

A Chaplain's Experiences

Our Chaplain, for whom we all entertain a high regard and respect, visited us in our editorial "den" a day or so ago, and having offered us a smoke, proceeded to light up himself and to regale us with a few of his experiences in the days when he was a young and bashful parson. We venture, with apologies to him, to try to recall two or three of them for the benefit of our readers.

When very young and newly ordained, he was directed by his Bishop, the late most Rev. John Medly, Bishop of Frederickton, to read the second lesson in the Cathedral at a crowded evening service. The Chaplain describes his excessive nervousness in graphic terms! The lesson was one of the longest chapters in the "Acts." He had difficulty in holding himself together—so intense was his nervousness: but by great effort he held his way through the lengthy narrative until he came to the account of St Peter's visit to Lydda and his healing of Æneas, a sick man there. At that point he had to turn the page, and in his nervousness turned *two* pages instead of one, and to his horror found Cornelius the devout Roman Centurian seeing a vision, and in consequence sending for St. Peter. The young parson quickly discovered his mistake, but his presence of mind forsook him and he could not turn back—but read straight on to the bitter end, 48 additional verses, no less!

In the vestry after the service, the Bishop came up to him looking very stern and said: "Mr. H., how did you make such a horrible mistake, you left Æneas sick and went on to read about Cornelius, What in the world became of Æneas?" Canon Roberts a noted punster of his day, who was standing by saved the situation by exclaiming: "Oh, my Lord, *Any ass* (Æneas) would know."

Another experience of the Chaplain's was when conducting a funeral service. When standing around the grave, with the body ready to be lowered, the young parson was perturbed by hearing a dispute between the undertaker and the chief mourner, in which the latter said: "I tell you sir, that the *Remains* before he died requested that he be laid with his feet towards the west."

Later, when Rector of Harcourt, a large country mission in New Brunswick, he drove up one cool September evening to the house of one of his parishioners, a farmer, named Phinias Beers, whose striking characteristics physically was his gigantic size, and his enormous mop of hair which was never cut. The following dialogue ensued: "Good evening Mr. Beers." "Good evening Parson." "It's a cool evening Mr. Beers." "It do feel kind of cool." "You've had your hair cut Mr. Beers." "Yes sir, I hev." "Aren't you afraid of catching cold?" "Well, it do feel pretty chilly like." "I'll tell you what to do, Mr. Beers, to avoid catching a cold,—wash your head in the coldest water you can find." To which Mr. Beers replied: "Wash my head, parson! I hain't washed my head for *forty year*."