

"MILES CHRISTI."

LOUIS GASTON DE SONIS,

Carmelite Tertiary.

[Reprinted by permission from "The Life of General de Sonis"—From His Papers and Correspondence, by Mgr. Baudard. Translated by Lady Herbert. Art and Book Company, London and Leamington.]

PREFACE BY LADY HERBERT :

The beautiful life of this true Christian hero has been given to the English-speaking public at the earnest request of several military men, and especially of the one to whom it is dedicated. It will be read with interest, not only by all who love their profession and are stirred by a tale of gallant deeds and hair-breadth escapes, but also by those who look upon life as an earnest thing, to be spent for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. In Monseigneur Baudard's admirable Preface to the French edition, he says : "This life is more than a rare spectacle—it is a great lesson. I hear on all sides that what is most wanted in these days are men of character. M. de Sonis was eminently a man of marked character ; we have rarely seen one like him, even in better times than the present. The profound convictions which from the first to the last day of his career were the light of his life, never saw him deviate one single step from the right line : *Per vias rectas*. He was straightforwardness itself : 'I always put the head of my ship towards the good God,' he said one day ; 'whatever winds blow, favorable or the contrary, I keep in that direction ;

for it is that port I wish to make.' He has been called emphatically 'the man of duty.' This duty he practised at whatever cost in the face of heaven, without ever considering the sacrifices it might entail. Heroism itself was only the natural fruit and the simple consequence of this view of duty, and, as he observed it himself, so he expected it of others. Discipline, honesty, morality, honor, were virtues which he guarded with jealous care. He has been called the 'just,' but he was also, when necessary, the judge, and 'did not bear the sword in vain,' as the Apostle says. To us, he appears as a man of another age—a noble knight of old France ; and to see him, by the united testimony of all, so noble and so constant in his principles and conduct, brings to our remembrance the great St. Louis, who won the admiration of the infidels themselves, and forced them to hold him for 'the proudest Christian that could be found.' But, besides all this, General de Sonis was a man of heart. As a husband, a father, a brother, a friend, he was a model of the deepest tenderness and the most constant affection. He was not a stranger to anything that was lovable ; he admired beautiful places, beautiful works of

General Lord Ralph Kerr, the model of a Christian soldier.