

## *Religious Revival in France!*

From a trench near at hand a little soldier,.... crawling like a worm, makes headway toward his neighbor. He gets on without being hit by the fire, at length, at the opening of the underground lodging of his Reverence the sergeant. Once there, with his nose in the ground, he calls in a whisper: "Are you there, Salvan?" "Yes," said the priest-sergeant. "What do you want?... If the Germans see you, you're done for."... "Could you hear my confession?" "Yes at once." "All right; but I cannot go to my knees, they would knock over my skittles." "It is not necessary; stay as you are." And right there, leaning over his trench, where the priest-sergeant stood, the little fellow received God's pardon, and then made off, crawling slowly, slowly until he reached his post.

"Irreligion decreases in direct ratio with the proximity of the firing line" is a truth formulated by a close observer of the French soldiers who are fighting in the present war.

Generals de Castelnau and Pau are, it has often been said and written, practical Catholics; so is General Foch, who, since the battle of the Marne, has become the right hand and second self of General Joffre. The latter, when the war broke out, was, it is well known, indifferent on religious matters, but I hear, on good authority, that a notable change has taken place in his convictions. At several crucial moments during the war he realized the necessity of appealing to One who alone can help when all else fails, and his sincere and straightforward nature obediently followed the new light vouchsafed to him.

The members of the French Gouvernement keep aloof from the impulse that casts France on her knees before the God of armies, but I can only repeat that these prejudiced politicians, narrow-minded and self-interested, do not represent the real soul of the nation. The soul of France is on the line of fire where her soldiers pray and