

SIDELIGHTS ON THE GREAT WAR

"ONE TOUCH OF NATURE MAKES THE WHOLE WORLD KIN"

The hard, dry impersonal accounts of the great struggle from day to day leaves us with a curiously detached sense of aloofness, and the war itself seems less real and actual to us than the great historic battles of the past.

A DYING CONFESSOR SOLDIER-PRIEST.

A Daily Chronicle special correspondent in Paris, Mr. T. Naylor, tells the following affecting story of the devotion of a soldier-priest in Saturday's issue:—

IN ACTION WITH THE FIELD ARTILLERY.

Some help to the realization of what war means may be gathered from a letter like the following from a young subaltern in the Field Artillery, written to his mother from a Paris hospital, which has appeared in the Brighton District Catholic Magazine for November:—

DIED

LYNCH.—At Bancroft, Ont., on Sunday, November 15, 1914, Mr. M. J. Lynch, aged sixty-nine years. May his soul rest in peace!

WILSON.—In this city, on Thursday, November 26th, 1914, Jane Wilson, widow of the late Alexander Wilson. May her soul rest in peace!

GURRY.—At St. Joseph's Hospital, Peterborough, on Saturday, November 14, 1914, Mrs. David Gurry, aged seventy years, a life long resident of Ennismore and mother of Mrs. John F. O'Sullivan, this city. May her soul rest in peace!

Thoughts are fruits, words are leaves. Let us strip off the leaves in order that the thought, thus exposed to the light, may gain strength, beauty, and flavor.—Abbe Roux.

It suffered agonies an hour. The elder child was not killed outright. It exclaimed: "Mother, take us out of the church; it isn't safe; and mayn't I have something to eat?" I hadn't even a crust to give her. Her hands were cold; "Mother, dear, I think I am dying." That was not all. I had to take the dying baby from mother's dead arms. The day after more Prussians entered the church. Thirty of us were dead, so we were ordered into the fields, and I had to go like the rest, though I was so weak I twice fell down. Finally, I reached Moncel, where I and dad found friends. ... Your children are dead. Mind you keep alive to avenge the hideous wrong, for if you don't I'll seize a gun and account for a brace myself.

THE PIETY OF THE FRENCH SOLDIERS

Testimonies accumulate to show the attitude of the French soldiers towards religion. In an article in Journal de Genève, M. Rocheblave, a French Protestant, says:—

THE WITNESS OF THE PRIESTS

What is thus set forth above is but a general statement which is corroborated by almost every letter that arrives from the priests who as chaplains or under the Colours are at the front. Thus a priest of the diocese of Saint-Flour tells of the generous acceptance of suffering, fatigue, and privations of all sorts shown by the men, and states that the priest soldiers, ambulance men, and stretcher-bearers have an abundance of religious consolations in the way in which officers and soldiers avail themselves of every opportunity to hear Mass:—

THE CURE OF LA VOIVRE

A recent issue of La Croix gives the following particulars of the shooting of the Abbe Labache, cure of la Voivre, near Saint-Diz, by the Germans on September 29:—

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AN INTERESTING LETTER

From "Bunboby's Corner" in Philadelphia Catholic Standard Times

To the most widely-beloved of Catholic poets the Corner is indebted for a close range view of war-time trouble—trouble which, in some instances, may prove to bear unforeseen blessings.

My very dear friend: While we were at Cape May Point I sent a poem to the little magazine edited by the nuns of the Order of St. Saviour (founded by St. Bridget of Sweden) who are at Syon Abbey, Chudleigh, South Devon, England. They are the sole community that have retained the primitive rule of pre-Reformation days; and the present lady is, strange to say, an Irish woman! A cousin of mine in Canada is honorary agent for their little pamphlet, "The Poor Soul's Friend," in Canada, and through him I have been corresponding with Mother Teresa, the lady abbess for some years past. It occurred to me that you might like to read her letter, which is especially interesting because of the war and distressing conditions in England. You are at liberty to quote any passage that appeals to you if you are so minded.

ELLEANOR C. DONNELLY, Villa Maria, West Chester, Pa., September 19th, 1914.

The eloquently descriptive letter of the lady abbess is living literature; contemporary history visualized for us: "My dear Miss Donnelly:—May God reward you for your sympathy in this hour of trial, also for the kind thought that suggested your writing those appealing verses, 'The Mistress of the Sea,' which strike home, Oh! so deeply, and make one's heart-strings vibrate and vibrate with renewed hope that 'The Mistress of the Sea' will protect our seagirt isles and 'fling the waters of grace abroad,' that the souls of all those whose bodies this present strike gives to the sea may be her salvage. R. I. P.

It is with a certain sense of relief, nay, gratitude, that one feels that the bodies of the sailors who have fallen in the fray will be saved by the sea from the desecration of being trampled under foot, as those of the poor soldiers, by an oncoming army.

The good God alone knows what all the horrors of the twentieth century will be. Now, at the onset, they are appalling enough, and yet we are only at the beginning of the sufferings this vast conflict will entail. These last few weeks have made me realize as I have never done before what Our Mother's sufferings were as she stood at the Foot of the Cross.

This has been brought so vividly before me by the heroic fortitude of widowed mothers whose only sons are at the seat of war. I have never seen grief engraved so deeply on any human face as upon the countenance of one of those mothers, a sorrowful expression made superhuman by its dignified quietness and resignation.

I cannot look at her but the picture of that other Mother comes to mind, the one who freely offered her Only Son for the saving of the human race. The passive suffering of the mothers and wives is not less heroic than the vital agonies of their sons and husbands who give their lives in defense of their country.

The pity of it all is that there are thousands of wives and mothers in the ranks of both friends and so-called foes and have given up, and bravely, too, their most cherished ones with but the faintest hope of ever receiving them back.

The toll of death this war will take, the worst of human passions that it will cause to run riot, are too terrible to contemplate, yet, thank God, the evil is more than counterbalanced by the bringing forth (in the majority) of all that is best in poor human nature.

Here we cannot measure things of time with the things of eternity, but we of the faith know that the eternal purpose will be wrought out despite all the folly of men, and that this terrible scourge of war has fallen upon Europe for the ultimate good of the sons of its people.

Europe was fast forgetting God: in every place men have supposed that they could do without Him, and now civilization without God has let loose the forces of destruction upon all.

That God the multitudes are beginning to realize this sad mistake—let us hope not too late for the floodgates of God's mercy to be opened—and they are now pleading for mercy from that God, Who, in the time of peace, they tried to persuade themselves was non-existent. Without doubt the chastisement of this war will be the saving of innumerable souls who otherwise would have been lost eternally.

Our good Bishop has given us leave for daily Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament until the end of war, also for the daily recital of the Office of the Dead for all who long their lives through the war. It is a great privilege, one for which we are truly grateful, as it is in a special way that Holy Mother Church in times like the present looks to the ranks of the consecrated spouses for the victim of expiation. They have been placed by the Church like Moses on the Mount of Prayer. Pray for us that we fall not our Divine Spouse in this.

Believe me, yours very gratefully in Jesus Christ. M. TERESA, O.S.S.S., Syon Abbey, Chudleigh, S. Devon, August 31, 1914.

TEACHERS WANTED

WANTED CATHOLIC TEACHER FOR Catholic Separate school district, No. 4, Hagarty, holding second class professional certificate. Duties to commence after 1st January, 1915. Apply stating experience and salary required after giving references to Albert Lehoucq, Sec. Treas., Wilno, P.O. Ont., 1884-2.

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Pope Benedict XV. Our Lady of August. Lourdes, with illustrations. Brother Jocelyn. Pope Pius X. A sketch of his life. A Mother's Wooing. How the Pope is Elected. A complete list of the Popes. Marcella Blake's European Trip. Maurena, the Cradle of the Society of Jesus. The Beggar in the Corner. Le Moine d'Iberville. Terry's Vocation. St. Rita of Cascia. Notable Events of Year 1913-14.

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