

"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 Haunard. Translated by Lady Herbert. Art and Book Company, London and Leamington.]

CHAPTER II.

ST.-CYR. CASTRES. PARIS. LIMOGES. 1844—1854.

The College of St.-Cyr then and now—Gaston at college—*Élève d'élite*—His fidelity to God—Gaston at Saumur—Pilgrimage to Solesmes—His engagement never to refuse anything to God—Sub-Lieutenant of Hussars at Castres—He marries Mlle. Anais Joger—He breaks off his connection with the Masonic Lodge—Domestic happiness—First separation—At Pontivy—The military home—Studies—Birth of his daughter—Gaston at Paris—His sisters—Their union of soul—Solitude—Art—Conferences of Notre-Dame de Paris—Birth of his son—His two sisters become Carmelites—Gaston de Sonis at Limoges—M. and Mde. H. de Lamy—The *Coup d'Etat*—Independence—The Lieutenant's vote—The Conferences of St. Vincent de Paul—De Sonis's action in the Conference—His report to the Bishop—His retired life—He makes his faith respected—His fall at the race course—He thinks on eternity—Progress in Christianity—Contempt of the world—Military piety—His pious exercises—He overcomes human respect—The Blessed Sacrament passes—The Way to the Cross—A holy anger—The nocturnal adoration—Table-turning—His strict fasts—His apostolate—His children—His paternal care—His brother Theobald—Visit to his cloistered sisters—His good advice—Conduct towards his men—His apostolate in the garrison—He is made Captain, and leaves Limoges for Algeria—Adieux and regrets.



HE military college of St.-Cyr at this moment is an admirable one. We may say that it is the refuge of those who prefer serving their country by the sword to

sacrificing to a modern government all their most cherished beliefs and opinions. The young men who enter it can fulfil all their duties as Christians as well as those of sol-

diers, and no one dares say that the one interfere with the other. It was not thus in 1844 when Gaston was admitted. Believing Catholics were rare, and those who practised their religion were more rare still. "We never see the chaplain except at the altar," sadly wrote De Sonis. It was necessary to receive the Sacraments in secret, and the ten or twelve who wished to do so had to wait for their turn to go out to be able to find a priest who would hear their Confessions. De Sonis felt this terribly. Each time that he went to Paris, his first act was