

something like indignation at the attempt of a desperately well-meaning chaplain at an open-air service the night before the men went into the trenches, to "frighten them with the prospect of death. They refused to be frightened and the chaplain's bag was very small: I have seen many soldiers die. I do not know what, if anything, they would have said to a *padre*. I only know that all I ever heard them say was "I've done my bit"; "What must be must be"; "It wur worth it"; "It bairn't no use grousing"; or "I'm all right topping." I've often thought that the secret of their fortitude was that they had done what they could.

What the soldier might teach the Churches is that there is only one thing that really counts, and that is character. In the army it is the only chance of distinction a man has, and nowhere is it so quickly grasped. The soldier is less concerned with whether a man's beliefs are "true" than with whether he truly believes them. He has no respect for the sacerdotal character as such; what interests him is not the priest but the man. He is not interested in religion as a science but he has some respect for it as an art. If a *padre* is a good fellow and sincere the soldier will accept him as such, but he will not tolerate the attitude of a man who assumes that he and his alone possess the keys of heaven and hell. It is only when the priest secularizes himself that he can command a sympathetic hearing. The Church will have to renounce all its worldly prestige,