

'71, when I returned from the Prussian lines, and I am glad to renew them to-day.' He was visibly touched at my words, and very much pleased. Then I bowed and retired, not having had to stand more than two or three minutes."

The elections both for the Senate and the Chambers were still more Radical than before, and M. de Sonis, from his bed of suffering could only cry, "*Contra spem in spem.*" "The Christians are given to the wild beasts," he wrote. "There is nothing new under the sun, but there will still be good days for the Church, and, God helping us, there will still be human lips to bear witness to the truth, as long as there remains a little blood in the heart of France!" Soon after this Marshal MacMahon gave in his resignation, rather than touch the honor of the army. This was a great loss to M. De Sonis. For a moment the President thought of naming him Governor of the Invalides; but he had no longer a choice in the matter.

"I know very well," M. De Sonis wrote to his daughter, "that I have brought on myself the hatred of all the Radicals, and I glory at the appellation of 'clerical,' which marks out every Catholic in these days for the vengeance of the impious. But what will become of us all, if I am pensioned off? That is a very difficult problem to solve. There is no doubt that our position will then be very difficult; but I cannot think that Providence will abandon us. I place all my confidence in God, and take refuge with you in His Divine Heart."

CHAPTER XV.

General de Sonis was encamped rather than settled at Châteauroux. The Government House was then building; so that he had nothing but a sort of

barrack, where they were all piled one over the other. "I live from day to day like a bird on a branch," he wrote, "feeling sure that on the first opportunity I shall be sent home. This is the more hard for us who have no home! But the servant is not greater than his Master, and the Son of Man had not where to lay His Head! So patience and courage."

As soon as he arrived, this man, whose watchword was 'Duty,' began a conscientious inspection of all the regiments of his new command, which were scattered between Paris and Poitiers. In the latter town, he saw for the last time Cardinal Pie, who expired soon after, one of whom General De Sonis wrote on the 19th of May: "This is a terrible loss both to the Church and to France. To me it is a great personal sorrow, from the affectionate interest which that great prelate always showed in me and mine. More than that, it is a light the less in times when thick darkness covers a world which is every day more guilty." On the 30th of May he wrote:

"To-day we have had the procession of Corpus Christi, presided over by Mgr. Marchal, Archbishop of Bourges. I assisted at High Mass, but was obliged to retire when the procession went out, on account of my leg. I had been forbidden yesterday to allow the military bands to play as usual on the occasion. Against all the army regulations this same Minister has forbidden the troops to form in rank for the passage of the Blessed Sacrament. He has only authorized an escort of two companies to maintain order round the *dais*, having exhumed this order from the papers of Marshal Soult, whilst the military ceremonial for processions is given in full in the army regulations of 1863. This is what we have come to!"