

FAMOUS CATHOLIC GENERALS

That famous Catholic publicist, Mr. Hilaire Belloc, in the course of a recent lecture, referred to an article in the *Nationale Zeitung*, July, 1914, which makes curious reading now. "Whatever may be reserved in the future for Germany," said the German journal, "it is upon France that we shall fall in order to achieve our principal successes, and we shall repair the damage caused us in a very different fashion from that of forty-four years ago. We shall not ask for four milliards of francs; we may have to press for thirty. The Blessed Mother of God, of Lourdes, will have her work cut out for her miracles if she is to heal the wounds we shall inflict upon France." The jibe in the last sentence is worthy of home-made bigots who scoff at Catholic devotion to "the Mother of my Lord" (St. Luke i.), and worthy of the "superior persons" who deride the miracles at Lourdes. Mr. Belloc expressed the opinion that

Our Lady of Lourdes Answered the German Challenge

in the three prodigious events of the war—"the almost incredible lack of judgment in the German Higher Command in the Battle of the Marne, 1914; in the early days of April, 1918, and in the marvellous success of the counter-stroke in July, 1918," which took place when there was being celebrated the sixtieth anniversary of the last apparition of the Blessed Virgin at Lourdes. Mere coincidence? But it is a fact, and assuredly a noteworthy fact, that the victorious French Generals are markedly devout to our Lady.

Marshal Foch Belongs to the Diocese of Lourdes, and was born at Tarbes, which is near to Lourdes. Catholic of Catholics, he practised his faith unafraid and unashamed, with that calm disregard of human respect which marks the true soldier of the Cross. Rene Puaux, one of his officers, writes of seeing him going quite alone into the church at Cassel "to meditate upon his task and to seek consolation for the immense bereavement of which he never spoke." General Petain, who has just received a marshal's baton, is a Catholic, as are Generals Castelnau and d'Espéry, and others. Of General Gouraud, the saviour of Rheims, Commander of the Fourth French Army, who in 1915 lost his right arm at Achi-Baba, and in 1918 thrilled the world with his achievements, we are told that when in hospital he made the morning meditation with the nuns, and had an altar in honor of Joan of Arc in his room; and in the Church of Our Lady of Victories, Paris, near to the altar is a white marble *ex voto*, inscribed to the Blessed Virgin, "in gratitude for June 30, 1915." A chaplain at Clermont relates how, at the request of the Mother Superior of the hospital, he informed General Gouraud that there would be Masses from 6 a.m. until 10 a.m., the last being a Military Mass; and the General instructed his secretary to put that in orders, and

Himself Assisted Devoutly at the Mass Offered for Our Armies.

A young French Catholic soldier wrote from the front:

"Yesterday, feast of our Lady of Lourdes, several non-commissioned officers, myself among them, went to Holy Communion. Now and then I am able to pay a visit to the Blessed Sacrament; never did this practice seem to me so delightful. . . . Providence spoils us; in every village we find the same Lord, the same Holy Mother, the same spiritual centre." Another officer encouraged his men by consecrating them to the Blessed Virgin. Such as those represent the real soul of France, the land where the Sacred Heart was revealed to Blessed Margaret Mary and our Lady Immaculate to Bernadette. Assuredly we Catholics may rejoice, not alone in

The Heroism of Our Fellow-Catholics in the Ranks,

but in the moral and spiritual grandeur of those who are supreme figures in the great conflict—Cardinal Mercier, King Albert, Marshal Foch, and General Gouraud. "That is what it is to be a Catholic," a north-country man was heard to say to a non-Catholic fellow-workman, indicating the marshal's request for the continued prayers of children, printed in a local newspaper. Thus the earnest piety and practical faith of the illustrious Frenchman had their inspiring message for the toil-worn, obscure worker of another race and clime, believing, as the great marshal believes, praying as he prays. They who jeer at miracles are blind indeed, with the great miracle of the Catholic Church confronting them.

"O FELIX CULPA!"

Then gazed the wild wood dumb with awe,
Staring with eyeballs opened wide,
At one grown conscious of a law
And lifted suddenly to pride.

The apex of creation in
His shame, creation, envious sees—
Magnificently robed with sin,
Knowing the roots of mysteries.

Hot-footed hurrying through the immense
The winds their happy tidings tell,
That man, exchanging innocence—
And gladly! for the fires of hell,

Proves his long-boasted power to choose,
To leave the good and take the ill;
Free, with his soul to save or lose,
By warrant of its royal will.

But hidden from the awestruck eyes,
Which see the sentenced rebels go,
Are those tall towers of Paradise
Wherethrough exultant rumors blow;

Where seated at the council board
The Three-in-One debate Their plan,
The Incarnation of the Word,
The Sorrows of the Son of Man.

—THEODORE MAYNARD, in *America*.

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