

this last dreadful struggle, although my heart was really breaking. At two o'clock all was over. My beloved Gaston breathed his last sigh on the feet of the crucifix which we pressed to his lips. His great heart had ceased to beat."

A Carmelite priest, Father Albert, assisted him in this last battle, which took place on the feast of the Assumption. He left this world under the happy auspices of one of whom he said to the dying at Loigny: Mary is placed on the threshold of eternity, to give courage and confidence to those who are about to cross it."

Directly after his death, there appeared on the features of this friend of God a phenomenon which is rarely seen to so great a degree. His face took an expression of really superhuman beauty. It was not merely a look of that peace and serenity so often seen in the sleep of the dead. It was, in reality, a beginning of his blessed and glorious transfiguration. It was far more than the majesty of death,—it was a vision of immortality. Those who saw him then felt they were nearer heaven than earth, and every one declared they never could forget it. Five days later Madame De Sonis wrote to her nun daughter:

"My dearest Marie—He is gone—our much-loved one, our saint! The Blessed Virgin, whom he loved so much, came to fetch him and conduct him to heaven on the very day of her glorious Assumption. God has given me the courage to bear this terrible trial. He gave me the strength to assist him during a cruel agony of eight hours, and then to see him expire without dying myself of grief. Our two lives were so linked together, and we had been so united during our whole existence, that the agony of separation is intense. But, as I told you, my dear child, God has been very good to me. He has made me see and realize in the most wonderful way the happiness of my darling, now in glory, receiving the reward he has so well deserved. All I pray for now is to learn to love God better, so as to be able soon to rejoice in my much-loved one

in heaven. There there will be no more parting, no more sorrow! May we all arrive at that celestial home, where we shall meet all whom He has given to us here below!"

The obsequies of the General in the Church of St.-Honoré d'Eylau were worthy of his life. They were dignified, simple and profoundly Christian. He had said to his son Henry: "I wish to be buried as a poor man, no grand ceremonial, no epitaph, no tomb. A simple stone with the inscription: '*Miles Christi*.'"^{*} Wounded in his holiest feelings by the decree which forbade the troops to come into the church, De Sonis was refused military honors, and the escort which was to have accompanied the body. But a great number of cavalry officers in uniform came of their own accord to render him this last service, together with an enormous number of priests, Religious, Sisters, and all the leading members of the Catholic Congregations. The College of Juilly sent a wreath for the coffin of one who will always remain one of its greatest glories. The War Minister was represented by General Lhotte, President of the Cavalry Commission. After the Mass and the absolutions had been given, the funeral procession paused on the threshold of the church, when General Lhotte spoke the following words with deep and visible emotion: "Appointed by the War Minister to the honor of representing him at this sad ceremony, I come to say a last farewell to the dear friend whose mortal remains we are accompanying to the tomb. The life of General De Sonis is too well known for me to retrace it here. He was the real example and the model of all military, as well as of all private virtues. The word '*Duty*,' inscribed on the first page of his life, is to be found everywhere, down to the last sheet of this book which to-day is closed on earth; and as it is said of Bayard, that model of noble knights, so it may be as truly affirmed of De Sonis, that he was without fear and without reproach. Adieu, General De Sonis! Adieu, glorious soldier! Your life will remain among us as a great

^{*} Soldier of Christ.