when our brigade was almost annihilated, and this chaplain held a service three days afterwards, and preached to the remainder of the men on the value of foreign missions. That is absolutely true; that happened in Palestine. I suggest to you that men like that ought not to be appointed as chaplains. Such a man cannot speak to men; he cannot elevate their thoughts; and I think the War Office has a perfect right to make a test of chaplains as to their capabilities in the matter of addressing men. Certainly the authorities of the church should be satisfied that they are properly trained and equipped in other directions, but I think the War Office has a right to insist that only manly chaplains should be appointed, and not men who have no notion of how to address men.

THE REV. F. R. WILSON (22nd London Regt.): I am very pleased to hear that we are likely to revert, if I may use that term, to the plan of having a chaplain

to a unit. I have felt the desirability of that very keenly indeed. I have been the chaplain of a London Battalion for many years, and I knew my men intimately. But on going to France the men were separated from their chaplains and cast among strangers. I am therefore very pleased to hear that the War Office is likely to revert to the ideal custom of attaching a chaplain to a unit, so that he may live among the men and get to know them intimately. In that way the chaplains will be better able to help the men.

MAJOR A. MENZIES : My only excuse for rising is that I notice in the *précis* the lecturer states that the official duties of the chaplain are only a minor part of his work. I had the pleasure of serving in 1914-15 in the First Division with Mr. Blackburne, and I am therefore well able to say something about the work he did, apart from his official duties. His work in 1914-15, during the first winter of the late war, was simply remarkable. I heard it said by many men that our troops would never have stood the first winter, when they had to stand in the trenches literally above their knees in mud, if it had not been for their ration of rum. But I take a different view of it. Although the ration of rum was helpful, I say that if it had not been for men like Mr. Blackburne, who looked after the troops when they were behind the lines, great difficulty would have been experienced in getting those men to stick out the conditions under which they were fighting in the front line. I am sure that if Mr. Blackburne had been serving in the Peninsular War, instead of in the late war, the Duke of Wellington would have sent back a message saying that there were only two chaplains of any value.

THE CHAIRMAN : If no one else desires to take part in the discussion, I will ask Mr. Blackburne to deal with the points that have been raised.

THE REV. H. W. BLACKBURNE : I think they have all been dealt with, Sir.

THE CHAIRMAN : After the outbreak of war in 1914, perhaps there was no department of the Army which made its mark more promptly and more effectually than the Royal Army Chaplains' Department.

Before the war the Army Chaplain had received little encouragement to associate himself with regimental life, and consequently in the early days of the War the duties of the Army Chaplain were understood neither by Commanders nor by the troops.

With the stress and strain of battle and war conditions, the Chaplain found his place. There has been a slight tendency to-day to harp on the question of those who failed. In every walk of life there is always a certain proportion of failures, so do not let us expect more from those who undertook the duties of Chaplain than we expect from those who follow any other profession. I claim, however, that in most cases the Chaplain filled his place in the life of his unit with great advantage both to officers and men and with credit to himself. It may be fairly claimed that the padre gained the esteem, respect and affection of all ranks, and as a general rule he became one of the best known men in his unit. He certainly earned it by his example of gallantry and devotion in attending to the wounded on the battlefield and in the dressing station; by his forethought and consideration for their comfort, bodily and mental, in the trenches and in the hospitals and behind the line; by his organisation of coffee stalls, reading rooms, and other institutions; and by an example of patience and cheerfulness under trying conditions, an example which did much to encourage all ranks and which undoubtedly tended to the maintenance of morale. In fact, so great an opinion had I of the influence of the Chaplain, that in the Spring of 1918, when we heard of preparations on the

part of the Germans for attack in great strength, when all sorts of rumours were in the air, and when it became evident that men would be called upon to make an effort such as they had never made before, I took advantage of a Conference of Chaplains of different denominations, organised by Mr. Blackburne, to address them, and impress upon them the importance I attached to their work in countering "war weariness" and in promoting "morale."

In our small peace army, where consideration of cost and economy are paramount, we cannot hope to increase our establishment of Army Chaplains. I had visions after the war of a Chaplain being attached to every unit equivalent to a battalion as one of the officers, carrying out not only what Mr. Blackburne has pointed out as the purely technical duties of the Chaplain, but also attending to the general welfare of the men, superintending their recreations and taking part in their education. I am afraid that that is impossible at present, but I hold the opinion that a Chaplain should be added on mobilisation to the establishment of each unit equivalent to a battalion.

I have often discussed the question as to whether Army Chaplains should wear badges of rank. Personally I am in favour of it. It gives them the status which is due to their profession and to their attainments; it gives them the authority which it is desirable they should exercise, and it does not interfere with their opportunities for association with all ranks. The influence for good the Chaplain can exercise is in proportion to his personality, zeal, and energy. So far as I have been able to judge, both from enquiry and also from forming my own opinion from a long association with the men, I do not think badges of rank will in any way affect the influence of the Chaplains with the Non-Commissioned Officers and men. As has been so well pointed out this afternoon, it is the man himself who will tell. It is the touch of human nature; it is the personality. He must have that, if he is going to get on at all, whether he wears badges of rank or whether he does not. It is preferable that we should show the respect and honour that is due to the profession and to the position, and class chaplains as officers. The compulsory parade service is another old question that has often been discussed. Personally I am in favour of compulsory parade services. I think they have two results. In many cases they have brought to the notice of a man things that he would otherwise never have heard of. Undoubtedly they have had an effect on him, because in time of stress and trouble there is no difficulty in filling your places of worship. Wherever services were held during the war, there was no difficulty as a rule in finding plenty of men to come to them, and I think it probable that in many cases thoughts were turned in that direction by having attended the compulsory services. Looking at the question purely from the regimental point of view, the compulsory parade service enabled a commanding officer to smarten up a man who had not taken the trouble to smarten himself up. He was compelled at any rate once a week to appear on parade clean and soldierlike. There is no doubt that if you can make a man feel that he is smart, and a credit to his regiment, you will heighten his self-respect and his morale, and make him a better soldier.

Finally, I ask you all to join with me in thanking Mr. Blackburne for coming here to-day and giving us this lecture, on a subject in connection with which a great deal of ignorance exists. No one is better qualified, as I foreshadowed in my opening remarks, to speak on this subject than Mr. Blackburne, and I think I am justified in asserting that if we could ensure that the majority of our chaplains shared in his energy, his breadth of mind, his knowledge of human nature, and his general sympathy, the Royal Army Chaplains' Department would run no risk of falling into any disrepute. In the name of all those present, and also of those

who will read the lecture when it is printed in the *Journal*, I thank Mr. Blackburne for his excellent lecture this afternoon.

MAJOR-GENERAL W. H. ANDERSON, C.B. : Ladies and Gentlemen, it affords me the greatest possible pleasure to move a hearty vote of thanks to Lord Horne for so kindly taking the Chair this afternoon. I need scarcely say that anyone who served in the First Army would naturally turn to his Lordship to preside on such an occasion, and therefore Mr. Blackburne and I have called upon him twice to preside at meetings here during the last eight days. Lord Horne is a very busy man, and the fact that he has spared time to come and preside over the meeting to-day is only another instance of the interest he takes in all matters connected with the Service, especially with the subject that Mr. Blackburne has dealt with to-day.

The resolution of thanks was carried by acclamation, and the meeting terminated.

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### THE FRONTISPIECE.

THE print here reproduced is from the painting by Wryke, engraved by T. Kitchen, in the collection of the Earl of Leicester, and the mezzotint is in the possession of the *Royal United Service Institution*. Owing to the need for seriously reducing the size, it has been necessary to delete the index figures in the original which distinguish many of the individuals, from King William III. downwards who are represented in the painting.