

What the New Army Expects of Its Chaplains

One of Them Outlines His Views Based Upon Years of Experience with Regulars—Preaching Only a Part of the Duties

WHILE candidates for commissions in training camps all over the country are equipping themselves to become officers of the first half million men drafted as soldiers, and while the regular army's Medical and Quartermaster Corps are working night and day to train newcomers in their respective branches, not much is being published about the organization of a comparatively small but nevertheless indispensable corps—the Chaplains of the new army.

There are now sixty-six Chaplains appointed to the regular army, representing every Christian denomination. The scheme of the General Staff for the new army provides one Chaplain with every new regiment organized. This will mean that in six months, at the latest, about 300 clergymen will be called from their parishes to work with American troops at home and abroad. The President has the sole power of appointment of Chaplains. Each appointee must be confirmed by the Senate. The number of Chaplains of each denomination is apportioned according to the figures of the official religious census of the United States. In the case of each individual appointment, the Chaplain must have been recommended by the organization of his church, or if there is no church organization of that particular denomination, then the recommendations of five prominent clergymen must support the request for a commission in the Corps of Chaplains.

Each candidate for the position must undergo a physical examination similar to that taken by other army officers, and must pass a mental test such as shall be prescribed by the President. The Chaplain enters the service as a First Lieutenant, becoming a Captain after seven years. He becomes a Major ten years later, if there is a vacancy in that rank. There are no Chaplains in the army with a higher rank than Major. A scheme to provide for the presence of a Chaplain on the General Staff and the creation of the rank of Chaplain General met with such opposition inside the corps itself that it was abandoned.

The uniform of a Chaplain is similar to that worn by other officers. The insignia differs in that a cross is worn on the collar. A Chaplain wears no side arms, and his person, like that of a doctor, has been declared inviolable by civilized nations. It might be mentioned that during the present war the duties of the Chaplains with some of the regiments engaged have led them into situations where their office could not be distinguished, and hundreds have fallen on the field of battle in Europe in the midst of the men they were encouraging to meet death fearlessly.

The Rev. Father George J. Waring of the Eleventh United States Cavalry, author of "An Army Chaplain's Duties and How Best to Accomplish Them," a book published by the War Department for army use, remarked the other day: "A Chaplain has to be, like St. Paul, all things to all men." He added: "A successful Chaplain is necessarily an adaptable man. He is ready at all times to fit himself with the least possible disturbance to military exigencies."

Father Waring, as he is affectionately known to thousands of soldiers, both officers and enlisted men, with whom he has served, entered the army thirteen years ago as Chaplain of the Eleventh Cavalry. He served with that regiment in Cuba during the second occupation and also

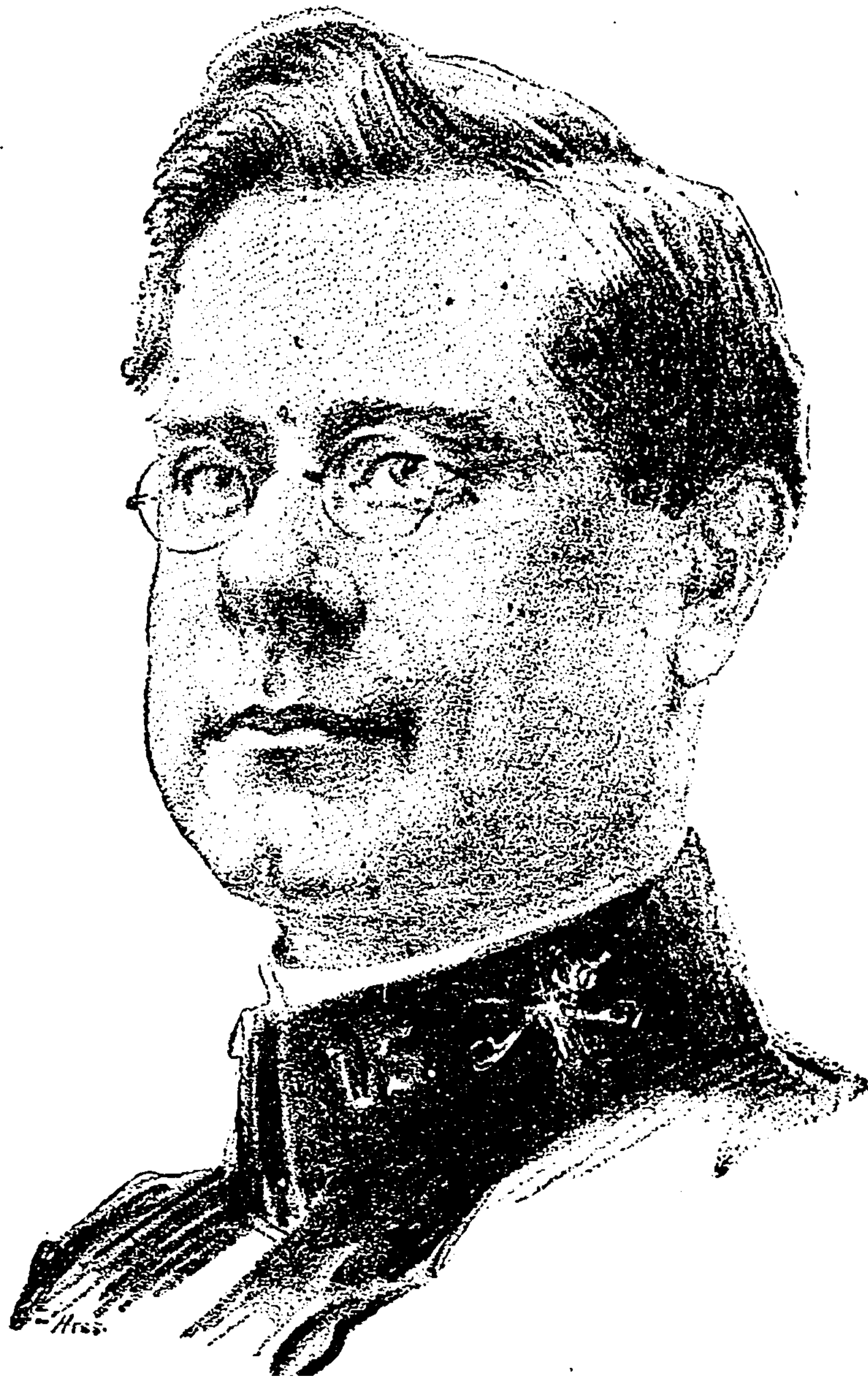
on the Texas border. A few years ago, after he had been promoted to the rank of Captain, he was sent to Leavenworth to assume a Chaplain's duties in the prison, in which the Government had inaugurated a new plan, the establishment of Disciplinary Barracks. There offenders against the military code were to have an opportunity to rehabilitate themselves in the army, or else in civil life. From the prison Chaplain Waring was sent to Governors Island, where, a year and a half ago, he took up his work in the Disciplinary Barracks at Castle Williams.

When he was asked what were the characteristics of a successful army Chaplain, Chaplain Waring replied:

"That is not so very easy, but, if you want a short list, I should say: Adaptability, tact, common sense, broadmindedness, cheerfulness, and practical sym-

pathetic, kindly disposed, friendly, lenient but firm, courageous, unselfish and essentially a man of God. He should be first, last, and all the time what he professes to be, a clergyman, and should leave the military end to those who have adopted that as their profession and life work.

"When the Government requests some church to send one or more of its ministers to the army, it does not want these clergymen to take or fill the places of its officers. If regular officers were needed they would be taken from the Government's own excellent training college, West Point, or from a military college, from the organized militia, from training camp, or from the regularly enlisted soldiers. Under no circumstance would the Government go to a theologian



Chaplain George J. Waring of Governors Island, an Advocate of Manly Sports for American Soldiers.

pathy, and he must have a good physique.

"Thousands of good clergymen might be failures in the army. But the army is no place for a man who has not been successful in parish work. The very reasons that make him a failure in the parish make him a disaster in the army. In short, I would say this: No Chaplain who confines himself in the limitations of army regulations concerning his duties can hope to be a success. For, while army regulations provide for certain fixed duties, they intentionally leave much to his common sense and good judgment. Hence, the first important duty of a Chaplain is to study each man individually. He should know every man of his regiment personally and endeavor to win his esteem and confidence. It is a good plan to try to learn something about each man's past life, about his home, his people, his former associations, his previous employment, and anything else that will help to form a correct opinion of his character.

"A man is ten times easier to handle when he feels he is talking to some one who knows him well and who is, sympathetically, a friend. Therefore, a Chaplain, to be successful, must have a cheer-

ful disposition; he should be charitable, sympathetic, kindly disposed, friendly, lenient but firm, courageous, unselfish and essentially a man of God. He should be first, last, and all the time what he professes to be, a clergyman, and should leave the military end to those who have adopted that as their profession and life work.

The United States wants clergymen, and only those of the best type, to become its Chaplains in the different regiments and to do those things and only those things which its regularly commissioned officers are neither trained nor supposed to do.

"The Chaplain's foremost occupation ought to be to instill religion into every one with whom he comes in contact. He ought not alone to teach religion; he ought so to live that every move he makes will tend to diffuse it among his men. He should preach short but practical sermons and should illustrate them in a way that will forcibly appeal to his audience. He should not make either himself or his religion a bore, but by a natural and pleasant manner make himself and his presence something to be desired. It is an excellent thing for a Chaplain to take a leading part in promoting the enjoyment and the entertainment of the soldiers. By so doing he can become better acquainted with them and can intrench himself more securely into their confidence. But a Chaplain should always remember that these are only means to an end, and not an end in themselves."

Chaplain Waring asserted that while a Chaplain could not be expected to hold services successfully for denominations other than his own, he could always hold a general service at which all the members of the regiment might be present, and he should preach such sermons as would be spiritually helpful to every one, without discussing dogmatic or controversial doctrines.

"But I have always found it more satisfactory to invite ministers of the different churches from towns nearest the post," he continued. "They are willing to come, and the men are helped and encouraged by meeting and talking to a minister belonging to the church at which they received their early training. This makes them realize that they haven't got away entirely from old religious influences, and it makes the ministers in nearby towns feel more kindly toward the soldiers and their weaknesses, for they realize that many of the men are members, or at least sons of members, of their churches.

"A Chaplain must neither be a narrow-minded man nor a bigot, if he hopes for success. He must avoid mixing up with the religious persuasions of his men. It is not his place to start or encourage arguments or discussions on religion, and least of all ought he try to disturb their religious convictions. My experience has been that I always have more backsliders from my own church than I can pull and keep in line; hence I never have had the time, even if I had the desire, to make converts from other religions."

Chaplain Waring is convinced that the soldiers' entertainments should be considered in the Chaplain's line of duty. For if there is not some attraction for the men at the post, they will naturally drift to the nearby town where there is usually everything which tends to degrade them. He is an enthusiast over athletics in general, and especially the manly games that muscle-hardened soldiers would prefer.

"The Chaplain ought to be the moving spirit in encouraging football and baseball," he said, "for these sports encourage emulation among the men and afford them excellent diversions from the regular military duties. In fact, nothing but foolish fastidiousness would prevent a Chaplain from giving hearty and practical encouragement to the manly art of boxing and wrestling. These sciences are so conformable to the makeup of the real soldier that they ought to be fostered throughout the regiment."

A most important duty of every Chaplain, according to Father Waring, is the visitation of soldiers who are in affliction, those who are sick, or those whose misdeeds have caused them to be confined in the guardhouse.

"The army Chaplain," said he, "ought to make a practice of visiting the men in their regiments when the latter are off duty. For when the men have confidence in their Chaplain they will not hesitate to ventilate their real or imaginary troubles before him. It is a good thing that some one should know what is disturbing their minds; otherwise the troubles cannot be remedied, and things will go from bad to worse. How often a whole troop has been dissatisfied because the men are laboring under some delusion which a prudent Chaplain could rectify in a few moments by a tactful explanation! The hospital is a splendid place for the Chaplain to become well acquainted with the men, for, while convalescing there, the soldiers usually have much time which hangs heavily on their hands, and they are delighted at any opportunity to vary the monotony. Of all the sacred duties a Chaplain must perform, none is more important than the receiving and transmitting of trinkets and keepsakes to the persons designated by the dying man, with the accompanying messages."

Chaplain Waring wants to go with American troops to France, if he can be spared from his work on Governors Island. He was born an Englishman, and has relatives in the British Army.