

A Man Amongst Men.

It would be of interest to record the names of all the priests who appear in the roll of honor, who are mentioned in despatches for conspicuous bravery, have been decorated with the military medal, or have received promotion. The ministrations of the priest-soldiers, who celebrate Mass in the trenches, or, if they are further from the enemy, on a portable altar under the open sky, or amidst the ruins of a village church, have made a lasting impression. The nature of the French, especially among the lower classes, is opener, franker, and certainly more impulsive than the English. In the midst of danger and terror their soldiers have come forward more readily than perhaps our men would have done, to confess themselves and to receive absolution from their corporal, their lieutenant, or captain, who is in Orders. Not merely the men show the fruit, but those who have been left behind have been equally affected. Attending the services on weekdays and Sundays in hamlet, village, or town, we certainly could not say that the congregations, as in former days, consist of women and children. The men are there. The great Paris churches which on Sundays offer barely standing room, tell the same tale. It is a sight touching and pathetic, wherever there is a depot, to see the wounded and convalescent, with faces and heads bandaged, arms in slings, legs dangling between crutches, crowding aisles at early Mass. Nor will those forget, who witnessed the scene, when a young vicar who had at the outbreak of war heard the confessions of the young fellows of the town, then had donned the haversack, and, fighting bravely, had been shot through the chest, barely healed of his wound, all bandaged up, appeared in the pulpit to say a few words before he returned to the front.

A Notable Change.

France has travelled far since the days of General Andre, when men were certainly not encouraged to go to church, and when officers whose clerical sympathies had been denounced at headquarters, lost every chance of promotion. The country will continue to move along the same road. It is not likely that Jesuits or Benedictine Fathers, who in the hour of danger, forgetting the treatment they had received from Government and hastening to serve their country, have received promotion or the Cross of the Legion of Honor, will again be banished, when the war is over. It is not likely that a generation of men, who in the dread and danger of battle are experiencing the strength and stay of religious belief, will ever return to their former attitude.

The French People and the Church.

The war has approached the Church and the Army in a manner which appeals to the sense of chivalry in the nature of the French. The voice of the extreme Socialist and anti-militarist is no longer heard in the land. Misunderstandings have vanished; and it is no exaggeration to say that the attitude of the French people with regard to the Church is undergoing a complete change. Just as the war of 1870 and the fall of Napoleon marked the beginning of the estrangement, which ended with the disestablishment of the Church, so the present war will introduce a new epoch in the religious history of France. Government will be obliged to yield to the new tendencies, and will find other reasons to come to terms with the Church. There can be no doubt that Germany, if it had been victorious, would have taken Christian interests in the East under its protection: to play the part of Lord Protector of the Holy Land and of Syria would have united the theatrical, romantic, and at the same time practical character of the Emperor William.

The Protectorate in the East.

The present state of things will make it an imperative duty for the French Government to resume the ancient protectorate over the convents, the schools, and the hospitals in the Levant and Syria. Turkey, moreover, by making war, by confiscating the French religious establishments and expelling the inmates, has raised a number of questions which can be settled only by the intervention of the Head of the Catholic Church.

The action of the English Government in sending a representative to the Vatican has been widely commented on in the French press, and has given rise to serious reflections. 'We cannot close our eyes and leave matters to be settled by the Congregation of the Propaganda,' remarks M. Hanotaux pertinently. Something more will have to be done. There is no need to talk about the Government 'going to Canossa,' but the rulers of France will find, as Bismarck discovered during the Kulturkampf in his negotiations with Leo XIII., that measures must be found that will meet the renewed spirit of the people, and remain in keeping with the old traditions of the country.

Pasteur's Benefactions to Soldiers

'At least one great victory is assured in the war, and one man has established an immortal reputation,' comments *Rome*. Some months before the war a Paris newspaper asked its readers to name the greatest man that ever lived. Pasteur was the choice of the majority, Napoleon coming in 'a very poor second.' *Rome* goes on to prove the scientist's claim to this distinction:

It was Pasteur, the modest, Catholic man of science, who first impressed upon the world the inward meaning and importance of infection and disinfection. By teaching doctors 'to wash their hands'—in the phrase of Claude Bernard—he taught them the precious secret of medical antiseptics, which has during these first six months of the war saved over a hundred thousand lives.

Figures are given to show the great decrease in mortality after Pasteur's teaching was introduced. In the Crimean war 15.21 per cent. of the French wounded died from their injuries; in the Italian war of 1859-60 the percentage of deaths was still higher; the introduction of surgical antiseptics among the German wounded in the Franco-Prussian war reduced the mortality rate to 11.07. During the Spanish-American and Anglo-Boer wars Pasteur's science had come into almost universal application, and only five or six per cent. succumbed to their injuries. The figures for the present war show that of the wounded French soldiers treated in the hospitals 55 per cent. returned to the fighting line, 24 per cent. are on leave convalescing, 17 per cent. are still under treatment and doing well; 1½ per cent. are permanently disabled; 2½ per cent. have died.

But this is only a part of the great change wrought by Pasteur's science (says the *Sacred Heart Review*). The mortality from sickness, especially infective maladies, during war times surpassed the mortality from wounds, but Pasteur antiseptics have reduced to very small proportions in the present war the death rate from tetanus, dysentery, and typhoid in particular. 'Perhaps Pasteur was not the greatest man in history,' adds *Rome*, 'but he will do until a greater is discovered, and he is one of ours.'

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