

"While there is life there is hope, my brave old Major. But in the meantime you are prepared for the worst. Are you not?"

"No Father! Not in the least. I only wish I were. Those long years that now show up in their true light, will not open heaven for me. If I only had courage to make my confession, death would not then seem so terrible to me who has faced it so often on the battle-field." Grasping his hand the priest whispered: "Do not be discouraged. I understand your case thoroughly and sympathize with you so much that if you like to begin right away I will help you all I can."

"Thank you Father. I appreciate your goodness. Give me till to-morrow please. For such an important review I must prepare. I will devote the day to it, and when you come to-morrow, will do my best; In the meantime please pray for me."

The priest came the next day and for three successive ones. The old Major was so sincere and so thoroughly in earnest that he was never satisfied fearing he had forgotten something and was not yet ready to receive absolution.

Finally the day is fixed for his communion and his room transformed into a little chapel. When the priest bearing the good God approached his bed, the old veteran with the iron endurance that was part of his character raised himself, gazed long and ardently at the Sacred Host, made the sign of the cross and exclaimed: "My God! How good Thou art! How good Thou art to come to a poor sinful creature like me."

The visibly affected priest gave him Holy Communion. And the old Major had won his final and most glorious victory.

He lasted a week after that. His sentiments were most touching and beautiful and his fine old face radiant as an angel's. His last words were to St Joseph, his last act to kiss and clasp the medal he had worn over seventy years.

