

valor and steadiness of purpose that not even Death itself can daunt. Their only thought is for souls; their orders from their Commander-in-Chief are, 'Teach all nations'; and wherever men need them, there they are found.

Says the correspondent of an English newspaper:—

'In some towns, at the German advance, only the parish priest remained. I heard bells ringing, and walked to the church. "To my surprise, there were only three persons to form the congregation. The clergy were all alone around the altar, and chanted the "Te Deum" by themselves. Nothing ever impressed me so much. Here were the priests, all alone, who had remained faithful to their posts to the last, and had clung to their duty. Now they gathered round the altar to thank heaven for their country's deliverance."

The same writer tells that—

'On the battle edge . . . a dying man . . . kneeling by a dying man, was a priest, holding one of his hands and administering Extreme Unction. On the edge of every battlefield I have seen these ministers of God. They move about throughout the fighting, calm and fearless, ready to help the doctors or comfort the last moment of dying soldiers.'

The Priest and the Materialist.

Again, we have this testimony:—

'A young priest who says his prayers before lying down on his straw mattress or in the mud of the trench puts a check upon blasphemy, and his fellows—anti-clericals, perhaps, in the old days, or frank Materialists—watch him curiously, and are thoughtful after their watchfulness. His courage has something supernatural in it, and he is careless of death. Then, again, he is the best comrade in the company. He does a thousand little acts of service to his fellow-soldiers, and especially to those who are most sullen, most brutal, or most miserable. He speaks sometimes of the next life with a cheerful certainty which makes death seem less of an end of things, and he is upborne with a strange fervor which gives a kind of glory to the most wretched toil.'

At one battle two priest stretcher-bearers, who advanced with hands uplited to show that they were unarmed, in order to save the rest of the ambulance from attack, were shot dead. The act in which death surprised them—doing good to others—was but the habit of their lives. Hear these words of a dying priest to his Bishop.

'I offer to God my sufferings and my life for the redemption of France, and for the recruitment and sanctification of the clergy of the diocese. I have the firm hope that your Lordship's blessings and prayers will get me the grace to remain always true to my priesthood, as I swore to do on the day of my ordination.'

One observer writes:—

'I could not help reflecting on the discipline which has made the French priests what they are. In this *dies irae* they have not flinched from the field nor from their flocks. Often where the civil authority has been overwhelmed, the rites of Holy Church persevere. The priests of the villages through which we pass are full of charity for our men. Sticking to their posts, they improvise ambulances for the wounded.'

The *Morning Post* tells how the destruction of the town of Senlis was prevented by the parish priest. These are the words of its correspondent:—

'The parish priest of Senlis, a man of 70, and a splendid type of priest—has stood by his people through everything with the tranquillity of faith. Despite his age, he had come through the terrible ordeal unshaken. He was the only man I met who had been through the German occupation with eyes perfectly steady and unflinching, with hands that had not that nervous twitch which tells of an intolerable strain.'

Five Bullets.

Ambulance or firing line, it matters not. See Father Lamy, wounded with five bullets, as he crawls about the trenches to help his wounded comrades-in-arms, till the ambulance men seize him and carry him

off, protesting. He was decorated with the medal for conspicuous bravery under fire. And his case is illustrative of many. M. Eugene Tavernier writes:—

'A long list of priests, for their military exploits, have received the honor of being praised before the whole army. In the midst of soldiers, a soldier himself, the priest, whom the Freethinker pretends to treat as an inferior citizen, has suddenly proved a living manifestation of the spirit of discipline and sacrifice.'

Truly, there is no armor like the armor of a good conscience; no vision like the vision that sees clear through the blinding mists of earth to the welcoming Hand of Christ. The priest has both these possessions, and they enable him to measure existing evils in the balance of eternity. Therefore is it that a priest can write:—

'War is forging a new and living France and England, which, forgetting sloth and ease, will press towards a higher ideal of national greatness.'

Oh, the marvellous certitude of the Catholic. It is divine. In the trenches in the twentieth century, as in the days of St. Peter, he knows exactly where he stands. His Church and her minister make all plain and absolutely certain. The Church is a divine institution with divine decrees. Its teaching is a sacred force—Mass, the Sacrifice of God; Holy Communion, the Bread of the strong. The Sacraments are channels conveying grace from God to man; living or dead, it matters not, for all Catholics are close joined in the Communion of Saints.

That is the reason of the turning to the priest. He is the mediator, the sole dispenser of the gifts of God, the sole representative of the Son of God, Who has plainly announced, 'He that heareth you, heareth Me,' and tells all that 'Whatsoever you shall loose upon earth, it shall be loosed in Heaven.' At the whisper of the priest all sin, the only obstacle between the soul and God, fades and is forgotten.

God's Messenger.

'Ah, thank God the priest is here!' and at his coming death loses its terror. The trembling soul, steadied, leaps with confidence to the Sacred Heart of Christ, sure of a welcome. In the Colosseum yesterday, in the trenches to-day, the priest stands by his people, a splendid figure, holding the Key of Eternity. How these words of Holy Writ spring to the lips as we see those heroes among heroes moving amid the smoke and death of battle:—

'And he got his people great honor, and put on a breastplate as a giant, and girt his warlike armor about him in battles, and protected the camp with his sword. In his acts he was like a lion, and all the workers of iniquity were troubled, and salvation prospered in his hand. And he was renowned even to the uttermost parts of the earth, and he gathered them that were perishing.' (1 Mach. 3-3, 4-9.)

CHAPTER IV.—OUR NUNS.

Our Nuns! Those handmaids of the Lord who walk the path of perfection in their quiet cloisters, their lives lit by the soft glow of the Tabernacle Lamp! They spend themselves in the Vineyard of Him Who has called them. Taught in the school of sanctity, they strive daily so to train as to be worthy followers of Him Who proclaimed, 'The whole of the Law is fulfilled in one word, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."' Moved by this mandate, they have circled the earth, bound to the service of mankind by the golden cord of charity, that golden cord of the triple strands—Poverty, Chastity, Obedience.

Close followers of Him Who is mighty in His meekness and powerful in His poverty, they show to-day the marvellous power of Christian charity, enabling them, weak women though they be, to triumph over all fear of danger and death.

Home Again.

Says the correspondent of an English paper:—

'It looks as if the Kaiser may succeed in re-establishing an *entente cordiale* between the French Church and the French State. Hundreds of nuns have been

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