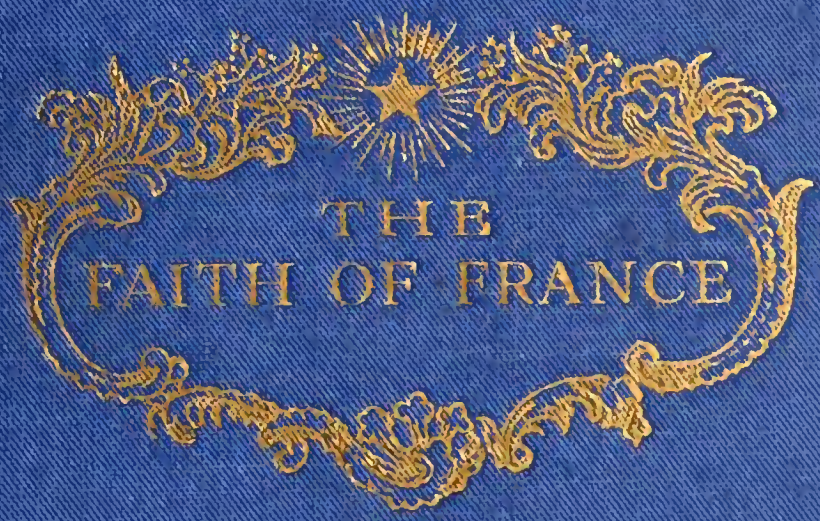

THE FAITH OF FRANCE

MAURICE BARRÈS

THE FAITH OF FRANCE

STUDIES IN SPIRITUAL DIFFERENCES & UNITY

BY

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WITH A FOREWORD BY
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FOREWORD

MILTON said: "A good book is the precious life-blood of a master-spirit embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life."

Here is a book which has in it the precious life-blood of many fearless and devoted spirits — brave boys and steadfast men of France, who have offered themselves in valiant sacrifice to withstand the German idolatry of Thor and Odin which seeks to dominate the world by brute force.

I beg you to read this book, my Catholic friend, my Protestant brother, my Hebrew companion, my Socialist comrade. Here is something which is good for all of us. Let us learn to live by the positive of our faith, not by the negative.

M. Maurice Barrès, the author of this book, — he would call himself the editor, — is one of the most distinguished French men of letters. If you knew him personally, as I do, you would appreciate the significance

of this book. Beginning his career in literature as an extreme devotee of "art for art's sake," he became interested in the public affairs of his country and particularly of his own province, Lorraine, and without losing his artistry as a writer, advanced to a patriotic enthusiasm. He also became strongly attached to the spirit and principles of religion, and worked earnestly for the welfare of the Catholic churches in France, especially in the line of an endeavor to save many of the older buildings, which had historic beauty and interest, from falling into neglect and ruin. In this book he shows himself a believer in that faith which makes men willing to lay down their lives in defence of liberty, humanity, and honor.

In February, 1917, I was in a little *hôpital de transit* on the front beyond Verdun, where the German shells were breaking around us. The commandant said, "I want you to meet my spiritual helpers." He introduced me to three chaplains, two Catholic priests and one Protestant pastor, working together in perfect fellowship for the comfort of the wounded and the peace of

the dying. That was a *union sacrée* which would have been incredible before this cruel war brought all creeds to the sense of human service.

Here, in this book, are the letters and diaries of all sorts and conditions of men of France — Catholics, Protestants, Socialists, Traditionalists, Freethinkers.

They all breathe the same spirit, teach the same lesson: *Que l'épreuve de votre foi, plus précieuse que l'or périssable* (*qui cependant est éprouvé par le feu*), *ait pour résultat la louange, l'honneur, et la gloire.* "That the proof of your faith, more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried by fire, may be found with praise and glory and honour." (1 Peter, 1:7.)

This cruel pagan war which Germany has forced upon the world has deepened the sense of true religion in every heart that owns allegiance to a holy, righteous, loving Power above itself. No faith, Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Socialist, is worth holding unless it can meet the test of self-sacrifice. That test brightens every faith that is true.

I love and commend this book because it reveals the blood-sealed testimony of France to this eternal truth.

HENRY VAN DYKE

PREFACE

THE prominent place occupied by Maurice Barrès among the French writers of the Great War is due not only to his wonderful talent as an artist in prose, but to the impassioned emphasis he has unweariedly laid since August, 1914, upon two ideas: the necessity of the *union sacrée* for France, and the growing evidence that the present world-crisis is a conflict of spiritual forces even more than of material and economic interests. His book on the *Diverses familles spirituelles de la France* gives its highest expression to that double message he has been carrying to the French public: a message which is the more beautiful and pathetic because it is voiced here by young men who died for their country conscious of their sacrifice and having a keen insight into their own state of mind.

L'union sacrée, "holy union," — such has been Barrès's daily watchword for a truce

of political differences during the war. A permanent advocate of preparedness against German insatiability; a son of those eastern provinces of France where patriotism is not only a sentiment, but an every-day necessity; a believer in moral values which, stronger than political denominations, represent the true soul of a nation, — Barrès might have been justified to minimize in his writings some misleaders of opinion who had, before the crisis and in spite of threatening signs, lulled the country asleep under the easy assumption of universal peace and of German good-will. As soon, however, as the war broke out, he at once silenced every religious and political disagreement; and, paying an equal tribute of admiration and respect to all defenders of France, hastening by his articles in the *Écho de Paris* such measures as the adoption of the steel helmet for the trenches and the institution of the "Croix de Guerre" for distinguished military courage, comforting the fighters with cheering news from the rear and stirring the reading public with vivid and picturesque accounts of the front he often visited, he has

acted as a most efficient link between the spirit of the fighting line — where his son serves in the ranks — and the interior of the country.

France is multiform; France is too articulate to be represented, even in time of war, by a single creed; what a former writer once called "the divine versatility of France" has left too many tendencies in her people for a monotonous unanimity of sentiment. And yet, unanimous she feels and she fights in the face of a common danger. She is showing the value and vigor of her civilization by the spirit in which she defends it: all threads of the remotest or of the nearest past are woven into an intimate human fabric of a marvellous and enduring tenacity, in spite of the differences of the woof and warp in color and quality. . . .

Such has been Barrès's point of view throughout the three years of continued suffering, deferred hopes, and magnificent fighting which France has traversed with an unbroken courage. Each political or religious party in the country had a special reason for being heroic, even if there was a

common sense of ultimate aims; and Barrès has glorified with the same emotion the sacrifices of each of these factions who had shaken hands in the one cause. A Roman Catholic thinks of another reward and of another purpose than a Protestant, when both offer their lives for their beloved country; a Jew is animated by other ideals than a Traditionalist, when the hour comes for "going over the top" with the same spirit of abnegation.

Among these different tendencies, which Barrès comments upon with equal admiration and praise when he finds them expressed in the simple letters of French soldiers who fell on the field of battle, and which he is never tired of enhancing with the lyrical magic of his style, which is nearest to his heart? Anybody knowing him and his genial delight in the ways and manners of his native Lorraine, remembering, too, his previous works, will rank him preferably, without hesitation, among the "Traditionalists." This word, however, must not be taken in the rather dubious meaning it is apt sometimes to assume.

Tradition, for Barrès and for his favorite type of French people, is not an obsolete remnant of the past, an antiquated notion, — "death in life, the days that are no more." It means, on the contrary, the recognition of the permanent values which give its sense, its character, and its strength to any human community that is not only a fortuitous gathering of men or a meeting of strangers in a wayside inn. Traditionalism is not, for Barrès, moving along in the same old grooves, but advancing in the direction given by the best effort of past generations. It is not submission to the blind forces of social inheritance, but evolution along the tested lines tried by a sequence of ancestors, acceptance of a rich common culture in which each individual soul is steeped.

Traditionalism, for the majority of the French people, is, first, moderation in wishes and desires, proper behavior towards one's human companions, a sort of sociability which bridges most differences in condition and rank; second, attachment to a certain number of rules, giving to family, profession, social relations, religious life, perform-

ance of the main human duties, a natural stability and a refined dignity. This, framed in the smiling scenery of the French landscape or in the quaint quietude of the provincial villages, is really a stronghold of civilized life worth living, of simple and progressive humanity. Seductive and beautiful as that traditionalism is, it was at the same time the support of the splendid energies displayed by the French people, and in which women and children matched the fighting men, their sons, husbands, brothers, and fathers: this precious fabric of national culture is really worth ranking with the spiritual forces derived from the religious sources, so often combined, as a matter of fact, with these continuous streams of humanity.

"The spiritual element is the dominating force in this war": one of the soldiers quoted by Barrés expressed in these words, before he died and as early as 1915, his essential view of the real issues which are at stake in the great conflict; and there is no doubt that the celebrated writer, who has often quoted that characteristic saying in his articles,

endorses it with the whole power of his insight, of his knowledge of the past and of his philosophy. It would, indeed, be fairly chosen as the very motto, not only of this book now brought in the English language before the American public, but of the whole literary work of Barrès since the war broke out.

He does not merely imply by these words, "the spiritual element is the dominating force in this war," that political ideals are confronting each other, or that material resources have to be handled by powerful minds in order to become efficient. "Making the world safe for democracy," "struggle of representative governments against autocratic organization," — those evident slogans summing up some deep aspects of the conflict are overshadowed by the idea that the principles involved in the psychology of both camps are, in fact, bearing on the very ideals proposed to mankind.

Whoever has read, for information or for duty, the numerous volumes of *Schützengrabenbriefe* collected by German publishers,

whoever has perused the notebooks or the letters pencilled by the invading soldiers, has been struck by the poorer quality of the German average spirit after so many years of State training. It is at its best when expressing mere passivity among the hardships of war, exceptional repugnance to carry out "military necessities," obedience and patience. Rare is that wonderful glow of conscience, accepted sacrifice, and elated sentiment of fighting for a Cause, which, even with a poor penmanship or a deficient orthography, is so marked in the letters of French soldiers. The simple man who, asked by a neutral journalist, in the winter of 1914–15, what he was fighting for, answered, "Simply that more *gentillesse* prevail in the world"; the old *poilus* whom everybody heard saying, "This war must be fought to a finish, in order to have no other war after it," — these plain folk of France are, willingly or not, giving evidence of "spiritual elements" as distinctively as the men of intelligence confessed by Maurice Barrès.

This may sound as a paradox if one con-

siders that the economists have been chiefly occupied, when exposing Germany's war aims, by dwelling upon the scope of their material operations, Mid-Europe, Berlin-Bagdad, iron mines, seacoasts. But her very covetousness, her assumption that Might is Right, her indifference to the national element, her self-centredness are, in their way, moral forces, too, only cruder and baser, and less beneficent for the world at large than the "spiritual element" expressed in the French thoughts.

The solid spire towering on the solid basis of well-defined groups witnessing the same faith, Barrès's book brings to a beautiful and harmonious culmination the different kinds of ideals embodied in his "spiritual families." Luminous conviction, in the Roman Catholics, that supernatural rewards will crown sacrifice; moral exaltation of Protestant minds; devotion of the Traditionalists to the enduring spirit of the generations, — these forces are not surprising in the individuals animated by them. All the more splendidly unexpected, from that

point of view, are the sublimated regions reached by French Jews fighting for Justice as in the times of the Maccabees, or by French Socialists abhorring the very thought of a humanitarian peace "made in Germany."

As has been repeatedly expressed by critics when Barrès's book appeared, its peculiar beauty is that not a single writer, however eminent, but a whole generation has written it; the young soldiers of the years 1914–15, fighting and dying for their ideals, have given here, with no thought of print, their spiritual testament. A member of the French Academy has been the devoted exponent and sponsor of obscure writers made glorious by their deaths; a great egotist in literature has bent in awe and veneration to others' sayings, in order to give them a finer setting, satisfied to act, this time, as a sort of sublime commentator. And so, through this manifold message of a great nation which, aside from her superficial political adventures, is sound to the core and asserting her vitality by each of her

pulsations, the secret of the French splendidness is best brought to the world at large.

Capitaine FERNAND BALDENSPERGER,
Professeur à la Sorbonne

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
December, 1917

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INTRODUCTION

THIS book is born of the confidence which those who are unknown to me have displayed in daily communicating that which they admire, that which moves them, and that which they believe should be before the eyes of the public and in the heart of France. In these pages I beg them to find the expression of my gratitude. Yet this lengthy task could not have been accomplished with such resources as were normally at my disposal. In order to lend a balance to the various chapters, I was obliged to seek "themes" which my spontaneous correspondents failed to give me, and these documents reaching me from families with whom I had no association, it became clearly my duty to strive to understand them in the same spirit in which they had been written. The most valuable coöperation was offered to me and an assistance that has been very general. It is due to this generous spirit that I may be permitted to thank Messrs. Ferdi-

nand Buisson, Charles Andler, Camille Julian, Paul Desjardins, Samuel Rocheblave; the pastors Charles Wagner, John Vienot, and many of their colleagues; Henri Brémond, dom Pastourel, dom Besse, and the "Secrétariat de la documentation catholique." Is not such an indebtedness another sign of the union of minds surrounding our soldiers? And finally, I can never over-emphasize the extent of my obligation to Mr. Joseph Bédier, that eminent master, whose scientific analysis and whose spiritual delicacy have helped me better to understand the heroic reality of to-day as well as the epic legend of former times.

MAURICE BARRÈS

THE FAITH OF FRANCE

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CHAPTER I

OUR DIVERGENCIES DISAPPEAR ON AUGUST 4, 1914

NEVER has an army at any period of the world's history so vibrated with intelligence and with vision as has ours. When this war began, our wisdom and our folly were mobilized with the nation. No wonder time-honored discipline was effaced throughout the ranks. Every element seemed to serve, the best and that which before the war we chose to stamp as the worst. We saw enlisted for the public welfare moral forces which sprang into being from every direction, whether born of one religion or of another, through philosophy or through tradition: all contained some element upon which souls could feed; thus inspired, this army, by intensive contradictions, when brought face to face with the Germans, stood united in strength and effulgent with spiritual beauty.

How explain this miracle? How was this spirit born? Remember that it was at first aroused by a great wave of national enthusiasm.

The soul of France had been asleep; it had rested upon a pillow of vipers. The horrors of civil war seemed to threaten its very existence — but the bells rang out the tocsin, and the sleeper awaked to a pæan of love. Catholics, Protestants, Israelites, Socialists, Traditionalists, all suddenly forgot their grievances. The blades of hate were miraculously turned aside, an eternal quarrel was silenced beneath a blazing sky. Each said to himself: "I will feel nothing, I will think nothing which may jeopardize the salvation of my country." The priest, in remembering the schoolmaster, and the schoolmaster in remembering the priest, exclaimed: "Possibly I was mistaken each time that I mistrusted him who misunderstood"; and each Frenchman who saw the son of his adversary jump into a train on his way to the front wished the young soldier god-speed while greeting his parents.

It is a *sursum corda;* it is the harvest of

a nation's soul. It is even more, it is a mobilization of the secret forces that spring from within.

From the dark shadows of our churches, the wax tapers burned — and the crowd pressed forward to kneel beneath their light. The Protestant chapel resounded with exhortations, the ancient synagogue with psalms of sorrow, and he who passed by these holy places, he who entered not, stood without and whispered a benediction. Houses of prayer, houses of refuge, we beseech you to aid the soldiers of France! The Socialists met, questioned the facts, and debated the arguments. They recognized that justice stood within the camp of the Allies and with one accord they vowed that they would serve France in the name of that socialistic Republic in which they believed.

No more criticism, no more suspicion! Each dwelt with sympathy upon the resources of the neighbor he had once despised. What if Abbé Sertillanges and Pastor Wagner did prepare their sermons; what if Père Vaillant once again ignited his blanquist fire; what if Albert de Mun gave us

to the full the outpouring of his heart: we are facing the peril of death. While the battle wages we stand ready to strengthen and to support these men of vision who are gazing heavenward with outstretched arms.

Sacred vigils of the Marne! Brotherly love alone seemed a determining force. We loved each other. Yet this first unity of the spirit would only have proved a passing emotion had not the mind of the army continually looked backward to guide, to purify, and to unite those who remained behind.

Following the Marne began a war tragic in its depression and dreary in its lack of movement. During weeks, months, years, our soldiers, inactive in the trenches, found themselves merely unskilled laborers ordered to perform dispiriting tasks. They worked mechanically in their mud-holes — yet they thought, they read, they talked, they pondered, they dreamed, and above all they suffered.

"The fleetest beast which can drag us to perfection," said one of them, " is Sorrow." Never has any other army thus lived through its soul. And this soul reaches us

from these soldiers through millions of sublime letters which for two years have given France her spiritual bread.

May we not hope that some day in every family these letters will be carefully gathered, that they will be guarded as treasures and that they will be reverently read?

It is in this way that the interior life of our soldiers shall be made known and that the secret of heroic France shall be revealed.

These endless letters, a million each day, scribbled with a faded pencil upon damp paper, are nevertheless living flames. The material form subsists no longer. Syntax, orthography, vocabulary are no better than the ink, the pencil, and the paper which have served in the writing, but what feeling — what truth! They make it possible for us to measure the fervidness, the bounding, or the depression of souls.

Henceforward my task will be to question them.

Naturally there are some weak in resonance while others are dull in color, but if one seeks from this inconglomerate mass such minds as are accentuated by belief,

and if these are classified and brought together in groups, what a psychological document we shall have! How many texts which deserve to become classic! The moral life of France in this war is made manifest through a wealth which is prodigious. A sky studded with stars! We rise and we fall by degrees which from a stolid resignation lead us on and on to a desired sacrifice. In the cause of France our soldiers either stoically face every risk, or, on the other hand, they leap forward with enthusiasm to embrace it. We shall see how their different convictions, religious or philosophical, sustain them.

I am not pretending that every soldier deserves our admiration; still less do I affirm that even among the best of them each one understands the reason of his inspiration or the source of his devotion. My plan will be to study closely every variety of their expression and to throw upon the screen such figures as are typical.

Others later may find a better way, but for the glory of the French spirit let us make this beginning.

CHAPTER II

OUR DIVERGENCIES REAPPEAR IN THE ARMY

EACH day troops are transferred from their barracks into the zone of death. Many started with songs and comic jests upon their lips; all were feverishly thoughtless — Why worry about the future? Time enough! Here they are behind earthworks which are always in upheaval, in the midst of comrades who are ever being mowed down, staring at a gloomy horizon where their eyes day and night can neither see a flag displayed nor even the outline of an enemy. Nothing upon which to feed in this monotony of interminable duty, except upon their own interior life.

They force themselves to chaffing and to gayety, but what when they are alone? Save for the great moments in which all can be forgotten, how often in this war must they be only in the presence of themselves! Each one of these men, at least at certain hours, must feel himself a wretched, subordinated

atom, a poor straw thrown into the flames, but with what a thrill is he throbbing! Ah, how alive hearts can be! Our peasant soldiers are nearly always thinking of their homes. Hark to this cry from a young Protestant, a sub-lieutenant, André Cornet-Auquier, who writes to his family: "To-night I was on trench duty — a superb moonlight night. Ah, how good it will be to pray for you!" (Letters, privately published by the pastor, A. Cornet-Auquier, at Chalons-sur-Saône.)

Think what emotion is here revealed! One sees that the soul refuses to breathe this frigid atmosphere, that it insists at any cost upon escaping from this sorrowful solitude, upon seeking a spot that is warmer, upon finding once more a fireside. But this family fireside is far away. The soldier must look to something nearer for his consolation. He must in imagination create brothers and find his solace in a composite soul rather than in his own individual self.

The army is rich in friendships and is full of small groups of two, of four, or of even more soldiers who become inseparable.

Friendship of fellow-countrymen: it is not rare, especially among the reservists in which ten or fifteen men of the same company have come from the same village; thus their friendship is fundamental. A friendship of habit between men who in their daily life are drawn together through enduring the same trials: is sufficient allowance made for this? They seem obliged to suffer unnecessarily when a useless and apparently arbitrary order exchanges them from one battalion into another. Often a man, in saying good-bye to his comrade, has tears in his eyes. Then think of the friendship of sympathy because of common ideas.

One is afraid to be disloyal to our soldiers, to belittle them, to dwarf their height, if one dwells upon a spiritual agony to which even the bravest hearts might succumb. To produce a color which is true, one must add gold, silver, and blue, — joy, in fact, to the sombre tints. Above all, the young men would never allow the wonderful pride by which their souls are inspired to be destroyed. A clergyman, Mr. Jospin, has noted this look of decision, this luminous

glance, this buoyant expression which one sees in their eyes as they march away. "These young men," he writes, "love life to an extraordinary degree, yet they face sacrifice with a magnificent simplicity. I have never before realized how short is the bridge between this world and the next." (Private letter.)

Well, these young soldiers, despite this spirit, long for friendship; they seem eager to exchange ideas, to compare their views as to life and death. The classes '15, '16, '17 are like college fraternities, where all are affectionate fellow-students subdividing into smaller groups.

Friends! The universal cry of all ages — it is on that theme that the letters from the trenches are clear and impressive. A young soldier meets a chaplain, and then other soldiers, who also are members of the Association de la Jeunesse catholique française:[1] they are delighted and exclaim: "How good it seems to talk of our life in the Association de la Jeunesse catholique française, when we are so far away in body, although never in mind. I await our Bulletin with much

impatience. Just think what it means to us in this almost complete solitude." (Bulletin de l'Association de la Jeunesse catholique française.)

Young Gustave Escande, a Protestant, writes in his diary: "Yesterday I came across a Protestant in another company of my section. He is such a sympathetic and serious fellow that to strike up a friendship with him would make me feel less lonely." (A la Caserne et sur le Front; publishers of " Foi et Vie.")

A school teacher, an adjutant, writes from the banks of the Marne: "I have found, with the greatest pleasure, some fellows from Seine et Oise; one of them is a sergeant, and in the section I command. Somehow I feel less alone." (Manuel général de l'Instruction primaire.)

From the Argonne, Roger Cahen, a young Jew and a freethinker, writes: "The loss of sleep to which I have grown accustomed, the wretched food which is ruining my digestion of which I was at one time so proud, all this is as nothing by comparison with the desire for conversation. I have no

one with whom I can exchange a single general idea or to whom I may even make a passing remark. Thus I am robbed of the greatest joy in life." (Roger Cahen, à l'Union pour la Vérité, 21 rue Visconti.)

A similar belief inspires to mutual understanding. Thoughts interchanged, interrupted, and resumed, tinged, perhaps, with melancholy in men of certain age, full of gayety even to the extreme of nonsense amongst the young men and the boyish officers, fill the days and nights. Nothing can remain hidden in a life replete with such poignant incident. They who are sympathetic of idea and mind gravitate towards each other. The ties of religion bind with exceptional strength. How comforting and refreshing it is to find others who feel as we do, so that we may together defer to some idea superior to our own!

"The origin of our little group," says a soldier in Champagne, in a letter written on September 24, 1915, "is for many reasons a never-to-be-forgotten date! All day long we had remained lazily quartered in an improvised camp in the woods. The most

contradictory rumors were flying about. Towards evening each battalion was drawn up to form a square while the colonel read General Joffre's burning proclamation. We knew what to expect. Our regiment was to advance the following day. It would be on the third line. At night while in small groups we exchanged the addresses of our respective families, some *poilus* were singing the 'Marseillaise' in the tents, while others slept. I found myself dreaming in the moonlight. A sergeant passed; he seemed in the dumps and stopped to break the spell. Another man came and sat near us. They began to talk about the next day, of the attack, of death, of God, until at last we separated having said an evening prayer together." (Bulletin de l'Association de la Jeunesse catholique française.)

Thus, out of the crowd, those of the same faith become joined together. In the hearts of our soldiers is found that sentiment which lends them strength and which they wish to make more vital through contact with their friends. Many in their solitude follow the lead of others, for even if they have no

definite dogmatic creed, they are nevertheless seeking co-religionists. Catholics, Protestants, Jews, Freethinkers, Trade-unionists, Internationalists, Traditionalists, all mingle together.

And the very forces which yesterday drove us at each other's throats, and which, since the hour of mobilization, have become scattered, are they not to become once more operative?

Beyond a doubt; only hereafter this will not be to provoke differences and antagonisms, for out of these very differences, which we shall probe one by one, shall be born a unity of spirit and a sympathy unrivalled in beauty and in inspiration.

CHAPTER III

THE CATHOLICS

THERE are about twenty-five thousand priests in the army, but only three hundred of them are officially appointed as military chaplains, wearing three stripes.

Three hundred seem very few, but a colonel has the right to designate, in each of his battalions, one additional priest to conduct the religious services. This extra chaplain never wears a cassock nor is he allowed any special privilege; he must, on the contrary, fulfil his military duties, despite which he seems to accomplish his priestly mission with perhaps fewer difficulties than the chaplain who wears the three stripes.

The latter is stationed with the group of stretcher-bearers attached to a division and rarely comes in direct contact with the multitude of men who are scattered along a line that seems endless; whereas he who is assigned to the stretcher-bearers of the battalion is at liberty to move about freely in

the trenches and to share the same life with his brothers in arms.

The remainder of the priests who are mobilized are either officers or common soldiers. They are, indeed, fortunate if they can say mass from time to time (this is rare), and while afforded neither title nor facility they nevertheless grasp every opportunity to minister to the wounded.

Yet twenty-five thousand priests represent a force which works as leaven in an atmosphere so responsive to religious influence.

A young soldier, Roland Engerand, writes to his parents: "Last night the chaplain of our division ate with us in a dug-out: a splendid priest, whom all the men adore, and they all came around merely to shake his hand. He had just returned from the midst of the hottest action, as he cannot bear to be at a distance from the men who are really doing the fighting. He asked me to give him some tips as regards the fellows whom he did not already know. He said to me, 'I'm going back with you into the trench!' So arm in arm we climbed down.

"We walked together most of the night. The men were digging. 'Give me your pick-axe. I want to be able to say, later, that I too have helped to dig a trench.' And believe me he dug! He stopped for a moment farther along; every lad greeted him, and he had a word for each of them. When he came to any member of my company he would clasp the man's head with both hands. 'Well, where do you come from, my boy? Listen!' And kneeling beside him with his arm around his neck, the two heads would be very close together for several minutes, yet one could hear nothing but the whispering of their lips. Then, having listened to the lad's story, he would speak to him, would strengthen him, would inspire him so that when he had finished, and the boy was more ready than before to make any sacrifice, he kissed him." (Private letter.)

What had he been whispering in his ear? He had spoken of his country, of his village; he had offered to do any little thing for him that lay in his power. All that was well enough up to a point, but it was not sufficient. The priest is a friend, a friend who

can uplift the soul, who reveals to the soldiers all the promise and the support of religion. "After all, should you die, you will merely be leaving a material life to pass into a life that is infinitely better." Then the soldier is calm, for when death comes, nevertheless he shall live. But this future life can only be happy provided he does his duty here on earth and because of his having conquered the strongest instinct in us all which is that of selfishness. The priest has only one mission, and this is to soothe and to raise him who listens to the very acceptation of sacrifice.

What a mission! In the abstract, the priest becomes a conqueror. Nothing can resist him; he deals with a doctrine which has been tried, which has proved its power, and which contains as its mainspring sacraments which are divine. He finds himself before men who are living under conditions that are appalling. Each must create his own sacrifice, facing as he does the sorrows of a whole world. Difficulties, resentments, are not unknown even in the lives of the saints. How can this chaplain from day to

day find a way by which his treasure house can be made an operative force?

Many of my readers have seen the army mass served in the open air. All at least have read numerous descriptions of this. Usually it is said in one of those sheltered corners of some wood half destroyed by shell, a wood full of different varieties of trees, or of those dark pines which stretch along the front from the sea to Belfort. A plank laid across cases of ammunition serves as an altar; it is concealed by branches and decorated with a great wooden cross; the candles burn in two stable lanterns; those present look, listen, sing, pray, hidden from the aeroplanes by what remains of the brushwood.

To this setting might be added a thousand details, but that which dominates it is the thought of death. It is in the sky above them, it vibrates in their hearts, it engenders brotherly love. The sublime prayer rises as it is uttered. Some soldiers kneel on the edge of the ridge; the priest gives them Holy Communion. "They who are here now may perhaps lose their lives through duty, but they will find them again in another world."

Thus speaks the Church, and who could long remain deaf to these great promises so familiar to our parents and which unite us to them in memory?

The masses are rare in the trenches. The chaplain scrupulously avoids exposing the men to needless risk or imposing upon them an obligation which might deprive them of their few hours of sleep. He prefers rather to rely upon the effect of his spoken word, to the comfort given by one man to another, or to carry the Blessed Sacrament to each individually.

The soldier priest, leaning upon that rough stick which is a mark of the *poilus* in the Argonne, covers the Host with his cape of horizon blue in order to give it to the faithful in some deserted dug-out. (Cf. lettre de H. R., membre de l'Association de la Jeunesse catholique française, dans le Bulletin de l'Association.) None notice this silent, almost noiseless, visit of no apparent importance, yet it serves to unite in the imaginations of the communicants the road to their home and the road to their heaven. At night, like Jacob, whose pillow was a

stone and who saw in his dreams the angels, they in their turn, as they closed their eyes in the muddy trenches, were able reverently to thank a presence which to them was divine.

When billeted in a village the various offices of worship are the more easily performed, — masses, benedictions, sermons, — all very beautiful and helpful to believers and to those possessing imagination. But especially do I refer to the soul of the average man, for it is this, the living reality, which must be sustained and strengthened. What has such a soul found? How much of consolation? How many soldiers, even though good Catholics, are sufficiently educated to follow with understanding the sacrifice of a God upon an altar? A mass void of a sermon, or of a great canticle sung in impressive unison, which elevates, which inspires, and which thrills, would produce but a feeble impression. For the majority of the soldiers this would merely serve as a link uniting them with the past. It makes this Sunday at the front remind them of the Sunday at home. At the most solemn mo-

ments, look at them; they are, indeed, far away from this improvised rural church in Lorraine or in Champagne; they are in their own church, the church of their little village, where in imagination they are at mass with their wives.

"Every night when quartered," said a priest of the battalion to me, "I preach for fifteen minutes, dwelling upon the very simplest themes, which are always the same. The greatest difficulty is to remain human, to avoid set phrases in an endeavor to touch the hearts. What can they most readily grasp? That which replies directly to those questions which are continually surging in their minds in the mud of the trenches and in the solitude at the front. One has to be near them, to live with them. One's expression must answer their needs. They have a horror of mere words. I speak to them of Jesus Christ because He is a being. They are always seeking for what is real. As for my peasants from the Vendée, God, Jesus Christ, the Church, the soul that is immortal, all are to them visible actualities. When I notice that they are restless, that possibly

they have been impressed, I know that that which calms them is the hope of Christians. They will either rejoin their families in their village when peace is declared, or should they fall on the battlefield, they will rejoin them in heaven. This belief in immortality is a certain and illuminating conviction which prepares them for that sacrifice which may soon be demanded."

Often Protestants and Free Thinkers who have assisted on these occasions confess to the priest that they have thereby been benefited. An officer watching the surroundings, listening to the hymns and to these spoken words of comfort, exclaimed: "What a splendid moral drill!" It has at times happened that some great leader has asked the chaplains to speak to the men on the eye of action. (Cf. in "La Revue des Jeunes," an account given by the Abbé Thellier de Poncheville upon the preparation of the offensive in Champagne in September, 1915.)

These discourses, powerful as is the effect they produce upon those companies drawn from districts where faith is strong, do not in themselves make as much impression as does

the speaker, when once his sermon is over and when he himself is subjected to the very dangers which he has urged his listeners to despise. It is then that he, indeed, becomes part of them. Listen!

Auffray, volunteer chaplain in the colonial troops, is thus described: "Coming from Brazil, despite his great age, to do his part in sharing the danger of this conflict, was gloriously killed in the German trenches where he had gone with the attacking troops." ("Journal Officiel," February 9, 1916.)

Barlet (of the order of the Lazarists), corporal stretcher-bearer in the 4th Regiment of Zouaves: "At the moment when his section rushed out of the trenches to attack and to carry a German line, he ran forward to help a lieutenant who was wounded; then, with word and action turning to these men who had lost their leader, he urged them on and on, up to the very German trench, where he finally fell after being four times wounded." ("Journal Officiel," January 31, 1915.)

Albert Fournier, volunteer chaplain to a

group of stretcher-bearers: "Died gloriously on June 10, 1915, who, while performing his priestly duties in the trenches, excited the courage of the men of the division who were about to attack the enemies' entrenchment." ("Journal Officiel," August 19, 1915.)

Le Rohelle, chaplain of the 62d Regiment of Infantry: "During the long and difficult preparations preceding the attack of September 25, 1915, he rendered conspicuous service to his commanding officer while sustaining and stimulating the morale and the patriotism of the men. At the moment of attack he was untiring in his care of the wounded, exposing his life over and over again under heavy shell fire, without any thought of danger to himself, until he had pushed on to the farthest point." ("Journal Officiel," December 18, 1915.)

The Abbé Salini (F.) soldier in the 273d Regiment of Infantry: "Very brave, twice wounded, had already received the Croix de Guerre (two palms). In the midst of an attack, he led his comrades forward while intoning the 'Marseillaise' and did not hesitate to push ahead so as to occupy an

outpost which effectively strengthened the whole position." ("Journal Officiel," September 19, 1916.)

The Abbé Rémy (Louis) in the 146th Regiment of Infantry: "Stretcher-bearer, filling at the same time the duties of chaplain in the regiment: a living example of courage and of devotion, ably seconding the commander by his ceaseless activity, was conspicuous through his absolute indifference to all danger in the course of the battle which lasted from the 9th to the 23d of May, 1915; he rushed up an embankment in order further to encourage the men; then, his chief officer having been cut off from all telephonic communications, he himself assured the transmission of orders despite a shower of shrapnel. Afterwards under the liveliest fire, he went to the relief of the wounded." ("Journal Officiel," July 24, 1915.) Military medal, and further cited for the decoration of the Legion of Honor: "On account of exceptional courage and devotion, and having already been given the medal and duly cited for his sublime conduct on the field of honor, he further distinguished himself on the 1st

of July, 1916, by pushing on to the first line of attack without arms, so as better to encourage the men by word and deed." ("Journal Officiel," September 13, 1916.) The Abbé Rémy is from the Vosges in Lorraine, a professor in the little seminary of Mattaincourt.

Still another from Lorraine, the Abbé Grosjean, vicar at Mirecourt, a stretcher-bearer attached as chaplain to the 156th Regiment of Infantry: "Begged the Chief of the division to allow him to accompany the troops during their attack in the battle of May 9, 1915. He was constantly seen on the 9th and 10th of May in the places most exposed to danger, exhorting some, encouraging others, nursing the wounded, seeing that they were quickly carried to the rear, — in one word, giving a splendid example of courage, of cheerfulness, and of charity." ("Journal Officiel," August 2, 1915.)

Father Deléglise (Jean Marie), of the Order of the Oblates of Marie Immaculée, volunteer chaplain to the 13th Battalion of the Chasseurs alpins: "Giving evidence of his absolute loyalty and devotion, exercising

his functions with rare tact and intelligence beyond all praise, teaching his men to ignore death, while himself showing an equal indifference to danger. In the attack of June 14, 1915, he went with his company, giving comfort to each, was himself shot while carrying a wounded man on his shoulders, yet nevertheless struggled to his feet so that he might stumble on with his precious burden. He was afterward killed by another bullet which struck him on his temple." ("Journal Officiel," September 5, 1915.)

Sainte-Marie, chaplain to a group of stretcher-bearers attached to an army corps (329th Regiment of Infantry): "Volunteered to go with a regiment to the first line during the attacks lasting from the 4th to the 15th of July, 1916. He was always in the most advanced post and where the position was the most dangerous. Day and night he never ceased to help the wounded and to arouse the enthusiasm of the men through both speech and act. Severely wounded himself, he offered a most sublime example of heroism and of abnegation." ("Journal Officiel," September 18, 1916; Legion of

Honor.) The Jesuit father, Pupey-Girard, official chaplain, with a group of stretcher-bearers belonging to a division of infantry: "A model of devotion and of courage; was especially singled out at X, and at Y, where he was foremost in every attack. Showering care upon the wounded who were falling around him without any thought of danger to himself and despite the grilling artillery fire of the enemy." ("Journal Officiel," February 9, 1916.)

Voiron (Pierre), military chaplain, group of stretcher-bearers of the division: "At the front since the beginning of the campaign. He never ceased either as stretcher-bearer or as chaplain to accompany the regiment as far as the first line and into the most dangerous positions. He was animated in the very highest degree by a spirit of sacrifice, which he understood how to impart to the men while stimulating their moral strength. During the movements north of X, he particularly distinguished himself by his daily presence in the midst of the attacking columns, and under the most severe bombardment, thus setting an example of courage to

every one." (June 10; "Journal Officiel," July 5, 1916.)

Roullet, military chaplain of an infantry division: "A model of modesty and of bravery. In the attack of March 29, 1916, he left with the first advance and arrived at the same moment before the enemy. He never ceased to move up and down the line on the 29th and 30th days of March, helping the wounded, comforting the dying, soothing and encouraging by his words, as well as by giving an exhibition of unexampled indifference to danger." (April 13, 1916; "Journal Officiel," May 22, 1916.) The chaplain Roullet is R. P. Roullet, of the Society of Jesus.

Father Brottier (Daniel-Jules-Alexis), of the Order of the Saint-Esprit, volunteer chaplain to a division of infantry: "Since the beginning of the war, his unceasing care of the wounded, his courage, his self-abnegation have been unequalled and beyond praise. During the battle of March, 1916, he remained side by side with the men who were fighting, and under the most trying conditions he carried the wounded out of range of

a murderous fire, caring for them and encouraging them all the while. Contributed the greatest moral support through his own sublime attitude, his self-control and his unfailing devotion." ("Journal Officiel," June 3, 1916; Legion of Honor.)

The Jesuit father Jean Brémond (Jean-Marie-Luc), volunteer chaplain of the division: "After having been with the soldiers on the first line during the entire action, he remained in a village, that was being fiercely bombarded, to succor and to comfort more than one hundred wounded, becoming responsible for and directing their evacuation and never quitting his post until the last man had been carried away." ("Journal Officiel," May 21, 1916.)

Le Queau (Jean) corporal and stretcher-bearer in the 62d Regiment of Infantry: "Devoted despite every trial, fearless of death, he had carried more than twelve hundred wounded from the different regiments since the beginning of the war, and was able to identify each man. In the attack of September 25, 1915, he continually encouraged his comrades, helping them over the top

of the trenches as they rushed forward. Wounded himself on the same day by bullets both in his arm and in his leg, received while looking after the wounds of others." ("Journal Officiel," November 14, 1915; Military Medal.)

Le Gall (François), volunteer chaplain to the 118th Regiment of Infantry: "Although exempted on account of delicate health, he went as volunteer when mobilization was declared; from the beginning he was a model of absolute devotion and of unselfishness; he rushed to the head of the regiment on the morning of the attack on September 25, 1915. From that time on day and night he never spared himself in the carrying of the wounded and in the comforting of the dying. Always at the very front, fearless of danger, he gave the most beautiful example of magnificent courage and of charity towards all. A chaplain of the highest moral worth, he, through his personal influence due to his many virtues, was able to render most inestimable service. He was wounded on October 12, 1915, in passing through the first-line trenches in order to identify the dead and to

superintend their burial while his division was resting." ("Journal Officiel," November 17, 1915; Legion of Honor.)

Le Douarec (François-Charles-Marie-Joseph), auxiliary chaplain to the 248th Regiment of Infantry: "Never since the campaign began did he cease to give evidence of remarkable devotion and of courage; on the 30th of June, 1916, he accompanied a battalion which conducted an attack in face of a merciless bombardment. He was slightly wounded, retired for a moment to the first dressing-station to have his wound cared for, then returned immediately to the spot where the bombardment was most intense, thus becoming the admiration of all the officers of the neighboring corps. He received two additional wounds. Already officially cited by military order." ("Journal Officiel," August 29, 1916.)

Gauthier (Yves), military chaplain to the 115th Regiment of Infantry: "Volunteer chaplain, a man of persistent bravery beyond all praise. Constantly on the first line, smiling at danger, and by his very presence inspiring others to feel a priceless confidence.

Already cited in the order of the day. He was wounded on October 2, 1914." ("Journal Officiel," November 24, 1915; Legion of Honor.)

The Abbé Batard (Jean-Marie), sergeant in the 65th Infantry: "Was accorded his wish to be in active service instead of merely remaining as stretcher-bearer. He asked to be inscribed as an advance scout and invariably sought the most dangerous missions. A model of courage and of energy, he inspired all who came in contact with him. On the 2d and 3d of January, 1915, under intense fire, he gave to all about him especial comfort and courage through his very example, constantly seeking the most exposed positions in order to encourage those who were fighting and in order better to help those who were wounded. A sergeant who was admired and respected by the entire regiment on account of his bravery and his absolute spirit of sacrifice." ("Journal Officiel," February 7, 1915; Military Medal.)

At last I must stop, for the month of September, 1915, alone (official records in

Champagne) places in my hands one hundred and fifty-six personal records of priests and of monks who died on the field of honor; in the battle of Verdun, in 1916, two hundred and six records of ecclesiastics who died gloriously; and I have at my disposal (in the beginning of 1917) the official text of thirty-seven hundred and fifty-four members of the clergy and of the religious orders who have been cited for recognition and who were deemed worthy of the six or seven stars, or palms. While confining myself, as I have done, merely to the mention of those recommended to receive the Croix de Guerre with a palm, the Military Medal, or the Legion of Honor, there would still be enough cases to more than fill a volume.

These official records, let me add, are as unalterable as tombstones, and it is through the passionate tremor of these actions that we wish to rivet in our memory the portraits of these inspired and inspiring priests.

Young Roland Engerand relates to me: —

"We stopped one day in the village of Mareuil before releasing the 20th Corps who were in the trenches of Neuville Saint-Vaast.

One morning having stopped at a church which had been struck by a shell, I went to visit the cemetery. I was feeling rather insecure because many very large shells had exploded very near me, when suddenly before a newly made grave I noticed a priest, untidy, dishevelled, wearing a cap with 79 as the regiment number, and with a face so young and energetic, astonishingly energetic, who was on his knees sobbing as he prayed. I crossed towards him, through whole rows of officers' graves of our 20th Corps, perhaps one hundred all told, marked with wooden crosses that were quite new, and as I was just off to join the attack, I asked him to hear my confession. He arose and said, 'That is the grave of my major. They are all wonderful! What examples!' And taking my arm he led me away, adding, 'I wanted, before the regiment was given marching orders, to say "Au revoir" to them for the sake of their little ones.' Even while crying bitterly his face never lost its expression of determined resolution. Having heard my confession, he continued for a long while, a very long while, to talk with me.

His eyes glistened feverishly while he spoke of the deeds of the 20th Corps, and his voice had a tone in which grief and pride seemed mingled: 'Ah, what splendid soldiers we have!' said he; 'what beauty of spirit, what indifference to death! How God must welcome them! If only you could have seen them starting off for the attack on the 9th of May! How superb they were! I was left over yonder in the *poste de secours*. There I could see nothing, so I simply could not bear to remain, and when I watched my children (the 79th) hurl themselves forward only to be mowed down, I rushed to the gunners, I cried to them "Quicker! Quicker! Fire again, do you not realize that they are slaughtering my boys!"'

"For a whole hour this excited priest told me one touching story after another. Especially about wounded soldiers: he dwelt upon the habitual indifference to death of these young men of twenty years. He quoted one of them after an operation: 'Keep my arm as a remembrance, major, although it is really to France and not to you that I have given it!' He insisted upon prais-

ing those who were wounded during those thrilling days, those who were brought into the dressing-stations terribly torn to pieces after their fierce attacks, and who while still trembling with enthusiasm would exclaim to their major, 'The Boche lines have been pierced, they have been driven out of France! We have beaten them! Is n't it great!' And only then could they be made to speak of their own wounds.

"This priest invariably ended his anecdotes with this phrase, which was at the same time so proud and so sad: 'We did our duty, sir; you, who have just come, follow the example of the 20th Corps and tell each one of your men that he who dies in honor on the field is sure of going straight to heaven.' "

What an inspiring thought! There is in this chaplain something far deeper than mere compassion, a sense of gratitude, and the expression of a patriot and of a brave heart as voiced to the comrades so worthy of his esteem. In his eyes these soldiers have become innocent victims whose blood is being spilled in atonement for the sake of humanity. How can we marvel that

such an atmosphere of sacrifice should produce an abundance of flowers redolent with the beauty and perfume of spirituality? One seems to touch for a moment the supreme height of a religion made real through its perfection: "A man has no greater love than he who giveth his life." It is to this that Christianity leads. While soldiers are seeking to die for France, the priest recognizes them as examples and feels that the instruction he has given them the night before is being returned to him amplified and actual. "Their death has made them saints. Their title to canonization can be found in their letters," said a chaplain. Another writes: "I have witnessed great acts prepare them for great deaths. I have seen sacrifices that have been formulated and planned for in advance. I shall always treasure in my heart divine secrets which will serve henceforth to illuminate my own life as a priest. Should my turn come to die, I shall thank God for having allowed me to perceive on this earth a vision so eternal in its blessing."

The heroic conduct of these soldiers con-

tributes much to exalt the faith of these priests who witness it in operation. Before an *ecce homo* the perfect Christian exclaims: "This is what Christ did for me; what have I done for Him?" And the same question rises to their lips before such men as these. A corporal priest, although twice wounded in succession, nevertheless took the command of two platoons whose officers had been killed. All were amazed: "What, you, who are so gentle!" "Oh," he replied, "when lambs are enraged, they cease to be lambs." No, it becomes quite another story. One of the most convincing answers which has been made by one of these fighting priests, when his conduct provoked astonishment, was that of the Abbé Paul Bouyer who gave it utterance in the midst of his agony. Adjutant to the 69th Infantry, he received a most honorable citation by order of the army, the Croix de Guerre, the Military Medal, and the English Medal. "Pray God," he writes to a friend, "that I may lightly wear this cross which merely leads me on to the real reward, to bear the cross of Christ, which is the cross of suffering."

Such is the sublimity of their ideals. From the sand dunes in the north, southward to the Vosges, in every direction, they climb in imagination the Mount of Olives, that mountain of complete resignation on which was uttered, "Not my will but Thine," and on and on to Calvary, that mountain of sacrifice on which was heard, "Into Thy hands I commend my Spirit." For to these Christians each day in the trenches is a renewal of the passion of Christ.

Abbé Gaston Millon, captain in the 90th Regiment of Infantry, in the midst of his priestly duties at Dead Man's Hill, during Holy Week in 1916, lived closely in spirit to the seven last days of his God.

"*Holy Tuesday, 1916.* I am meditating upon this phrase of Joffre's, 'Our victory will be the fruit of individual sacrifice.' Sacrifice remains the one great law. Jesus Christ Himself has given us the example. The Church lives through the virtue of her Master and of His disciples, virtue only acquired through sacrifices. Sacrifice unto death.

"*Holy Thursday.* The bombardment becomes violent. What does this matter? I

leave myself in the hands of Jesus, Sovereign Priest and Sacred Host. During this time in the trenches I shall think of the Last Supper and of that awful night in the Garden of Olives. If you wish my blood, O my God, I offer it to you with the blood of my divine Saviour.

"*Good Friday.* The night has just marked the end of the infantry fighting. From eleven o'clock on, the great cannons thunder; Dead Man's Hill on our right has been lost in the smoke. Good Friday, the day of man's redemption, what a fitting way in which to pass this day! We would fain have forgotten, O Jesus, and you have forced us to face death. 'Look and choose! I leave your eternal future in your hand; follow me to Calvary.'

"*Holy Saturday.* Jesus lies dead in His tomb. I, in my death shelter, may die at any moment. An *obus* has just fallen a few yards away; my lamp has been blown out and a soldier killed. O my God, receive my soul. Death is in our midst; it is always near, always near, always possible. My soul is ready to meet it. It will be my deliverance.

If I survive this war with what fervor shall I seek to save souls! But now I am still a priest I must set an example of courage. What a week! Holy Thursday, the feast of priesthood! Good Friday, the feast of sacrifice! Holy Saturday, the feast of solemn vigil before the grave! Then Easter, and the glorious resurrection."

Thus he writes, and as he leaves his shelter to take up his service an *obus* strikes him to the ground. Easter was, indeed, for him a glorious resurrection. ("L'Écho d'Amplepluis," June and July numbers, 1916, and private letters.) Christ has applied His sufferings to the salvation of mankind.

Father de Gironde, sub-lieutenant of reserve in the 81st Infantry, killed in the Battle of Ypres on December 7, 1914, exclaimed: "To die young, to die a priest, a soldier, while attacking, while advancing, in the full performance of one's sacerdotal privileges, or perhaps giving absolution; to shed my blood for the Church, for France, for my friends, for all whose hearts are filled with the same ideal as my own, and for others who know the joy of belief. Ah, how beauti-

ful this is!" (Father Gilbert de Gironde, in the office of the Messager du Cœur de Jésus, Toulouse.)

And all of these Catholic heroes have separate intentions.

The Abbé Ligeard, from the great Seminary of Lyons, corporal in the 28th Battalion of the Chasseurs alpins, before going into action, the very day of his death writes: "I offer my life hoping that the lack of understanding between the priests and the people will soon cease to exist." (Letter from Bulletin de l'Association de la Jeunesse catholique française, Lyons Branch.)

Father Frédéric Bouvier, a man of especial acquirements in the study of comparative religions, killed at Vermandovillers, December 17, 1916, while succoring the wounded, gave his life "for his comrades in the 86th in order that so many good and just men, who hereafter need only turn to God, and to live according to His teachings, may thus be inspired to seek Him." (Extract from a letter of farewell to the 86th Infantry, May 9, 1916.)

Joseph Arnoult, soldier in the 44th Colo-

nial Regiment of Infantry, cited in the regiment's records, "He constantly volunteered for special patrol duty," wrote, just before he fell upon the field of honor: "I left making the sacrifice of my life to God, praying that he might quickly accept it. I wish to die as a martyr for the salvation of my own soul and for that of France." ("Semaine Religieuse," Nantes, June 6, 1915.)

Instances are innumerable of this mystical summing up. These Catholic heroes seem to breathe with calm, in an almost supernatural atmosphere.[2] One knows the prayers recommending the soul to God. These are the ejaculations which the Church has prepared for the dying. She summons Heaven in exalted appeal to aid and accompany the soul in its flight. Beyond the veil, the Christian soldier sees another world in which his place is reserved. Draw near and read this testament in form of a letter which was written by a dying man on the field of honor. Marie-Lucien Guillard, student in the great Seminary of Chavagnes-en-Paillers, was wounded on September 8, 1914, and in his solitude and agony here is what he offers us, written with a glacial hand: —

"*My good and dear ones,* —

"When this letter reaches you, your child will have gone to heaven, unless some kind Germans may have rescued him on the field of battle. Yesterday morning, September 8, at about half-past six, while you were at mass, owing to the holy will of Providence I was struck by a ball which went through my thigh and I fell. I am still on the same spot, for, by a truly unworthy similarity with the fate of my Saviour Jesus on the Cross, I am actually nailed to my cross, being unable to move my leg even the smallest part of an inch. My wound is not very painful, provided I do not stir, but I am suffering desperately from thirst. My morale is excellent, I am enduring no agony. My crucifix is before my eyes. I pray and I await the will of my good God. You knew that, before I left, I had made a vow to sacrifice my life. I have renewed this vow many times since yesterday morning. I renew it again now with all that may be pleasing to God to add or to retract. I have *no* fear of death; I have seen it and I see it still too near me even as I write. There is nothing horrible about it,

because it brings happiness. As for yourselves, I pray that your grief will be silent, resigned, almost joyful. My greatest sorrow is to leave you, but I know that before long I shall find you again." ("En Avant," parochial bulletin of Ardelay, Vendée, and a private letter.)

The mystics insist that one must long to be nailed to the Cross of Christ, and there exists a beautiful letter of Catherine of Sienna written on this theme; but what is the most inspired teaching compared to one act! This soldier priest, nailed to his cross on the soil of France, is a glowing fact which transports us *ex umbris et imaginibus in veritatem.*[3]

CHAPTER IV

THE PROTESTANTS [4]

THERE are sixty-eight Protestant chaplains in the army, and there are scattered throughout the ranks as officers or soldiers three hundred and forty more, who, without enjoying either official recognition or facility, are nevertheless permitted to speak freely when the occasion presents itself.

Not a large number — but how many Protestant pastors are there in the whole of France? A thousand at the outside including all sects. Even in time of peace, their followers, those at least in the villages, only see them at rare intervals and then merely for a few hours, as they pass through. In the reformed religion, the sacraments, for the administration of which the priest is indispensable, do not exist. The one great spiritual help is the Bible.

"In the army," said a pastor to me, "we are not prepared to improvise altars and to

celebrate Catholic masses in the open air which always produce such a profound impression. We have not the same beautiful liturgy as yours, but we have the Cross of Calvary and the Sacred Word."

Let us draw near, let us listen, let us try to penetrate the profound and beautiful motives which determine the spiritual life of these Protestants who are soldiers. The Catholic priests live in an atmosphere which disseminates a belief in the supernatural while at the same time this is encouraged by outward and visible effects; now we must associate with pastors who are more rigid, more pious, more exemplary of conduct than is the average man and who are aiming at only the highest moral standards.

A Protestant who wished to make me understand the mental attitude of these pastors while serving in the army, thus described one of the most beloved of them: "Pastor Nick, wounded by the enemy, is like a giant, blond with blue eyes, whom we have always seen pledged to every good cause. He upholds social Christianity, a neighbor of the Sillon who wishes to make

life on this earth more bearable and to establish God's reign through humanity itself. In the midst of his parishioners he instituted a 'friendly society.' He is purely non-sectarian; he shares all with his neighbor. While ever contributing to social progress, he is one of our most active pastors, and in his spirit he is very close to the most beautiful types of the Catholic Church. To-day, in the dual capacity of chaplain and of soldier, he is drawn to follow those who are in the first line! He addresses the wounded with the utmost delicacy of speech — giving to each a message that is full of tenderness and of sympathy. He is always an optimist, as he absolutely believes that everything which happens must be for the good of those who love God and who wish to make Him as really existent. The phrase, 'His soul magnifies the Lord,' explains the quality of his courage and his own soul becomes a psalm."

The family life of these pastors, associated as it is with the priestly functions, has afforded during these last two years some beautiful manifestations which the faithful cherish as lessons and as examples enabling

them better to face the trials of the war. The pastor Camille Rabaud, an octogenarian, of the old Cevennian stock, had two grandsons. The elder fell on the field of honor: "His death inspires me," wrote the younger: "henceforth we shall be two."

He, in his turn, was struck down: then the old man went to the Temple and mounted the pulpit. They tried to stop him — at his great age such an effort was too much! His answer was: "They did their duty, I will do mine!" He preached; he drew from their deaths an example to encourage the good people of Castres.

It was the same at Nîmes; the pastor, old Mr. Babut, having lost his son, endeavored to deduce from his own grief consolation for the comfort of others. Mr. Babut is the pastor who at the beginning of the war, wrote that noble letter, with an honesty pushed to the extreme, to Pastor Dryander, and who received from this German, the appointed preacher to the Emperor, a reply that was revoltingly pharisaical. His son fell on the battlefield, and he preached a sermon full of faith and of spiritual strength. The Catho-

lics as well as the Protestants flocked to hear him. I believe that nearly all who were present wept. An eye-witness wrote to me that this was for Nîmes, a place rent as a rule with religious differences, a day not merely of union, but of a deep communion in which the same hope and the same suffering were mingled.[5]

Another pastor, chaplain in the army, Mr. Gounelle, had lost his son. Thinking of this young hero and of his comrades, he writes in a letter which is before my eyes: "This war has reversed our relations. We educate these children in time of peace; it is their turn now to educate us and to set us examples."

This is a really beautiful thought and one full of sublime and human understanding. We seem therein to touch the highest moral pinnacle.

What are the ideas which are the most powerful elements of inspiration for these Protestants at war? What is the nature of that faith which so contributes to their service to the country?

First, they love Alsace.[6] Many of them

were born there. This is an important factor which lends a special fervor to their patriotism. "For half a century," said a pastor who was a native of Alsace, "our exiled souls have suffered as though from an act of impiety at these arbitrary divisions of our country which seem not only to prolong the sufferings of Alsace, but to ignore them." In order to deliver her, one must preserve as uppermost the patriotic idea of country. The Alsatians, French in the same way as are the inhabitants of Nantes or of Marseilles, have, moreover, a personal desire for victory which is even deeper, and a purpose for crushing Germany which is even greater. They war against an oppression which refuses their very natures any real expansion. From this Alsatian point of view the Protestants are convinced that there was never a cause so just for which a man should fight as is the cause of the Allies. And this conviction affords them a second reason for reassurance. While forced to defend the liberty of France, we are struggling at the same time for the freedom of the smaller peoples. Without this certitude, many of these Pro-

testants would be tormented, paralyzed, and made incapable of action. They could not easily have become reconciled to follow their country's flag in a war that would have been one of aggression.

"My heart as a citizen is not disturbed," writes a sergeant, Pierre de Maupeou, killed at twenty-five years of age, "but my heart as a Christian is often perplexed. There are warring in my soul two sentiments which cannot be reconciled — I am not afraid of acknowledging it. The morale of man is not the morale of God."

This sergeant in the Engineer Corps is only one brave man amongst many. His two citations in the order of the army prove this to be the case. But he is a Christian who has scruples. He took part in an action reported by the official records on February 8, 1915, "a German trench destroyed by a mine whose defenders were either seized or killed." His reflections on this incident are as follows: "It is a hard death — as the miners say, this for which we were responsible! The Gospel reads, 'He who strikes with the sword shall perish by the sword.'

So that at moments I may not fail in my duty, I must, indeed, be convinced of the beauty and of the righteousness of this cause." (Diary of Pierre de Maupeou, killed in the cemetery of Ablain-Saint-Nazaire, May 28, 1915.)

These Protestants are numerous to whom the idea of war seemed at variance with their thought of God, and who look for some solution to appease their consciences.[7] One must not seek vengeance upon one's enemies — one must rather pardon them! But the life of Christ was, after all, a conflict in order that this world should not become the possession of the wicked, and such a precedent as this convinces them that it is possible to reconcile the service of God with the service of man. This perfect solution I find in a letter of Oliver Amphoux, doctor of law, a student in Protestant theology, who shortly before Vassincourt, where he fell on September 5, 1914, writes: —

"The hour of the great battle strikes. The general of the division himself declared this morning that it would be a decisive battle. One can pray God, not according to the Ger-

man fashion, for one army rather than for another, but for the preservation of justice."[8]

The third and last principle for which these Protestants fight is to establish peace in the world and in their souls. Frequently I find from their lips under different expressions this appeal to the fulfilment of the Gospel. Francis Monod,[9] who was one of a pious group known as the "Volontaires du Christ," enrolled as a sub-lieutenant in the 33d Infantry, wrote: "War! Why, more than ever we seem to be struggling for peace. When the fictitious unity which was nearly established east of us forty-four years ago shall be dissolved, France, at the head of progress and of liberty, shall aim effectively, then as always, for the peace of the world. Out of this war great things shall result for our country and for that work which shall be accomplished in her and through her. This actual war, oh, miracle! shall prove the cause of the evangelization of the world in our day and generation. It will serve to arouse the Church and to unite its members." (Quoted by Mr. Raoul Allier, "Avec nos fils sous la mitraille.") Again, young

Gustave Escande, of the Fédération Universelle des Étudiants Chrétiens, writes to his friends: "It is a comforting thought that hundreds and thousands of young men in this world are fighting even as I am to attain the ideal which we have erected, 'To make Christ our King.'"

But the voices of these young champions of right are no more persuasive than is a prayer uttered by a simple soldier, a Protestant from the district of Montbéliard, who died in the ambulance at the railway station of Ambérieu: —

"O my God," said he, "let Thy will be done and not mine. I consecrated myself to Thee in my youth, and I pray that this example which I strove to give will serve to add to Thy glory.

"O my God, Thou knowest that I never wished war, but that I have fought because it was Thy will; I offered my life so that peace might prevail.

"O my God, I pray for all my dear ones, Thou knowest how much I love them: my father, my mother, my brothers, and my sisters.

"O my God, give a hundredfold to these nurses for all they have done for me. I am poor, but Thou art the dispenser of riches, I pray for them one and all." (Quoted by the Pastor John Vienot in "Paroles Françaises.") [10]

This prayer, full of gentle grandeur in which his last thoughts are expressed, this simple soldier repeated so often that the Catholic sister who nursed him copied it out to send to his mourning family. A touching tribute from a nun who was quick to recognize those sentiments redolent of the same charity to which her own vows had pledged her. May Heaven bless these two inspired children of France!

Thus, from the redeeming of Alsace, from the love of their native soil, these French Huguenots enlarge their objective until it includes the saving of all mankind — and from these three motives, of liberty, of justice, and of peace, is born the heroism of the warrior.

Henri Gounelle, who finally fell in the de Calonne trenches on June 15, 1915, thus writes to his father on June 8: "I am

leaving to-morrow for the trenches. You may rest assured that I have every intention of coming back. However, if fate rules that I shall remain yonder, I hereby bequeath my frail body to the cause which is racking our country with a thrill of patriotism, a patriotism which is both heroic and divine." (Private letter.) [11]

On the eve of the offensive in Champagne, where he was killed on October 6, 1915, the sub-lieutenant Maurice Dieterlin, a former scholar in the École de Chartres, sent this last message to his family: —

"I have spent the most beautiful day of my existence. I regret nothing and I am as happy as a king. I am glad to forfeit my life in order that my country may be delivered. Say to our friends that I am going to victory with a smile on my lips, rejoicing more than have all the stoics and all the martyrs throughout the ages. We are only one moment in eternal France. France must live — France shall live.

"Prepare your most beautiful raiments. Treasure your smiles to do honor to the conquerors in this great war. We may not be

amongst them — others will be there in our stead. You shall not weep. You shall not wear mourning for us, because we die with a smile on our lips and with a superhuman joy in our hearts. Long live France! Long live France!

"How intoxicating it all is! To-night has been the supreme hour of my life, for which I have been preparing since my birth. I feel that I have had every earthly joy, all of human happiness, and that at last my soul may depart in peace. I belong no longer to my father, to my affianced bride, to my studies, to my tastes. I am the chattel of my colonel. He can dispose of me as he will. He can hold me in the hollow of his hand and toss me hither and thither as best it may seem to him. How easy, after all, sacrifice seems, and how your enthusiasms as rapid as your discouragements appear far from us, immeasurably far, as far as are the stars in our firmament." (Private letter.)

And in one of his last letters Corporal Georges Groll, secretary of the Paris Y.M.C.A., who was to die at the hands of the enemy near Souchez, June 9, 1915, wrote

to his father, a baker in the rue Pierre-Lescot: "I have not been sent here to die: I am to fight; I offer my life for future generations. I shall not die, I shall merely change my direction. He who walks before us is so great that we cannot lose Him from sight." (Private letter.)

What a picture! It might have been created by a Michael Angelo. When we see the cold churches of these Protestants, when we listen to their sermons, whose theme is always a rigid morality, they seem to us so calm, so self-contained, so intensively logical, that rather than compare them with such Catholic heroes as those whose acute and emotional state of mind we have described, we feel that we must speak of their philosophy rather than of their religion; let us, therefore, learn to understand them better through the affection and the admiration inspired by such acts and such sublime expressions as these described.

Maurice Rozier, an under-officer of infantry: "Sunday, May, 1915. All three, my captain, the chaplain, and I, held a service on the cliff overlooking the smiling valley of

the Aisne, while the Germans were firing at an aeroplane above our heads. 'My help suffices thee. Saint Paul in the midst of dangers finds peace in God.' Such was the simple theme of our meditation." Nothing else. The thought of this act of faith is touching, yet it conveys no meaning to us. In the life of young Escande, we read that when he was unable to see a Protestant chaplain, he loved to enter the little Catholic church at Courtemont, where hidden behind a pillar, he stood in silence and in contemplation. And so at that moment we strove to perceive more clearly this young Christian praying in the shadow. To-day we seem to understand their interior life and our close relationship becomes revealed. The same deep roots of Christianity, and both yielding two glorious flowerings.

CHAPTER V

THE JEWS

IN her eternal wandering Israel's greatest problem lies in the choice of a country. This is not always an inheritance: it becomes an acquisition through an expression of will, and her nationality seems like a title whose chief aim becomes that of proving her worthiness to bear it.

Many Israelites, established amongst us through generations and centuries, are automatically members of the national body, but they are anxious that their co-religionists who are newcomers should also give proof of loyalty. At the outbreak of the war, when there was an antagonistic attitude manifested in the ancient Parisian ghetto (in the 4th Arrondissement), in that quarter where were found the Jews from Russia, from Poland, from Roumania, and from Turkey, a meeting was held by one of the editors of the paper, "Le Peuple Juif," who gives this account of it: —

"Do you not believe," said some one, "that it will be necessary to open a permanent and public centre for the Jews from abroad who have enlisted, in order that it may be known that the Jews also have offered their contingent?"

That very day an appeal in both French and Yiddish was addressed to the immigrant Jews, urging them to come and inscribe their names in the rooms of the Université populaire juive at 8 rue de Jarente. This was greeted with enthusiasm, regarding it as a shield, and, says "Le Peuple Juif," not a single Jewish tradesman in the Jewish quarters who did not post this appeal conspicuously before his shop. On the following day an enormous crowd surged into the rooms of the Université populaire juive. Each wished to be inscribed without delay and to be given a card affirming his enlistment: a magic document which enabled him to pass through the ranks of police agents and which pacified the wrath of the over-zealous concierges and neighbors. ("Le Peuple Juif," October, 1916.)

Young men, willing volunteers, men of

intellect, questioned, sought information, and gave explanations while registering these ill-assorted recruits. The most enthusiastic was an Israelite of twenty-two, student at the École des ponts et chaussées, small, slight, with expressive, almost feverish eyes which gave evidence of a deep and intense nature. As one inspired, he dreamed of gathering together a whole Jewish legion. Rothstein was a Zionist; thus, through this proof of allegiance given to France, he felt that at the same time he was serving the cause of Israel.

What was his theory? Did he believe that through the victory of the Allies would be realized those projects of Dr. Herzl, which while visionary are nevertheless full of grandeur, or was the motive, more simply and more surely, to increase through sacrifices the moral force and the authority of Judaism? One phrase of his leaves no doubt as to the vigor and directness of his thought. To his friends he named Palestine as their meeting-place after the war.

When all had registered, then he himself signed the paper of enlistment.

Going first as a soldier in the ranks, Amédée Rothstein was promoted to be a sub-lieutenant, and cited in the order of the army for having "shown a spirit that was remarkable and a degree of self-control which was the admiration of the officers of infantry and of their men"; finally named chévalier de la Légion d'honneur for "having particularly distinguished himself on September 25, 1915, when, being the first to leave the trenches, he so inspired his men to follow that a magnificent impetus was thus given to the opening wave of attack."

One would like to become familiar with the thought, the surprise, the sympathy, the hope in the breast of this young hero of Israel in the midst of the soldiers and of the country of France, in a moral atmosphere so wholly different from that of his own normal state of mentality, but one which nevertheless intoxicates him and one from which he would fain become enriched.

I read an analysis of his upon the thesis of Pinès on the "Littérature Judéo-allemande," a study which was brief and dry, yet which makes one regret not seeing the more

elaborate treatise, described as "too personal, too subjective," which he had written upon the same theme. Such as are these ten pages in which he follows the spoken word of the Jewish race, they give evidence of his fixed purpose, of his obsession as touching the sufferings and the hopes of Israel, and so his eyes are turned towards Palestine. His sentiment of national pride seems to dominate any other, with a tendency to gravitate towards human idealism.

We have his *Ultima Verba* in a letter addressed to his chaplain, Mr. Léon Sommer: "I literally regard my life as wholly sacrificed, though, should fate rule otherwise, at the end of the war I shall consider it as no longer belonging to me, and, having done my duty to France, I shall thereafter devote myself to the beautiful and unhappy people of Israel — that people from whom I have descended. My dear chaplain, in case I should disappear, I would rather rest under the protection of David. A *Maguem David* will rock me in my last struggle, and my spirit will become reconciled to the thought of my eternal sleep in the symbolic shadow of Zion."

On August 18, 1916, Sub-Lieutenant Rothstein fell at the head of his troops, struck by a ball in the temple.

There is something sad and touching in the destiny of a young soul which only looks at the world and at life through the Jewish nation, and of one who dies while serving those who are dearest to him, and from whom all the while he insists upon separating himself. But this is only one of the many trials of the wandering Jew.

Now let us pass on from this friend who stands without and draw nearer to those friends we have adopted as our very own.

The Algerian Jews, during this war, have shown us an Israel which has become part of French civilization, and which desires sincerely to conform to our laws, to our responsibilities, and to our sentiments. Forty-four years ago they participated in no law at all. Suddenly Crémieux accorded them a privilege which vastly disorganized the Arabs. He decreed that they should be considered French citizens. The nobility of this title, the prerogatives which are attached to it, the education which they had enjoyed at our

hands all seemed to have transformed them into patriots. Their fathers only understood trading, but they responded to the call to arms. They left, I am told, with great enthusiasm. A witness asserted that they could be heard exclaiming: "We will rush upon the Boches, we will drive our bayonets through their bowels, while thanking the Eternal."

This cry is superb and takes us back in imagination to Biblical times and to the reign of the Maccabees. I wish that I might have found more ample and more precise data as to the part these Jews from Algiers have played in this war;[12] but if we pass on in this same chapter dealing with these aliens who become such good Frenchmen as to compensate us for and as to justify their adoption, I can offer a direct testimony which shows us a noble and a passionate soul and one that will reveal the intimate struggles of French Israel.

I hold in my hands the personal letters of Robert Hertz, a former pupil of the École Normale Supérieure, a professor of philosophy in the high school of Douai, founder of

the Cahiers du Socialisme, and the son of a German Jew. It is this last fact which emphasizes the tragedy of his position and of his mind. His letters to his wife are admirable in their scope and in their beauty. I should be doing him an injustice if I did not mention his love of home; his intensely intellectual spirit of research, which was manifested in a most original way in the very midst of war; his entire enjoyment of military discipline, which satisfied what he chose to call "a homesickness for the cathedral which was afar off"; and finally his indomitable will which was determined to go on to the very end. Frequently my own name, blamed or praised, was referred to by his pen, and I seemed to hear our harmonies and our discords, for the war leaves nothing in us which we are unwilling to reconsider. But I shall not pause, I must go on rapidly, almost brutally, for the honor of Robert Hertz, until his thought, denuded and palpitating, is laid before us.

"If I die," he writes to his wife, "I shall but partially have paid my debt to my country!"

And farther along, this important extract: —

"Dearest, I remember my childish dreams when I was very little, and later as a day pupil in a high school in the room near the kitchen on the avenue de l'Alma. With my entire being I longed to be a Frenchman, to deserve to be one, to prove that I was one, and I thought even at that time of the brilliant deeds I would accomplish in a war against William. Then this desire for integration would take another form, as my socialism proceeded to a great extent from this sentiment. Now the dream of my childhood comes back with an even greater insistence. I am thankful to those leaders who have accepted me as their subordinate, to the men whom I am proud to command, they the children of a really chosen people. Yes, I am full of gratitude towards a country which has accepted me and which has thus made me its debtor. No price is too great to pay for this, and may my little son always walk with head erect, and in a France that is restored may he never know the torture which has poisoned so many hours of our

childhood and of our youth. 'Am I a Frenchman? Do I deserve to be one?' Yes, my baby, you will have a country, and you can step forth into the world sustained by this assurance: 'My father lived here, and he gave all for France.' As for me, if I need any reward, it is found now in this sweetest of all thoughts.

"There has been in the standing of the Jews, and especially amongst the German Jews who have only recently immigrated, something which seems irregular, equivocal, underhand, and spurious: I feel that this war gives us the opportunity to clarify the situation, to make it straight for our own sakes and for the future of our children. Later they may work, if it so pleases them, at the supreme and international task, but first one must prove by deed that we have not sunk below the national ideal." (Private letters.)

The author of this last will and testament signed it with his blood and certified it by his death. Robert Hertz was killed on April 13, 1915, at Marchéville, being a sub-lieutenant in the 330th Regiment of Infantry. I doubt

whether anywhere else can be found such an expression of emotion or one which indicates so passionately the Jewish desire to be absorbed and to become as one with the soul of France.

Here is the exposition of the Jews who have recently come into our midst, and in whom that unreasoning, half-animal love of country (such as we feel towards our mother) does not exist. Their patriotism is born of intelligence, an act of will, a decision, a mental choice. They prefer France; a country means to them the free consent to an agreement. Notwithstanding all this, they are able to discover in such a conclusion a reason for devotion, and Robert Hertz, son of a German, has revealed to us in his admirable writings that, recognizing himself to be a citizen only through adoption, he nevertheless wishes to prove by his conduct that he is worthy of this honor.

But there are many other Jews rooted for centuries and for generations in the soil of France, sharing familiarly with the joys and the sorrows of our national life. I ask myself, What do they find in their religion to

nourish patriotism? What remains in them of that old Jewish piety, and what comfort can this offer to Israel's sons who are engaged in this war?

The great rabbi of the central consistory of France in a letter which is before me replies: "My chaplain and I have recognized in our Jewish soldiers since the beginning of the war a great revival of religious faith allied to patriotic enthusiasm." However, I have no documents. I acknowledge frankly the failure of my researches. The documents which I possess shedding light upon the moral attitude of the Jews only reveal mentalities devoid of religious traditions.[13] They are simply free-thinkers.

Those free-thinkers who come from either Catholic or Protestant stock live unconsciously to a great extent through the old foundations of Christianity, which for centuries have been preserved in the little country churches. But these other Jews, from what source springs their devotion and their allegiance? What message has been whispered by the seer who lurks in the shadow of the ancient synagogue? Towards what man-

ifestation of Jehovah do they bow when they recite the *Fiat voluntas tua ?* And how can we properly interpret their acquiescence in this moral gamut which leads from the way of expectant sorrow upward and onward to the joyous desire for sacrifice?

A young Jew offers a reply to these burning questions. Roger Cahen, only recently graduated from the École Normale Supérieure, aged twenty-five, sub-lieutenant, while under German fire in the forest of Argonne, gives himself up to an examination of conscience, the extent of which we find in his letters.

Clear and forceful, evidence of the latent germs of a great talent, they breathe forth the conviction of a young intellectual who, speaking to his family, his tried friends, to his old master, Mr. Paul Desjardins, has no fear of proclaiming his pride and his freedom of spirit. They are, moreover, short meditations in which one perceives that this young soldier is only seeking and finding himself in all of this chaos of war. Roger Cahen does not venture beyond the prescribed circle which is created by his own interior life: "I

believe in no dogma, in no religion," he writes. This was his view before the war; it is emphasized in December, 1915, two months prior to his heroic death. "I have just read the Bible. To me it is merely a compendium of anecdotes, of old and charming stories. I neither look for nor find in it anything save the outpourings of poetic emotions."

They are always these same poetic emotions which he himself seeks in the war, and he finds many therein which are truly beautiful. I believe this absolutely when he writes: "I have within me an inexhaustible fund of gayety, a soul that is ever fresh, impressionable, and alive to all sensations. Each morning I feel as though I had just been born and that I am seeing this great world for the first time." Some of his letters, written on his knees, under the light of a miserable tallow dip, five yards underground, are of lyric grandeur. Listen with reverence to this compelling poem: —

"Splendor of dawn! No hymn can compare to this which surges in the soul of men on guard in the trenches who after hours of

waiting suddenly see appear the light of a triumphant day. At such moments a whole orchestra seems to sound within me. If only I might make note of these interior melodies which no earthly concert can ever render. If only you could realize the richness and the beauty of these emotions which give one more beloved day to the world!"

I never hear the prisoners in "Fidelio" mount the tower, without associating the sublime music of Beethoven with the voice of this little sub-lieutenant. Night, that is creeping across the sky, illuminated only by rockets, a floating mass of nebulous clouds which threaten rain, he himself salutes them with the chorus of the sailors in the first act of "Tristan." From the depth of the trenches on the first line, he notes that the only real events in his life "are the changes in natural order, the falling of night, the birth of day, a heaven that is overcast or one that is studded with stars, the heat or the freshness of the air. This confusion with the life of the world lends to our life a dignity and a beauty that is incomparable."

Attached thus to the splendor of the uni-

verse he defies fate. "I believe that whatever may happen to-day, to-morrow, in eight days, I have arrived at a height which can dominate events and which will permit me only to regard them with curiosity." And again, as he gazes upward: "The sky is everywhere blue. Buzzing with aviators. To-day shall again witness their combats. To watch aviators who seek their prey, who fall upon them, who fire with their machine guns, who fly again into space, who return to the charge until one or the other is dashed to the ground, — I find in this the same primeval and passionate enjoyment as when one assists at a bull-fight, only here the arena is at a great height."

All this is summed up in his profession of faith: "At the risk of seeming mad in your eyes, from my soul and inward conviction I declare that I adore being here, that I love the first-line trenches, as a wonderful 'thinking spot' where one can gather to one's self all assembled forces; and thus enjoy life at its full. I am as though basking under a reflector; I see myself in a light that is scorching, with a brilliancy which, far

better than any study, facilitates analysis. I read seldom; I take more satisfaction in looking about, in trying to unravel and to coördinate my impressions; a study that is deep and prolonged. That which my men do in the trenches while digging passageways, I do within my own soul."

If at length you begin to resent this dilettantism as a little unreal, endeavor to discern in its attitude a foundation which is at least meritorious and which is touching in its quality of tenderness. This courageous lad sent these letters home to his parents. Was he always self-composed in his heart? I think so. But I am equally certain that he wishes to inspire in his people a sense of the same composure. And he never ceases to reiterate this to them throughout this whole correspondence, — it is a series of pictures and of emotions: —

"I am as happy as a man to whom is offered a bunch of roses to smell. The habit of being face to face with all that is most poetical and sublime broadens one's horizon. This campaign has been for me, as I anticipated, a wonderful experience. It has made

a man of me; it has taught me self-reliance. It has increased my vision (all my interior life has become less complicated and broader, broad as a wide avenue where I might watch many passers-by as they come and go), above all showing me the effect that a serene and smiling countenance, added to a few understanding words, can produce at any time upon others."

In each of his letters the conclusion he arrives at never shakes his confidence in the fact that he is a safe and reliable instrument. It is the refrain and the mainspring of his daily reflections. He has found his course and his direction. He is sure of himself. In order to define his method and his mental attitude, his cult or his culture of self, he finds many expressions redolent of intelligence.

"Rejoice," he writes to his parents, "but not with a joy that is primitive after the fashion of the Boches, but a joy that is discerning."

On another occasion, wishing to describe the monotony of the days and nights of a half-monastic mental relaxation, he writes:

"I am revelling in the sensation of continuity"; and later: "I was born for a life of adventure. I am steeped in the voluptuous exercise of my own will."

His refrain in this hard life never varies for a single second. Each day he notes: "I believe that I am making real interior progress. I am carrying away a wonderful collection of pictures and of impressions."

In the end, one begins to feel resentful. Really in the midst of such a drama this sensuousness of a collector, — yet he is to be pitied, this brave fellow; we are not going to deny him the right to take his comfort where he best can find it; let us rather admit the fact that in an atmosphere in which so many lament he is able to create even the illusion of happiness. One night when he was on guard in the trenches, between one and four o'clock, while the bullets and the grenades were crackling against the parapet, he noticed the relative positions and the scintillations of the stars, and added: "I must certainly study astronomy."

This is really very beautiful, and it all contributes towards making him courageous.

It is in following his line of the least resistance that he reaches the height of heroism.

Let us note this fact in passing. Roger Cahen finds his justification in Pascal, who says in his saintly fashion: "Man is a slave to his pleasure; that which gives him more pleasure is that which invariably attracts him." Pascal, together with the Jansenists, here exposed this doctrine of Saint Augustine, who had in his turn borrowed it from Virgil. In their eyes this was in fact only a truth based upon common sense. "One does not give up earthly goods except one finds greater treasures through the service of God." Roger Cahen, who enjoyed reading Virgil in his trench, might have adopted as a device, *Trahit sua quemque voluptas*. Such was his habit to interpret in his turn and after his fashion the *Fiat voluntas tua*.

"I strive to profit through my isolation and acuteness of conditions which danger induces in order that I may better know myself. If only you might realize how simply one judges one's self in this place! I have succeeded until now in preserving my balance through a philosophical indifference

and through an insistent acceptance of circumstances." The last is the crucial word, *acceptance!* And it is not merely a word; it is a whole attitude. Fresh, noble, profoundly sad for them who listen in perfect sympathy, but for himself it is tinged with joyful sense of peace.

"I do not allow myself to pass any serious judgments upon the events of my life; I accept them as opportunities which fate offers me in order that I may the better understand myself and the better develop myself."

And again: —

"I look on, I permit myself to be affected. Do not imagine that I make any mental effort to connect men and things with the whole and to place them in the universe. Nothing of the kind. I once made the effort, in my early days before the war. Now the plait has been taken. Relief from all strain. Life seems to me simple, so simple, and each day so wonderful that I cannot understand failing to adapt one's self to it in a spirit of grateful recognition."

One of his young friends, to whom he writes these beautiful letters, endeavors to

understand him and exclaims: "You are a fatalist." Roger Cahen actively protests, "neither fatalist, nor determinist; I merely accept with affection all conditions which are creations of new ideas, of new forces; I am of those who always hope, I am convinced that the Messiah will come."

Another day, he writes: "I am naturally of a pious mind, but my piety is that of Jean Christophe: 'Be reverent towards the redawning day.' My God, it is the Times, the Times so full of uplift and so strong of purpose."

And finally, on the eve of his death, we find this very beautiful page: —

"I was none other than a stoic between the ages of fifteen and seventeen; at that time Marcus Aurelius was always on my table, and I was saturated with Epictetus. Since the war, I have passed away from and have renounced the doctrine of stoicism. I no longer needed such scaffolding, so I threw it down. I was ill at ease in its determinism, and in fact it seemed to me too cold, too devoid of heart. I continue to believe that the chief merit lies in a sensible attempt to

see things as they are and as only part of the whole, to focus them in all sincerity and simplicity, and even at the cost of myself if necessary, painful as this process may be, but I do not find that there is a superfluity of reason in the world. I believe that it is governed solely through sentiment and passion."

What loneliness these reflections suggest! One might almost imagine that this bundle of letters expressed a line of thought which was unique in these ravines of la Fille Morte. Roger Cahen is alone facing nature.

"I have long been accustomed to solitude; I have grown to like it and to make it productive; I work from within as much as possible. I have learned to live in the midst of people who mean nothing to me, as though I were alone, without indulging in stupid criticism of them, without cost to myself, in perfect peace, with a complete sense of detachment from those near me and with whom I must live. In fact, all that I see about me are landscape, sky, forest and human incident, all are so beautiful, so very beautiful, that the joy of even contemplating

them grows more dominant. With my comrades I confine myself to acts of common courtesy; with nature, I establish my friendships, those relations of affection which are very touching and at times very sad."

It is, indeed, true that he is a soul apart, but how can one read his thoughts without loving him, this young intellectual, dead at twenty-five for France! Truly it is fortunate that on the other hand we have Peguy, Psichari, Marcel Drouet, the young Leo Latil, Jean Rival, Cazalis, boys that are all electrifying. His freedom of mind, his isolation, his sensitive nature, his refined sensuousness, are nevertheless a form of courage which is at the same time distinguished and forceful. After all it is his culture which binds him to *our* soil; he writes in his dugout while using a copy of Montaigne as a desk, he revels in the Chartreuse de Parme. Alone, wholly alone up to the present, he demonstrates to us in the midst of this war this attitude of an amateur facing life which is that of any number of these young men of letters. Their creative forces become submerged by a sea of emotion which arises in the heart; they abandon

themselves to this vast ocean of a universal passion. What has become of the symposiums of the "Revue Indépendante," of the "Revue Blanche"? Roger Cahen continues, renews, enlarges a conception of life which once we ourselves lived a quarter of a century ago. He exalts it. Dead on the field of honor, in that Argonne where for six months he had never wearied of listening to his own thoughts as in a dialogue, he has been cited in the order of the 18th Brigade of Infantry, and as a sergeant relates, he was tearfully mourned by the men of his company.

Roger Cahen, Robert Hertz, Amédée Rothstein, all these characteristic types offer something which is rare and unique. It interests me to watch their development at different ages, the stages, the rounding-out of a personality, the young intellectual Jew, who for the last few years has been playing an important rôle in France, but I cannot admit that these are representative types of the average French Jew.[14] The old families, rooted for generations to the soil of France, would much prefer adopting as their model and as their standard the great rabbi of

Lyons who fell on the battlefield while holding a crucifix before the eyes of a Catholic soldier who was dying.

In the village of Taintrux, near Saint-Dié, in the Vosges, on August 29, 1914 (on a Saturday, the holy day of the Jews), the ambulance belonging to the 14th Corps took fire from the German shells. The stretcher-bearers, in the midst of flames and explosives, carried out the one hundred and fifty wounded men who were there. One of these, who was about to die, asked for a crucifix. He begged Mr. Abraham Bloch, the Jewish chaplain, whom he mistook for the Catholic chaplain, to give it to him. Mr. Bloch lost no time; he looked for it, found it, and carried to this dying man the symbol of the Christian faith. Only a few feet beyond he himself was struck down by an *obus*. He passed away in the arms of the Catholic chaplain, Father Jamin, a Jesuit, whose recital has made this scene public.

No commentary could add to the wave of responsive sympathy which such an act inspires, — an act redolent of humane feeling.

An endless list of examples shows us an

Israel whose one effort has been to prove her gratitude to France. Step by step we are uplifted; herein fraternity finds its most perfect expression; the venerable rabbi presenting to a dying soldier the immortal reminder of Christ on the cross is, indeed, a picture which can never perish.

CHAPTER VI

THE SOCIALISTS

THE Socialists were extremely apprehensive at the beginning of August, 1914, as anxious as we were and even more so, for they were fully persuaded that Germany did not want war and that, if ever the Emperor attempted it, their German comrades would oppose it even to the launching of an anti-war. They had hoped for, they had pleaded for simultaneous disarmament of the nations, and now that the thunder rumbled, they realized that internationalism was not the universal solution of the historical antagonism which exists between countries. There was nothing to do but to arrive at some decision. What stand should they take? What path should they follow? All looked to their leaders.

What did these latter think?

Let us strive briefly to sketch the doctrinal belief of the Socialists during this war.

In July, 1914, when the Serbian question

was agitated, they started with a vote of the Paris Federation, where nearly all agreed that in case of war a general strike should be declared, and a few days later, at Lyons, Jaurès gave utterance to the famous phrase, that if war came, nevertheless France should not only remember her allegiance to the Russian Empire, but that she should also recall her contract with humanity. This practically advocated a rupture with our Russian allies which would have been a very dangerous course to pursue.

There was always a corrective measure possible: we would adopt it — but only in case the two governments, Russian and French, should not ask for arbitration. If Russia proposed this and was willing to submit to arbitration, it would prove that she was a peaceful nation.

Would she accept this? This was the main preoccupation of Jaurès during those last days in July.

Russia did accept it. From that moment on the Socialists were protected. The responsibility of the war was not to rest upon France and her allies. In the eyes of the

world it would be known that neither the French nor the Russians were the aggressors. From this sprang the attitude of the Socialists. They would take up arms in a defensive war.

Two hours before his death, Jaurès had said: "This German diplomacy is of a brutality and hypocrisy I could never have imagined."

Hence the solidarity on August 4: no general strike, no malicious destruction of property. If a chance remained to establish a universal and socialistic republic, it was only on the condition that we should not be beaten. Socialism could no longer conquer if we were defeated. Thus, in defending France, we would defend socialism. This was the thought which sustained them through all the early months of the war. Not even a discordant shadow in the first manifesto which was given out in December, 1914, and upon which their platform was based. This condition lasted without interruption throughout that first trying winter.

In February, 1915, began the wavering. At this time there took place a meeting in

Switzerland between two French Socialists and certain Socialists from the Reichstag. The latter made it clear to the former that there could not be an immediate peace. We are not familiar with all of the details of these interviews, but from what transpired we understand that the German Socialists proposed to negotiate on the basis that the Western question should remain *in statu quo.* They did not offer to return Alsace and Lorraine; Germany should not only keep them, but would further seek satisfaction on the Russian front.

This was courageously opposed by Vaillant with an energy which was most determined.

A second danger presented itself at the time of an international Socialist conference in London. The Christian pacifism in Wales created an atmosphere which threatened the party's manifesto. Why was no one found to show these utopian and religious people that even Puritanism held to a military tradition and that Cromwell's army was something of a social republic? Pressensé might have pointed this out.

The unsatisfactory statements which resulted from this conference percolated through the summer of 1915 and up to the date of the congress on January 1, 1916 — expressions that were far from clear. At the same time began the agitation of those who had gone to Zimmerwald and to Kienthal. The memory of Jaurès still influenced the majority of the party and acted as a barrier to any ulterior motives. His memory was the incentive rallying to patriotic purpose. Without exactly formulating this, it was said: "Jaurès would have done as we are doing. The German Socialists claim that we are disloyal to our creed, but he knew better than they did what socialism professed. We are not in the wrong when we aid our national defence. Jaurès would have been a Gambetta of broader views adapted to even greater problems than those of 1870." Nevertheless, a congress seemed advisable to the leaders of French socialism. It took place in January, 1916.

It seemed incongruous asking for the assembling of a congress when each nation was mobilized, yet this merely served to main-

tain the legitimate machinery of the party. The majority urged a sacred unity for the national defence up to the very end. A small group alone insisted upon immediate peace at any price.

These Zimmerwaldiens and Kienthaliens are now the greatest problem with which the Socialist Party has to contend. There has been persistently expended against them a consistent energy which is most meritorious. There are moments when they seem to be winning out. But each time that they formulate a proposal, the party for national defence is able to destroy it. So successfully has this been accomplished that at the congress in January, 1916, the following splendid resolution was adopted: —

"Rejecting once more the dangerous division of opinion as proclaimed by the Zimmerwaldiens and the Kienthaliens, the national congress condemns as anti-socialistic all principles which do not loudly advocate the right to defend one's country when attacked. It affirms that the duty of international socialism is to determine which government is the aggressor, in order to turn against it the

efforts of all the proletariats of the world and so that the nations shall be preserved from violence and from the duration of the war."

Furthermore, in this congress it was set forth that the greatest danger possible for the Socialist Party would lie in its separation from the soul of France.

Nevertheless, international strife continues. Even amongst the labor unions, opposition is met at times through the metal workers and the machinists, those two powerful bodies who absolutely control the workers in ammunition. And it is for this reason at the present time that one can detect in the Socialist Party four divergent interests which indicate four sections: —

Herveist right, with Hervé.

Governmental right, with Sembat and Thomas.

Left, unqualified Marxist, with Longuet.

Left, after Kienthal.

The old strategists of the party (for example, Renaudel) firmly believe in the value of unity and struggle to maintain it; and this at the expense of discrepancies which were too often in evidence as the December

congress of 1916 proceeded. However, if it is true that the trend of thought in this congress was identical with that of Mr. Sonnino in Italy (and Renaudel, in "L'Humanité" of December 30, insisted that such was the case), we can rest undisturbed. The Socialist idea, they assure me, is that Germany will throw down her cards, and as these are trick cards, which fact will be recognized, we shall win out.

Here, to sum up briefly, are the various doctrinal beliefs of socialism during the war, such as I have heard discussed from my seat as deputy, and I have earnestly endeavored to draw this curved line as dispassionately as one would trace it upon an army map, or the rise and fall of a human temperature upon a medical chart.

But I must hasten to get at the soul of the party, although it is necessary to understand its arguments, its councils, and councillors: my main object is to discover how certain doctrines of internationalism and of pacifism themselves became for some combatants a certain war strength, a kind of moral nourishment.

In August, 1914, back of the Socialist leaders whose views we have heard, all of the agitators were irritated and scandalized. What! Are none of the things agreed upon to be carried out? Germany declares war, and the Socialists of the Reichstag uphold it? Those comrades of yesterday, whose hands they had shaken in the internationalist congresses, have allied themselves to this imperial and military machine? This was nothing short of treachery. Let us arm, since this defection of our German brothers leaves us no choice, in order to crush the pretensions of the Kaiser to world-wide domination. Forward, then, — if in order to insure definite peace we must make definite war.

Still the great problem is unsolved: how will these anti-militarists submit to army discipline and obey leaders whose right to lead they have always denied? From the first moment of mobilization, August 4, 1914, a teacher in Paris, general secretary of the Jeunesse républicaine du troisième arrondissement, Mr. Schiller, — who, by the way, was doomed to die on the battlefield, —

wrote two letters from his barracks (published in the "Lanterne" on October 8, 1916, under the title: "Ceux de l'école sans Dieu"). He made known his ideas in a touching manner to the pupils in his school: —

"My dear little children, I did not often speak to you of the war. When you fought together even in play, I always separated you and scolded you, as war is a frightful thing which I thought you need never have explained to you, because you would grow up to be so reasonable and because the men of other countries would become reasonable too.

"Like your fathers, like your big brothers, I joined the colors. I am in a pretty little town in Burgundy awaiting orders to march, to do my duty bravely like a good Frenchman and citizen, orders which will speedily be given. Should I never return, hold fast to the memory of your teacher who loved you affectionately while asking you to shout aloud with him, 'Long live Republics and free nations!'

"A. Schiller

"Sergeant in the 89th, 26th Company"

And on the same day he expresses his sentiments in a most manly fashion in another letter addressed to his friend, Mr. Nail: —

"I will frankly acknowledge to you, and without any sense of shame, that it is hard to leave the members of one's family with the idea that possibly one may never see them again. But once the threshold of the barracks is passed, one is no longer the same man.

"To watch the incessant arrival of the men who have been mobilized, as I have been seeing them, makes your heart beat and excites you so that you long for only one thing, which is to deliver the world from this imperial group which has so oppressed us through that formidable necessity of maintaining armed forces."

"One is no longer the same man!" — this phrase alone would answer the problem we are examining; the context even leaves no doubt. Mr. Schiller, responding from his heart, never hesitates, allies himself in sympathy with his fellow-soldiers, but his principles — instead of throwing them over as

he turns from the door of his headquarters — only serve to provide him with further moral strength. And so, like him, many of his pacifist co-religionists find in their former teachings and passionate convictions the very fireside to which they return, so that they may metaphorically warm their half-frozen feet, their benumbed hands, and their suffering souls.

Pierre Génin, a freethinker, an anti-militarist, did not wish to admit that in the war which he execrated there could be any failure of his principles, but only a solemn opportunity of defending them and of assuring them victory.

"I leave with courage," he writes, "in the hope that our loyalty and possibly our sacrifice will benefit our children. They must live in the enjoyment of that peace of which we have dreamed. If our youth, if our strength, may serve to establish their man's existence, we shall then have fought for our ideal which remains a living and a happy fact beyond this lightning and this thunder. In this upheaval our vision shall not be dulled. And now, off with a quick step and a

keen eye to smash these savages! (Letter quoted by Mr. Séailles in "L'Union Morale," January, 1915.) In September, 1914, Mr. Génin died on the field of honor.

The Socialists defined Edmond Lapierre as "one of the best amongst the militants of the younger generation," and said "That in the region of Ivry and of Villejuif, not one had fought with such persistence and with such intelligence." On the 9th of January, 1915, at half after five in the morning, on the day following the first combat at Crouy, and at the time Hill 132 was taken, a non-commissioned asked for a volunteer to inspect the approaches to the trenches. Lapierre climbed the slope, his gun in hand. Having located the enemy, he fired as long as his ammunition lasted; just as he was about rejoining his comrades, a ball passed through his head and wounded his lieutenant who stood by his side. His captain, in the letter announcing his death, declares "that he fell gloriously, paying dearly with his life." Shortly before this sublime death, Lapierre had sent this page to his friends on "L'Humanité," which was almost like a legacy: —

"We are soldiers in this army of the Republic which is threatened by German militarism, but nevertheless we remain firm defenders of our great ideal and loyal to the organization which is its actual expression. Socialists with human hearts and with generous sympathies, we have one sacred duty to perform in the midst of this sea of anger and of hatred: to beware that these low instincts do not sow in the souls of our fellow-soldiers seeds of vandalism and of barbarity. Our mere presence has often arrested deeds that were frightful and inhuman." ("L'Humanité," November 24, 1914, and February 24, 1915.)

A wounded Socialist, being cared for in a western hospital, writes: —

"For three months I have been compelled to kill. One says to one's self, in order to keep up to the mark, that this work one is engaged upon is that of a liberator; that its sole end is to crush an odious imperialism; that once this has been accomplished, the way will be open to us for the furtherance of social reform; that from this charnel house in which we have been living may at last

spring the flower of equality. We have to repeat this to ourselves many times, we Socialist soldiers, as we must always believe it. Yes, this war must mark the definite emancipation of all the human race." ("L'Humanité," November 19, 1914.)

The face and phrases of Alfred Salabelle are especially characteristic. He was twenty-seven years old, was a teacher in the Ardèche at Andance, and edited the teachers' column in "La Bataille Syndicaliste et l'École émancipée." On November 13, 1914, he wrote to one of his pupils: —

"We work, all of us, in order that this war may be the last, and that the pupils of to-day may not later be obliged to endure such terrible times of rain, of cold, and of carnage. We work in order that hereafter there will be no more emperors and no more kings who have it in their power to destroy this world at their pleasure. The little boys in Germany will understand it even as we do and when they grow to realize what their emperor has done to his people."

And on December 14, 1914, one week before a ball had crushed his skull, he de-

clares to his friends on the "Bataille Syndicaliste": —

"I received the article by the Vieux de la Vieille on the 'Banqueroute frauduleuse de la Sozialdemokratie.' During the past four months I have often recalled the discussion which the case of Andler had provoked. How this theory has since been confirmed, and how facts have justified the criticisms which the older brains of internationalism formulated against German socialism! We have reached a period when all can learn much. For those who survive it, there will be many hours of compensation: Barrès and others will have revelations made to them as well as the Sudekums and their followers." ("La Bataille Syndicaliste," January 8, and 12, 1915.)

How many reflections are suggested to us by this brave soldier, when in the midst of this awful war he is able to foresee, through the perspective of the struggle in which he will engage, that as soon as peace is declared there will be a joyful satisfaction to his compatriots in a picture which he now detests! Unfair adversary who in his conception puts

me on the same plane with Sudekum! But blessed be this animosity if it afford pleasure and comfort and if it serve as a tonic to this brave fellow whom I salute in all spirit of friendliness. I believe Alfred Salabelle did me an injustice in his mind, yet it would be unpardonable if we failed to recognize beneath his crude expressions a really deep nature. In these souls there is a vision, a type of the social economic world in which I do not believe, but which I admire as it creates a consolation and as it points to a heaven far above the trenches. Above all, I find a reflex of moral grandeur in the views of these anti-militarists and pacifists who are able to adapt their ideal to the exigencies of the hour in order that the future may be assured. Old Corneille would surely have found a place in his works for these unbending, inflexible men, passionately concentrated upon the idea that they will not yield an obedience, yet often submitting with a manly tenderness to army discipline and to the commands of those "who wear gold lace."

The "Bataille Syndicaliste," Hervé's pa-

per, as well as other journals, have frequently published letters in which these Socialist soldiers criticize the value of their leaders while rendering them the respect which is due. These officers possess a training and a degree of knowledge from which all can profit. This strikes the simple workman and inspires in him the same kind of appreciation which he feels in the factory for the knowledge of the technician. A worker, no matter what his creed may be, recognizes the man of value who understands his own trade. Tangibly he realizes the superiority of brains, and he does not try to conceal this fact. If he has a good boss, once through arguing over politics, he lives on the best of terms with him, and reciprocally so does the boss with the workman. Between people who love work there is a certain professional sense of justice and a similar estimate of values. They measure, they judge each other, their respect is mutual, together they aim to turn out good work. An officer who is up to the mark as leader, that is to say, as leader of men, can speedily discern in a revolutionary workman these very qualities of

energy and of broad understanding. To-day in the army, instead of severe discipline, is now and again substituted a method of command which is more sympathetic, more personal, and to the French character more effectual.

Captain Robert Gauthiot, when a civilian, was assistant director of the École des hautes études. A scholar of the most serious type, he had greatly broadened the field of his studies, until he had become one of the best linguists in the school at Meillet. At the moment when war was declared, he was in Pamir, occupied with deciphering Sogdien texts similar to those which Mr. Pelliot had brought back to the Bibliothèque Nationale. However, he left at once. On his way through Petrograd, he was asked to serve in the Russian army; he refused, arrived in France, entered our ranks as a lieutenant, fought gloriously on the Yser and elsewhere in the 20th Corps. A wound, which he received on the forehead when a shell destroyed the hut which was his shelter, caused him long and terrible suffering. He finally died. Such is the picture of the man. Let me add that as

a Socialist he thoroughly understood the Socialist workmen. Here is what he said of them: "If one meets with resistance in men, one must appeal to their self-respect. At a difficult moment, when the mere exercise of authority produces no good result, I speak to the man who is the most obstinate. I explain my views to him on the very spot: "This is the important point, and I have no other man to send here; choose your best comrades, any you select, and go there; as soon as possible you will send me one of your chums to bring me your decision, and you will then stick to it. I must rely upon you because you are the cleverest."

Mr. Gauthiot further said: "The confidence of the Socialist in the army is not inspired merely by the sight of gold braid. He waits until he has seen his superior put to the test."

In conformity to his ideas I heard a priest, one of the under-officers, relate that in some companies the men showed an evident preference for certain of their associates, often only simple soldiers, who had given evidence that they knew how to extricate themselves

at the moment of emergency. The officers would say to these men, "What is your opinion? If you agree with us, go and tell the others."

Here we are doubtless touching one of the fundamental characteristics of our race, the feeling that is more warlike than it is military. This love of skilled work, this need of a discipline which is tactfully administered, and to a certain extent mutually understood, is found amongst many others besides Socialists. As a witness to this fact I wish to quote from a young man bearing an illustrious name, François Lachelier, the grandson of the philosopher, Jules Lachelier. He died at nineteen on the field of honor. He wrote to his mother on the very morning of the day when he fell (July 8, 1916): —

"The men of my battery — sly, tricky, rebellious, fault-finding, always ready to complain of their food, of the war, of their officers — are at the bottom good fellows who while chaffing know how to stand the greatest fatigue and to pull themselves out of the most desperate holes. If you could see the ingenious ways in which they arrange

the shelters and in which they place the guns! There is a great rivalry, by the way, between the gunners, as to which would build the platforms more horizontal than others; and the circles better rounded, all these men apparently indifferent and impersonal, yet delighted in their hearts when their battery is praised and when the firing is good, true, and accurate.

"It is the same thing when they look through the newspapers; they read the news with an air of indifference, but once at the mess-table they show themselves to be well informed and discuss with intelligence and with ability the questions that are uppermost.

"If you could have seen them recently during an attack — they were not the same men; one detected joy, even enthusiasm in their eyes, and I assure you that at that moment they were no longer dwelling upon their grievances nor upon the duration of the war, but each and every man of them was passionately concentrated upon the part he was playing in it.

"Believe me, that in an advance one real-

izes the close connection between the actual forces and the general plan of action as projected and developed through the plans of the leaders. It is just here that one recalls the attitude as expressed of the conscious and organized workman; each soldier knows that he is a part of the big machine, and with total self-abnegation, he consents to become merely one of the wheels operated by an unseen hand.

"It is the glory of our times that so many millions of men have been inspired to sacrifice themselves so wholly to an idea, and for the sake of this to submit themselves to a slavery which is of the most extreme and unprecedented description; but real liberty consists in subjecting and in resigning one's self to the inevitable, and in being willing to become a mere part of a piece of mechanism of which one might have been the actual inventor." (Private letter submitted to me.)

Such beautiful expressions cannot be confined to any one party, for they describe the attitude of many Frenchmen, yet this helps us to understand why these revolutionary

workmen so frequently develop into splendid soldiers and devoted collaborators of their superiors. There must first be a heart-burning period to pass through. This bitterness of spirit exists only too frequently in the industrial world and leads to "sabotage." But from time immemorial workmen have always faced this destructive spirit and have discredited it; socialism declares that it is not through such corrupt methods that the salvation of the working classes can ever be reached. As for these revolutionists, when they have to make war, they do it with courage because it is in their day's work, and their habit is always to put the best that is in them into the work at hand. But so far as they are concerned the war often modifies their views. They like to insist that these remain the same, for they find in such a belief a very considerable satisfaction, yet we observe that many of these men, while retaining much that is unchanged, have become in other respects quite altered, like a tree in the beginning of a new season.[15] They emphasize this to us even while fighting their internationalism and their paci-

fism; yet, after all has been said and done, events are hard masters, and in order that they may escape the intolerable yoke threatened by the Kaiser, those soldier revolutionists have yielded to many a concession so far as their general view of life is concerned. They have understood that the problem of military discipline is very much the same as the problem of industrial discipline, and while their souls are full of belief in a just equality, they have accepted service under leaders who only yesterday they execrated. Rebellion has become as unsavory to them as has destruction. They have acknowledged the discipline of the army in much the same spirit that they once accepted the discipline of the shop, because both are the outcome of a necessity born of labor. Alfred Salabelle is expressing the thought of many of them when he writes as we have above quoted: "We have reached a period when all can learn." Ah, well! We do not wish to be of those to whom this lesson of the war merely means a lesson given to others; we will receive it, too, even at the hands of our opponents and in all good faith,

if they will only bring us some message which will broaden our outlook. We are of different dispensations, nevertheless allies, relations, in whom the same blood is flowing, and often in our own soul we recognize the identical qualities which we so combat in the soul of our neighbors. Above all we should understand these Socialists because their ideas floating upon air have very often touched us. These ideas are like birds perched upon their shoulders which sing to them a refrain full of happy consolation. Which one of us has not at some moment heard this same refrain singing in our hearts? They, like ourselves, are men developed by their work, and to many of them this war has proved so full of illuminating beauty that we, too, shall long to profit by it so that we may the better interpret the book of wisdom. I have read in the "Entretiens des non-combattants" (May–June, 1916, 21 rue Visconti) the notebooks of Albert Thierry, a trade-union professor, and the most sincerely radical of union men, jotting down like a legacy his very earnest thoughts as regards politics and morals, and

seeking to find in what way the highest course of justice in the world might best establish a lasting peace. Five little treatises, simple and of noble purport, trembling and with wings outspread, like the first training of the baby bird, I mean that effort to fly skyward in order that more may be seen. Thierry died, gave up his spirit before his mind had attained the mastery of these great heights. To fathom in what conditions peace will be established between all of the countries and in each country is an undertaking which is beyond the comprehension of any soldier or of any teacher. I listen to him with more confidence when he plans for peace amongst Frenchmen themselves, for here his experience is of value: —

"The French after the year 15, who have remained steadfast from the North Sea to the Rhine whatever formerly may have been their economic interests, their political opinion, their faith, their ideal, need no longer tease nor torment each other, that old French spirit of animosity, which after all contained something of nobility, will become allied to a French spirit of sympathy

such as neither France nor the universe has ever known before.

"The French of the Protestant religion have given proof in this war that they love France, their Protestantism and their sense of justice spring from the same loving source; these become equally dear to every Frenchman. The French Catholics of the year 14 have given assurance that they love France, justice, and Jesus Christ in the same way! These become equally beloved by all the French. The French who were without any belief have in the years '14 and '15 shown that they too love France, justice, and liberty of mind in the same degree; these all become as dear to those Frenchmen who are proud of their faith as to those who are proud of their thought. French unity will spring from this into being, as it did once before at the time of the Federation on July 14, 1790, not necessarily based on the same expressed social religion, but rather upon the same love of France, and upon the same sense of justice. This reconciliation need never become either an assimilation or a confusion; in earth's garden many flowers

must flourish." And then suddenly he says: "All peace that is merely from without is of no value unless peace within reigns in each and every soul."

At these unexpected words from a revolutionist I pause. They are not reflected from any groups, impressions, viewpoints, or ingenuities, but from many things which this man has experienced himself with all that is in him. I am ready to listen, Is it on the edge of the ditch near this Vauvenargues of the retreat of Charleroi.

What do we know of this Albert Thierry? "A rather set jaw, eyes shining with intelligence, a pride quick to take offence," as he is described by Paul Desjardins, who both knew and loved him well. He had a pure and implacable conscience. His friends looking back remember him as a mature man. They insist that he never passed through any period of adolescence. This characteristic brings at once to our minds those extremists in history (more respected than beloved) produced by the Arnaulds and the entire Jansenist body (Pascal excepted), the Lamennais and the Proudhon. Thierry, like the

latter, was born of the people. His father was a mason in the 17th district. As he also wished to become a teacher he set himself the task of maintaining amongst his sons and daughters, who were of the working class themselves, a fidelity to that very class to which they belonged. We have noted to what extent the best type of French workman respects capacity for good work in himself and the attitude to create something the result of long selection, the fruit of his own life and of the lives of his forbears. A mind such as Thierry's, when he arrives at a similarity of parallel, deducts his theory from the fact; this is the reflex of that simple kind of employment so common to the working classes. Through this he is influenced to attribute to manual labor an almost religious element. Glance for a moment at that very beautiful piece of writing by Andler referring to a new form of social ethics (in the "Civilisation socialiste," published by Marcel Rivière). There is a spirit of moral renunciation in this deference to a trade, in this desire to turn out skilled work. It savors of an austerity which a Proudhon might have

borrowed from those guilds of the Middle Ages, while introducing into socialism an unbridled quality which is a direct inheritance from Fourier.

Thierry affirms with some apprehension that the greater part of the working masses has become unfaithful to this civilized ideal of work well done. Workers of to-day feel a certain disdainful indifference towards manual labor, and it is this which so disturbed him that he deliberately threw himself into trade-unionism, asking that it should effect the reform of the primary schools in France: the latter, in his eyes, had become a dangerous instrument tending to class upheaval and to social uprooting.[16] These views merit attentention. Albert Thierry undertook a magnificent mission. Divided between family life, in which he had as strong and as wholesome a belief as had Proudhon, and his studies upon "The Art of Teaching" which he constantly contributed to syndicalist publications, he remained with pride a member of the working class. Drawing always near the hearts of his brothers, while listening to the voice of his own heart, he was con-

stantly inspired to set a pure and perfect ideal before humanity which not only portrays the sanctity of labor itself, but also the sanctity of those who labor. No self-seeking in this, profoundly to respect the environment from which one has sprung and to remain associated with a trade to which one was born. Thierry believed that he was selected for a great mission which would some day be revealed to him. Within his soul was a touch of monasticism. Viewed in this way a political creed becomes a faith. "He had pledged his salvation," says Paul Desjardins, "upon a unique vow: namely, that the real spiritual life which can alone explain the world and satisfy man is born, not of elegant leisure, as certain aristocratic societies believe, but of normal labor." As for ourselves we hold that the highest thought, that which explains the world, is the outgrowth of the scientific laboratory and of the religious oratory. Thus for the complete salvation of civilization, we would rather rely upon the College of France and upon our village churches. Yet it is true that work and labor produce customs and

courage, without which nothing can exist and from which alone superiority can develop; and I recognize and I admire all that is real and uplifting in this pride of class, in this pious devotion to manual labor which gives a stability to the child, preventing him from blindly drifting with each rapid and winding current.

The hopes and the desires of the teacher, Albert Thierry, are indeed admirable. Admirable with certain reservations we must admit. How would it be possible, indeed, at twenty years to have enthusiasms without having extremes. These extremes of Thierry's must therefore be properly estimated. One can never measure a force of which one has not simultaneously estimated the weight, its direction, and its successive movements. In 1903, at twenty years of age, Thierry had already dedicated himself, through a certain creed, to the establishment of peace, or rather to the religion of work; but he hastened to add, do not make any mistake: "There is an optimistic love of peace, which is both conservative and cowardly; I am suspicious of this. In the Federation of the fu-

ture I would not wish to live if one were not obliged to struggle against exploiters, hypocrites, idiots, and Christians!" Thus he spoke, this young instructor, during a journey in Germany, and doubtless under the influence of Nietzsche, and now you will see him, under the influence of the war, completely changing his views and his utterances. From these first words, written hastily on August 12, 1914: "I leave in a quarter of an hour, 28th Infantry, 26th Company, Evreux. . . . If we are to be vanquished, it would mean that justice does not exist, and to live in a world devoid of justice would hardly seem worth while. . . ." How superb this tremor of a reed shaken by the wind! On September 4, 1914, at the Orbais farm in the Tardenois, he fell wounded in the shoulder, was made prisoner by the Germans, but in a counter-attack, ten days later, was again set free by the French. On his return from these ten days of captivity, he said to his friend, Félix Bertaux: "No words can describe to you their cruelty and their stupidity." And in other letters: "We must first conquer them, afterward we

can pardon them. We are primarily defending ourselves from these monsters, these clever monsters, who are methodic and efficient in everything, even in crime. . . . This is a low race, it must be disarmed and dishonored." On November 19, 1914, he made the observation: "The greatest value of this war, it seems to me, lies in the fact that it establishes at once the reign of universal death and possibly the reign of eternal justice. And I, I submit to both with a disciplined mind."

About the same time, on November 17, he scribbled in pencil in a notebook the following: "Yielding to an irresistible impulse, I must write these Conditions de la Paix . . . which does not necessarily mean that they will be adopted, but merely to think them out and to know what we really mean when we speak of justice." It was from this sudden inspiration in November that his book developed. His book which he dreamed of calling "La Volonté de Justice," is like a shield, a sword in opposition to the "Volonté de Puissance," by this very Nietzsche, whom at last he understands.

"The working people (poor, or, to be more exact, proletarian), renouncing any personal claim as producers, would prefer that the strength put into individual work, their own property, so to speak, should become part of the whole, thus contributing to national prosperity.

"Employers and employees, before coming together, must both repudiate the old individualism, the agitating cause of so many of their evils.

"The French of the year 14 and of the year '15, Catholics, Protestants, or Jews, have all decided that they are fighting for the cause of justice, both for an obsolete and for a future justice; for the establishment of a justice still unknown; for the Rights of Man and for the Rights of the People.

"A Frenchman worthy of the name, proud of his history, proud of his mind and of his faith, that Frenchman either wishes justice or he does not wish to exist.

"He is born as Destiny wills it, in a country to be defended at a great price, to which peace costs dearly, burdened, moreover, not only with the physical and intellectual in-

equalities which are the result of nature, but also with the economic and inherited inequalities which are imposed by society.

"He should receive, whatever is his birth, an education based essentially upon work, its science, and its history; and in this way his mind and his heart would grow to perceive equality, truth, and justice. A moral state, founded clearly upon the new principle, 'a refusal to rise,' would make of each of these Frenchmen, a citizen despising pleasure, anxious to serve, preoccupied with his work, himself disinterested, and a man worthy of all admiration."

Why has the censorship struck out and cut to pieces this legacy of genius written in good faith? This essay of serious purport, and full of inspiration, is a beautiful tree grown upon French soil. How much sap have its roots drawn from Mother Earth? What has it received from its leaves scattered upon the four winds of heaven? I should like to discover in Thierry that which is pure and real, as against that which is merely literary and ephemeral. Often he gives evidence of thought, or of that which

he dignifies as a mental process! Often that which he expounds are his experiences as a teacher, of the man who is "a victim of children," as he describes it, and of the sincere man a victim of his scruples. I am not very much preoccupied with his efforts at logic. But how beautiful are his ethics! I see in him a song which never finds utterance, but whose spirit enlightens and breathes life to his brothers. As a thinker? I am unconvinced. As a promulgator of morality, he is a past-master. "If the people turn from strife, if the middle classes renounce their pretensions, then national peace will be forever established. If innocent of self-seeking, then man is much more closely bound to the family of his father and of his mother; one might affirm that he remains ever loyal to it, and that its tradition nourishes his mind and his heart so long as he has his being. Refusing to be self-seeking, even as regards his work, man will advance much further in this very field of labor, he will regard his trade as a means of establishing justice. Refusing to be self-seeking, the man who works for the people, from whom he

has gone forth through education and to whom he returns in a spirit of sacrifice, learns to give them preference on account of their virtues while dedicating himself to the mission of reforming their vices. In this way there will be a broadening from the trade to the class, the class to the nation; the nation to its various national confederations, and to the confederation of the world at large; individual ambitions and national ambitions will be silenced, their conflict will end, and labor on earth will for the first time in history be produced in harmony and in peace."

Suddenly, on November 26, he rises to his apotheosis and pours out his heart in the following paragraph: —

"My attitude towards this war is no longer that of the revolutionist defending merely his own laboring class, but of one defending the whole of mankind. Justice is the common wealth. As there is the injustice born of capital, why therefore is there not an equal injustice born of labor?"

Here is the struggle, the cry of conscience under the pressure of war. None of us can

read this passage and remain indifferent to it. One must remember it. If Thierry had planted no other thought in our mind, this alone would have saved him from oblivion. We will add it to the list of those for which we shall ever be indebted.

As for the rest — little matters. I close the book and I rejoice that in socialism such spirit exists.

Friend, abandon your reasonings, your infantile and narrow system: for it is this song of the soul through which you will best be understood. He even acknowledged this himself. Shortly before his death, in re-reading his work, "La Paix intérieure," he writes on the margin: "Oh, larks of these mornings, dear French and fleeting larks, give to me a further inspiration!" This outburst I can comprehend: he frees himself from all parties, this man of the people, to whom the country brings life, this son of a race of peasants and of soldiers, this workman who revels in his notebooks so that he may write a great work, that he may create, that he may seize upon some truth. I shall see him henceforth amongst the anointed of

the earth, at the table of the gods, who all differ one from the other, yet who are all equal and who will judge the world with an equal generosity.

And still further along, this passion of experience becomes more intense: "How happy I am to write this essay while the larks twitter and while the cannons roar." And finally, at one of these extraordinary and unexpected moments, he gives us this thrilling outburst: "The shells are falling at no great distance. I shall be satisfied (if I must die here) to die while I define this beloved Justice. Do you not agree with me that such a death would be well chosen?"

What a soliloquy! He had the privilege of the death he craved on May 26, 1915, at Aix-Noulette, during the Battle of Arras.

It will be well if an Albert Thierry can infuse into the Socialist mind his thought purified by the furnace of war. We shall feel deeply interested in the outcome. In some of the writings of Sainte-Beuve, there remains one note, which is true to-day and which might almost have inspired Albert Thierry: "The middle classes as they rise

become so easily corrupted [and to-day in 1917 I may add France being so thoroughly decimated], the remedy must lie in the common sense and in the strong purpose of the masses who must be enlightened to the utmost and who, while striving to do away with brutality without any weakening of strength, must nevertheless be inspired through their own intuitions." Such was Thierry's entire programme.

CHAPTER VII

THE TRADITIONALISTS

"THE past never dies in us," repeated Fustel de Coulanges. This was the motto, this was the whole spirit, of the studies made by Joseph Déchelette, who was killed on October 3, 1914, at the head of his company. Déchelette erected a monument to the oldest page of our history. He made a study of the Celtic world as well as of our own prehistoric times, insisting that from the paleolithic age to the Gallic and to the Roman there was no interruption. A few days prior to his dying on the field of honor, he wrote to Camille Jullian, on September 20, 1914: —

"This present time is not much concerned with ancient history, whereas that of our country increases in importance each day on account of its glorious pages. But the past is inseparable from the present. I have no doubt but that this Battle of the Marne, fought on the identical plains where stood

those great Gallic *necropolises*, gave you as well as me a vision that was at the same time patriotic and inspiring. Whether it be the sword of La Têne or a gun modelled in 1886, it is always the same struggle of the soul rebelling against the brutal aggression of the Germanic race. Happy, indeed, are the youths who take part in these desperate battles!

"J. DÉCHELETTE
"Captain, 104th Territorial Infantry"

This letter — with its beautiful ending, "Happy are the youths!" — brings vividly before our eyes the sentiment of those who regard their soil as a sanctuary and who inherit their law from the dead whom they reverence. This predisposes us better to comprehend the support which during this war certain minds find in their "traditionalism."

François Baudry, a nephew of the celebrated artist, was a young scientist of twenty-four. Born at Versailles, he preferred a more modest locality and so became devoted to the Vendée, the birthplace of his

grandparents. From there he exclaimed, when the war broke out and when he started for Gérardmer to join his regiment: "If I die, it will be as a good Frenchman, a good Catholic, and a good Vendéan. The mobilization in the Vosges has been splendid. We have taken down the signpost on the frontier of the Schlucht; we shall set it up again on the Rhine. Feeling absolutely calm, I hope with the grace of God to set the example I owe to my grade as an officer, to my position in society, and to my being the great-grandson of the Géants du Bocage."

All is contained in these few lines: this tribute to Lorraine, the bastion of France, the definition in three progressive stages of his patriotism, his one aim in the war.

François Baudry never ceased insisting that he fought for realities; he wished to regain Alsace, to be worthy of his little strip of country, the Vendée, and further honorably to fulfil his mission as an officer. This is the one sentiment pervading the Traditionalists. They have received and so they wish to give. They received the gift of France, their family treasure, and therefore

long to leave behind them a France that is even more beautiful and a family even more rich in virtues.

But in order that all may be clear and precise as the basis of our analysis, allow me to bring you into intimate acquaintance with Lieutenant Pierre Fourier de Rozières, a citizen of Mirecourt in Lorraine, destined through his letters to become the glory of literature, in France as well as in Lorraine, and a man whose all too brief military career was astonishing, as is proved by four citations, one of which is by order of the division, and three by order of the army.

On the very first day Pierre de Rozières took part in the march upon German Lorraine and later at the defence of Nancy; he was wounded on September 7 in the forest of Saint Paul, near Romémont. "We were in the clearing, fighting face to face. I had even exchanged three shots from my revolver with a Bavarian officer who had missed me." In the hospital where he had been evacuated, he learned that a family property had been ruined. His feelings were embodied in this letter to his father: "There is no

ground for despair so long as the sap remains! Let us pray God that it will always be healthy, this sap of our family, and always French this land of Lorraine which has cost us so many tears. I embrace you, my dear father, while assuring you that if God preserves my life it will only be to follow in your footsteps: which means love of the soil and fear of God."

His idea of Christianity is beautifully mingled with his spirit of devotion to country and to family: —

"The hour of universal sacrifice has sounded. The best blood is the blood which counts the most as a holocaust in the eyes of God. It may be to this that I owe my life. Paul Michaut [his cousin in the glass works at Baccarat] was one of the victims on whose account God will give us victory. If I am to serve, and to serve well in the future, I have the firm conviction that I shall be spared. But if my life is not to respond to the ideal I have ever before me, then God in His goodness will take me at the moment when I have reached the extreme of my utility. Why should I be anxious? It is evident that the

very best Frenchmen will be tested by infinite suffering; and as I am not one of the best, it is certain that I shall not be called upon to suffer the most."

And very sweetly he adds: "This is a consolation which in fact is really none at all."

All of his thought resolves itself into this dual formula: "War is terrible, yet it is a great grace for those who are in it whether as individuals or as nations. France and I both needed these hard blows. As for myself, I shall welcome any that may come to me in the future." And then: "How many young men will be saved by this very war which may seem to destroy them! These sublime deaths of which you tell me are held as God's own reserve, and it will be through them that we shall attain victory."

I note this profoundly religious spirit in order to show the real character of this young man and to reveal the sources of his inspiration. Yet I wish rather to dwell upon such traits as are purely national and which during the time which he spent in a hospital in the South are discernible in a certain antagonism natural to adolescence and to Lor-

raine. He was irritated by the *far niente* which surrounded him; he felt very remote from the war and at such a distance pictured his Lorraine in smoking ruin and in tears.

Each time that he comes across the mere mention of the name of his beloved country, he suffers the same thrill of torment: —

"I thank you, dearest mother, for all your letters which bring me nearer to our Lorraine and to her struggles. Truly Lorraine's fate is terrible beyond expression. If the words of the third Beatitude can be applied to nations as to individuals, she is, indeed, entitled to a sublime future."

At last, on April 17, 1915, he was able to return to the front. "How different from the army station and how happy I am! Such wholesome mentality and such sympathetic companionship, devoid of all jealousy and so loyal. . . ."

He assisted in the attacks on the 8th, 9th, and 10th of May. Slightly wounded, he refused to be removed and entered Carency the very first of all, at the head of the troops who carried the little fort. He was proposed for a citation by the order of the army. But

before this was confirmed, he had added to his achievement.

"On May 27," he writes to his mother, "we did not succeed in capturing the exit from Ablain Saint-Nazaire, from the cemetery and from the already destroyed road. Two regiments respectively had there been cut to pieces. Our progress towards Souchez had been arrested. Then a supreme attempt was decided upon and a blow was struck by the two most fearless companies of the 360th, whose record is so good. My company had the honor to be called. The assault turned out to our advantage, even surpassing our wildest dreams. I was able to seize three times more the amount of ground than I was assigned to capture. In addition I took three hundred prisoners (of whom seven were officers) and six machine guns. The general of the army corps, watching from the hill of Notre-Dame-de-Lorette, and seeing the attack succeed so splendidly, wept; this I was told by one of the ordnance officers, who came to inform me that I could rely upon being made a chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur. One can be proud of one's cross when

it has been won in such a way. My happiness is very great, believe me, to have materially and personally recovered a bit of France from the Boches. Here is a letter which will give father such joy that it is that which really seems to me the best of all."

This feat of arms conferred on Pierre de Rozières the cross of the Légion d'Honneur by a special telegram from General Joffre. On June 9 it was given to him officially: a very touching scene in the midst of an incessant cannonading. A little girl chosen by the people of liberated Carency presented a bouquet to the young officer. The old mayor of Ablain-Saint-Nazaire, weeping from emotion, grasped his hand, and told him that one of the streets in the village he had taken would henceforth bear his name. The general who commanded the division, as he pinned the ribbon on his breast, exclaimed: "Before congratulating you, lieutenant, I must first thank you."

And the young knight of the Légion d'Honneur wrote then as follows to his father: —

"It is in thinking of your happiness and in thanking God for the great joy which He has

bestowed upon us that this morning I received the honored touch of the sword. I now wear the red ribbon. I think that I owe more to circumstances than to any merit of my own. If kind Providence, so considerate of me since the campaign opened, was responsible on this occasion for the extraordinary opportunity which singled me out from so many brave men, I cannot but feel that I owe it first to you. Doubtless Heaven wished to give to you and to mother this joy in the midst of so much sacrifice! I am benefited through you. I do not wish to become proud, and yet I am willing to wear this cross with head erect, knowing that I won it honestly. It will give me a certain self-confidence through life if God allows me to survive. I kiss you, my dear father, deeply moved at the mere thought of your paternal pride and wholly recognizing that it is to your entire life I owe this honor."

I must pause because I cannot imagine it possible to reach a greater height. How many centuries of civilization and of religion were required to have produced a child of such nobility. But at last the end draws near.

Something disturbs me even while transscribing these fragments of correspondence so peculiarly intimate in its nature. In making articulate to the world a voice which spoke in confidence to a small family circle, I risk distorting the real character of Pierre de Rozières and to leave the suggestion of some blind illusion in this young hero who appreciated glory as a magnificent stimulus to the soul, yet who despised and undervalued any visible sign of success. I find a striking proof of this reserve while continuing to examine this correspondence; for instance, in this very short letter which I think sheds great light: "Ex-Casino of the Boches in Ablain-Saint-Nazaire. To-day, June 26, I received a visit from Barrès. I was about to lead a concert; we had a piano and a violoncello, and I have other talent in my company. Barrès was much moved by all this, because the artists were really excellent. He embraced us all."

Great Heavens! So he was there. How well I remember this cellar! It was a morning in June when I, with three companions, walked about Ablain, worse than any desert,

one long narrow street raked by the guns, where at intervals a shell would still strike. Suddenly we heard proceeding from a cellar a classical and very beautiful motive by Bach, sung by a 'cello to the accompaniment of a piano. We knocked, the door was opened, and there in the darkness were twenty soldiers, amateurs and artists, who welcomed us, and amongst them my fellow-countryman, the son of my lifelong friend, who never made himself known to me! This fills me as I write with the deepest regret, but what a convincing proof of the exaggerated reserve of Pierre de Rozières whose affection for me was undoubted! He was soon to go back to that fiery furnace, but first his business was to capture that cavernous way from Angres to Souchez.

"My dearest mother," he writes on the date of July 12, "thank God for the great miracle which seems my permanent protection. I have just lost nearly my whole company and my sub-officers, with only two exceptions. I am untouched so that I may once again profit by the glory due to this heroic sacrifice of these courageous men. Here is

my company cited by the order of the army for the third time since May 9. The same generals, the same spectators as in May, have themselves come to embrace me this time. This was, by the way, at the ambulance, for I had had my ear drum perforated and my incus cracked. This caused me some suffering, but I am not in the least the worse for it." He was allowed to go to Mirecourt on leave of absence, during the month of August. He made many visits to all the spots dear to him from childhood. On the eve of his departure, a farewell dinner was given at his request in the country place on the Haut de Chaumont, where he wished to sit under the yews on the terrace he loved, so that he might see the town from there. He seemed in a dream. In answer to a remark made to him by one of his sisters, he said in a low voice to his neighbor: "It is because I wish to look at Mirecourt for the last time." On the distant horizon could be seen Notre Dame de Sion, her arms outstretched ("Souvenir de Louis Colin"). At noon on October 1, 1915, in Artois, three days after the capture of Souchez, when,

ahead of his men, from a hole made by a shell, he examined the ground from which he was to lead the attack on towards the heights (on Hill 119) which rises back of Souchez in the direction of Givenchy-en-Gohelle, he was torn to pieces by a shell. He fell on the spot already sprinkled with his blood and which he himself had won back for his country.[17] On his breast was found this memento: "O Lord, my God, henceforth, whatever may happen and whatever Thou desireth, I accept from Thy hand with calmness and resignation, death with its agony, its suffering, and its sorrow." Thus did he commune in the secret of his heart with the Source of his honor, of his virtues, and of his very being.

But that which particularly impresses us is the following which he wrote relative to the death of his cousin, Lieutenant de Cissey: "When Saints die it is proper to chant the Magnificat, and they who can before a beloved grave recall its triumphal verses are alone worthy of him who has gone."

We must obey, and refusing to dwell upon the loss entailed upon Lorraine and which

one can estimate after the publication of the unfinished work of Pierre de Rozières, let us gather the two ethical exhortations dedicated to youth, two very personal letters in which this young man, while ignoring the disturbing influence of the times, has formulated and defined his mission.

In the first letter he exposes the high esteem with which he regards his vocation as a writer: —

"The one thought which stimulates me in my lonely and often discouraging work is in the hope of service. In what noble cause? To what definite and final object? God at the proper time will surely not fail to indicate this; my responsibility is therefore clear. It is to be prepared in the very best possible way. For the moment all must be concentrated upon this preparedness, all in the acquirement of serious literary taste, all in the search of the beautiful, and through the purest style, through fidelity to the truth which only impresses the reader, I shall refuse to be carried away by the whirlwind of this century or to be tempted by a disorder which has become so universal. That

species of pride which would advance the seasons which Providence has ordained for the world, this overwhelming defect from which the whole of society suffers, only results in producing an enervating anæmia. But a young ploughman like myself should not be pitied, even if he is toiling upon a sterile and arid soil. Summer will surely come, rich with its ripened grain, and later autumn full of its fruitful vintage. There is a time to learn, and a time to teach."

But his ambition is to be a thoroughly well-balanced man, developing physically as well as mentally. Here is the programme which he has sketched: —

"Life in the country seems to me the most normal, the most conducive to work, the most propitious to offer to my beloved ones for a real home, — a home which will not merely suggest a utilitarian apartment, but the most hygienic for the physical as well as for the moral well-being of a family, wherein in fact one's house might be given the fullest significance. It is necessary that the shadow of the church tower should fall across the village roofs as must also the

shadow of the château. If we are deprived of either the one or the other, our Lorraine countryside will soon become vulgarized. Order is the will of God. Let each establish it in his own environment, there where his influence can be felt and not elsewhere, whether his is an earthly or a heavenly mission, whether by the spoken or by the written word, if the grace of the Holy Ghost is in his soul it is always possible that in the simplest way he can give evidence of this through his life. I cannot fail because I have the vocation to write and to found a family of which I am to be the head. I must erect in the midst of equally divided fields and above the rustic roofs which are too nearly similar, the 'Tour du Meilleur,' that pointed roof which draws to itself the thunderbolt of the storms in order that others may escape it: this high wall where the tender ivy clings to its stones; this permanent evidence of that hierarchy which is of such value, which reminds those mad people who forget it that no man can rise without steps that are unequal; this gabled dwelling is detestable if it only stands for pride, but divine in

its mission if, like an open granary, it is a source upon which all may depend, each according to his needs, for a high standard, for wise council, for a place of refuge and for kindly charity.

"We must not descend to people; we must rather raise them to ourselves, and we must stand on a height simply and without arrogance.

"My race reached me with neither blot nor vulgarity; it is thus that I must transmit it to future generations, in the same probity of spirit, clothed in the same mantle of nobility, and dedicated to the same standard of perfection."

Here are thoughts, is it not so? which it would not have been possible for us to omit from our grouping of these various spiritual bodies, and to whom, from Catholics to Socialists, we have listened.

The same preoccupation to persevere in a narrow sphere, and to remain rooted therein in order to become a creature of strength, of health, and of virtue, is encountered in Joseph Hudault, although with a note that is less feudal. The conception to which

Joseph Hudault and Pierre de Rozières are the most opposed is that doubtless which Le Play refers to as absenteeism, that is to say the vice of a proprietor who deserts his land. Both are inspired by the same desire to plough and to plant the soil and to raise there year after year a protecting shade under which the most lowly may find shelter.

Owning in the neighborhood of Chartres a vast estate, Joseph Hudault made it of great agricultural importance, and in interesting himself in the building of workmen's dwellings, in public gymnasiums, and in young men's clubs, he acquired a very positive influence. During the long winter evenings in the country he wrote. His two novels, "La Formation de Jean Turoit" and the "Pavillon aux Livres," can easily be classified like "Dominique," like the "Disciple," in that series of romantic novels well calculated to cure us from all romance.

Joseph Hudault had entered in his personal notebook, and for his own use, after the same fashion as had Pierre de Rozières, that which he pleases to designate as his "Principles and foundations of life": —

"I must seriously think of making a real home. Wealth is the most powerful aid to this; one must not despise it: in fact, such contempt is never sincere. Its first advantage is to permit the maintenance of great dignity and even of a certain elegance in life. It bears responsibilities. One must avoid all useless expenditures, while remembering those who depend upon us and for whom we must make every effort in order to insure their happiness. It is not enough to found a family: one must become a social authority. A real head of any industry interests himself more in his workmen than he does in his own affairs. While developing these he has the joy of thinking that a greater number of worthy people will be brought under his influence. In the same way the conduct of the peasant can be affected. One thing, however, is necessary, — personal contact. Every opportunity of drawing near to the people should be religiously cultivated."

There is nothing new in these views, and I quote them merely to show to what type of mind Joseph Hudault belongs; but here we

come to remarks which are literally born of his own experience, and therefore still worthier of consideration: "I am convinced that we cannot impose an ethical idea or a piece of good advice without bestowing at the same time an increase of well being. How can a man whose whole life is spent in an endeavor to set aside a little money for his old age remain oblivious of the universal tendency towards a more comfortable mode of living?"

The summing-up by this young man, his rule of conduct is that he shall create a situation for himself and become a local influence: "Social effort in order to be productive must centralize upon a given point. One cannot impose one's self as an authority in society in one generation, but by striking and striking again on the same spot; from father to son a family arrives at acquiring a very considerable influence which after all justifies existing. In France there ought to be many dynasties based upon this principle." This is remarkable and of noble purpose, this desire to construct one's life like a work of art in order that it may prove productive.

However, Joseph Hudault did not merely consider his own vocation, there was the vocation of France as well. One day on his soldier's memorandum book, he wrote: "With my mania to try and understand others, even those who are my enemies, I have discovered a great beauty in the colossal dream of conquest indulged in by the German people who, with spirit befogged by tobacco and music, fell upon us and nearly enslaved us through its discipline and its heroism; I loathe them cordially, but only because their destiny is opposed to ours." Thus we face his double duty (which he justifies and perfects through his Catholic belief). It is to accomplish his own mission, while at the same time collaborating with France in the performance of hers.

At the beginning of the war Joseph Hudault was thirty-three years old. Starting as a sergeant of the reserves in the 102d Infantry he was wounded on September 16, 1914, at Tracy-le-Mont, and on his return to the front he was raised to the rank of sub-lieutenant in the 67th Infantry which he joined at the Éparges. Thanks to his note-books

we are able to study his arguments. I shall extract the most central and invigorating thoughts, yet, in order to show his admirable strength, we must at the same time, while holding the text before our eyes, live, breathe, and feel the horror of the setting: "At night, in the forest lighted by the rockets, listening to the din of the grapeshot, I gave myself up to the indulgence of thinking. And in reviewing my past life, I ended by finding that it had not been wholly devoid of usefulness, a discovery which has softened for me the prospect of death. After all, I have built, I have planted, I have written, I have had three children. If misfortune should overtake me there will still remain some result of my having passed."

In September, the 67th went to take its place with the troops massed in Artois preparatory to the big offensive. It was in the third attack from the Lubeck trench that Joseph Hudault met his death, under circumstances which are described in his citation by order of the army: —

"A very distinguished officer, animated by the most elevated sentiment and by ar-

dent patriotism, was wounded in the arm on September 28, 1915, at the head of the section which he led upon the field so as to place it in front of his objective for attack: refused to be cared for, in order not to miss the expected drive, he fell bravely while the action was going on."

Joseph Hudault and Pierre de Rozières are samples of a crowd of splendid young men, more numerous, more intense the more war touches them, and who seek for themselves and for their country a rule of life. All thrilled, like Dèchelette, to have inherited a long line of deaths which they revered, by which they themselves felt protected and armed, and the legend of which they wished to maintain. From this vivid imagination sprang the very strongest argument: how can we live better than in strict accordance with those of whom we are the sequence? These young men would perish in the midst of a chaos of ideas improvised or foreign, but both equally unjustified.

We wish realities, said Baudry, that is to say, manners and institutions which correspond to our deepest convictions and which

realize all that we carry in our hearts. They know that they will find their strength and their spiritual fecundity in those types of life that have been tried by many others of their race, and so they feel the need, even in their audacities and innovations, to lean upon an antiquated experience.

For them no liberty, or rather no liberty to breathe so long as anything German should remain upon the soil and weigh upon the spirit of France.

To-day's war is a war of deliverance. They have approached this liberation in two ways. Before freeing the country, they had to free themselves. These victors of the Marne had from the depth of their conscience conquered Germany, separated the virtues and the truths which had come from us; in short, assured through themselves the triumph of France. For these young soldiers, the temporal drama of 1914 extended and renewed the spiritual drama of the night before. The intensity of their will power had preceded their warlike fervor.

Thus in the desire to re-create French fraternity and to attach themselves closely to

the generation of the past and to that of the future, these young patriots became automatically allied in intimate friendship with each other and with the older men whose thought seemed to them sympathetic. They came together in leagues, in literary clubs, in periodicals where their ideas were exchanged, and trained.

Groups that were varied and at times contradictory. To draw a picture of these "laboratories of thought," I might describe the very influential centre to which Paul Déroulède gave the impetus and introduce you to the Ligue des Patriotes [18] or present you to that small world brought together by Alsacian, Lorrainian, and Austrasian piety in the "Marches de l'Est," by my friend Georges Ducrocq. But with a feeling of reserve and unwillingness to speak of those too closely related to me, I will confine myself to a household where they held to the extreme doctrine of Charles Maurras, while at the same time preserving an ardent sympathy for the early forms of nationalism.

The "Revue Critique des Idées et des Livres" was edited by about thirty young

writers who were not satisfied that truth should merely pervade their own views. They wished to formulate it for others. It was through the light of the Royalist system that they judged life and books, but how intelligent was their estimate of poetry as well as of prose! With what keen appreciation and with what affection they have spoken of Racine and of Stendhal! Full of taste and enthusiasm, these young theorists founded a society that was of a rare quality, an academy which was at the same time learned, polished, and enthusiastic. They loved each other like brothers. In terms which his moderation only made the more touching, one of the survivors, Eugène Marsan, said to me only yesterday: "Never could a more united group be found. We were all so happy!" And out of these thirty experimental companions, fourteen have died for France and two are missing. I shall merely mention them. This is out of respect. Would it not be proper to describe them in three words: — Died for France. Lionel des Rieux, Pierre Gilbert, Jean Marc Bernard, Marcel Drouet, Robert de Fréville (who

signed himself Robert Cernay), Deschars (whose signature was Germain Belmont), Charles Benoit, Maurice Louthard, Joseph de Bonne, Prosper-Henri Devos, Raoul Monier, Major de Mougins Roquefort (who signed Jean d'Aulon), A. de la Barre de Nanteuil, Gustave Valmont. Missing: André du Fresnois and Henri Cellerier.

Educated readers have recognized in this enumeration many names already famous. Not one of these young heroes who does not deserve a portrait, a study, and a shrine, but for the present let us think of them as a whole so that they will impress themselves upon our hearts through the very weight of their solidarity.

All foresaw and predicted the war. One of them, Pierre Gilbert, on the very eve of the fatal day, in the "Revue Critique" of July 25, 1914, published brilliant pages regarding the Prince de Ligne, wishing that this "Fiery heart" should be the more closely allied to our literary history. He asked that he might borrow certain phrases with which to head our military regulations. Here are the extracts, this plumed effusion which breathed

forth the same illusion as that which during those feverish days of August, 1914, concealed from the young students at Saint-Cyr the true character and the real horror of the war which was then beginning: —

"'Even though you come of a race of heroes,' cried the Prince de Ligne, 'even though the blood of gods runs in your veins, if you are not eternally inspired by the spirit of glory, do not take your places under the flags. May enthusiasm inflame your minds, may honor electrify your hearts, may the sacred fire of victory shine in your eyes, that in proclaiming the traditions which are the insignia of glory, your own souls may become thereby exalted!' "

What a beautiful farewell for a young Frenchman of letters when he closes his kit as a sub-lieutenant, and should he die what a picture of himself to leave, as a legacy, to his brothers in arms and in thought! They say that amongst the survivors of the "Revue Critique," the young men in the trenches have learned this lively prose by heart, which the young girls who were devoted to the cause supporting Gilbert had

sent them, and which they recited half audibly while the firing was going on, as a tribute to the memory of their friend and as a tonic to their own soul.

This same sequence of ideas which produced in Joseph Hudault and Pierre de Rozières such deep serenity and on which the young writers of the "Revue Critique" sought to establish their theories, enthused Henri Lagrange, but instead of the broad and calm strength of his young elders, this child substituted a certain divine impetuosity. He was a storm bird.

In order to reconstruct French order and to hasten a national "renaissance," Henri Lagrange, from the age of fifteen, was one of the first to fight as a young Royalist. I shall offend no one in recalling the previous claims of a child dead for France, even if there are found therein some elements of discord. The same zeal which threw Henri Lagrange into the midst of a street broil, and for which he had to endure six months of prison before he was seventeen, was equally apparent in him during the war.

On January 11, 1915, he wrote from head-

quarters: "I would never have been the Lagrange of the Action Française, who had so persistently described this peril to his comrades, had I not myself asked to go to Alsace. For five months past I have made this request at least twenty times. At last it has been granted, thanks to God! If I die, it will be as a good Frenchman of whom you can be proud!" And immediately he affirms that "the shells and the balls are physically less hard to face than the blows of canes." He finds his element in the war. "We were beaten; which was only a half surprise to me"; he writes to his mother the day after the Battle of Charleroi: "We must fight on to the last man and to the last cent. This is the only way in which we shall win out."

How he loves, this stripling, to flaunt his will of adamant! How happy he was to look with serenity upon a horizon fraught with danger! Month after month, until October, 1915, when he fell, he never ceased to reiterate: —

"Such a war; two years, ten years, twenty years! Can any one predict when it will end? Should it be over within a year we should

only be obliged to arm again and to prepare with fresh resolve, for peace now would not necessarily be final as it could offer no satisfactory solution of the problem. In fact the Germans occupy Belgium, the North of France, and a great part of Russian Poland; all this gives the enemy absolute superiority. Now what is needed for the peace and preservation of France, 'intimately allied,' as said Proudhon, 'to the peace and the welfare of Europe,' is the dismemberment of Germany, the restitution of Alsace-Lorraine, our advancement to the Rhine, and the freedom of Belgium. For such diseases as these, there can only be such remedies. Against Napoleon arose coalition after coalition. It took fifteen years to conquer him. Against William, the conditions will be exactly the same."

A clear-cut expression, one that is uncompromising and in which wisdom is clothed in a garment of inexperience. I like this spirit that is unyielding. I like the rock in the torrent which gives forth flashes of light. How full of imagination and of poetry this youth must have been! I am aware that in the

Action Française they wish above all to appear very sensible, but a young Royalist, aged fifteen, is surely a prodigy of romance, and I am sure that Henri Lagrange found in Royalist politics an outlet for his many dreams, for all that was most intangible and that was most personal in the vibrations of a young and ardent soul. His outbursts possess an element of sorrow and of sadness. I am reminded by them of the granite of the Vosges, which contains that mysterious quality of exhaling an odor of violet.

Eight days before the great offensive in Champagne, eight days before he died, Henri Lagrange, on a road back of Aubesive, found himself face to face with one of his former companions in the disturbance, Maxime Brienne. The two young soldiers were there resting with their regiments awaiting the signal of attack. How joyous must have been the emotions of these two friends who had together founded the publication, "Leurs Figures," and who had not seen each other since August 4, 1914! They talked for some time and a little while afterwards Maxime Brienne sent to his

friend Tournay, who forwarded it to me, an account of their wonderful meeting.

I will leave in this curious communication its varied roman color, its form somewhat recalling Saint-Just, and all of the divine uplift of these young men, consecrated to the Revolution in the name of order, and who saw in the salvation of France the first step towards the accomplishment of their "integral nationalism."

"Henri Lagrange in uniform, Henri Lagrange soldier, was not only himself, but himself at his best, and in the full possession of his highest faculties. He exuded a double strength in which were combined a quick and resolute mind, a vibrant and magnificent activity, from which emanated an overmastering forcefulness, a kind of balance that seemed wholly dynamic, always creative, alert, progressive in work, in struggle, and in victory. He was, above all else, full of genius and full of heroism.

"As usual, he spoke but little of himself; he referred rather to his chiefs or to his comrades whose slowness irritated him; he spoke also of other leaders about whom he was

enthusiastic, of his captain who had recently died, whom he respected and whom he deeply regretted, and finally of losses already so numerous that amongst our friends it included André d'Harmenon and poor little Fernand, and then the most recent and by no means the least serious, that of Octave de Barral. He spoke only of beauty and of bravery, with an admiration which thrilled with a spirit of noble envy. And yet what was there of real value in these friends which deserved his envy? Possibly the palm above the grave. It must have been intended that this sublime desire should be granted.

"Lagrange was an extraordinary mixture of self-confidence and of self-abnegation. Within him reigned a superhuman peace, the result of having consecrated himself to Duty so long as he lived; whether during the years ahead it was to be in the form of that intensive work bearing upon national renaissance and upon the restoration of French order, or whether he should soon fall himself to contribute to that victory which had become the essential condition of the fulfilment of our hopes and, as a matter

of fact, the only task which was of any present importance. He loved to throw himself into this struggle without reserve (I felt this and was filled with both admiration and alarm) without any evidence of that praiseworthy and legitimate quality which might be designated as prudence. With an overwhelming commingling of common sense and of splendid activity, with a determination which his exceptionally lucid brain added to a sort of methodical passion, he was convinced that any victorious attacks were won only through sacrifice which was premeditated, through that contagious temerity imparted from one to another, by the finest type of men, just as in the same way a panic may be started by a single and stupid cry. This verification of what his intelligence had perceived while in the midst of desperate encounters, and which confirmed one of the most sincere and vital of the theories which meant so much to him, produced a sense of poignant excitement. He insisted that the duty of those who, through the struggle of mind, their sense of honor, and of patriotism, knew how to drive fear away was not merely

to fulfil their own duty with more stability of purpose, but that it was to court death, as this was the price by which to drive on the commonplace majority to that superhuman effort alone insuring success. I had learned from some of the soldiers and from his comrades whom I had met, that to this rule, as to all others which he had adopted in life, he was unflinchingly faithful, and it was this which was winning for him an ever-increasing recognition.

"It was thus, Tournay, that I left him, standing under the trees which lined the broad highway over which the light of the moon was casting its hard shadow. His expression was more luminous, more full of resolution than I had ever noted before. His eyes, beneath brows that were gravely knitted through a sheer forcefulness of purpose, his eyes which you remember, glistened with a lurid reflection that reminded one of steel. His face had become emaciated through over-fatigue, its pallor emphasized by the moonlight. The lines were so vigorous, so strong, so youthful, and so virile. To the tragic suggestion of the hero was added

something of ascetic severity. But that which I shall always remember was his look; it was this look facing mine while we clasped hands for the last time. And when with a sudden impulse they were withdrawn, we did not utter a word. The moment was too serious, its solemnity seemed to stifle me. Still I was not tempted to throw off this feeling as I turned away, by calling out a genial and a gay good-bye; this would have sounded too false and would only have added to my pain.

"I swear to you that my description has not been colored by any sense of deeper sadness which time has added to this memory. I knew the resolute character of my friend, his worth, that which his comrades in arms said of him, and the position which his regiment was expected to take in the forthcoming attack, a position in the foreground and one of the extremest danger."

Such was this life. Its general effect is fraught with sadness. Brief and brilliant, it strikes the mind in a way that is well-nigh depressing, owing to its rapid succession of accentuated pictures. Lagrange was in

quest of storms even though to him they were disastrous. His friends gave me the rough draught of a novel to read where, in the first months of the year 1914, he had begun to draw the longings, the passions, and the belief of himself and of his associates. I feel that in this there is stirring a spirit of rivalry before the heroes of aviation and before the leaders of our final civil struggles. His models may be unknown, but his enthusiasm reawakens that of the myriad young Frenchmen who wished in his eyes only to live for danger and for glory. "All that is insipid disgusts us, all that is bitter attracts us," he declares; and, in endeavoring to define to his own satisfaction the theme which would lend value to his book, he wrote in the guise of a memento these problematical and alarming phrases framed after the fashion of all prophecy: "I shall not be surprised if from these pages it will be unmistakably and clearly seen that to the rising generation is promised either the restoration of a great country, or, on the other hand, its suicide or its martyrdom."

These expressions are painful. To think

that such youths had to suffer to this extent because they harbored within their souls such healthy dreams, dreams to which they devoted themselves with an enthusiasm born of the deepest conviction, and in the cause of which they were ever ready to carry the weapons of anarchy. They had suffered, perhaps unconsciously, from these high aspirations, from having yielded to such lofty impulses, and from having passed their boyhood days in brawls with the police. In vain had the spiritual dawn which they had invoked appeared upon the horizon. Baudelaire in a famous poem (but in another sense) emphasizes that the first liberating gleams of the morning cast shadows upon the workers of the night. Henri Lagrange felt that darkness and hatred would disappear, but that he himself was a sacrificial victim.

During the war, on learning of the death of one of his friends of his former fights, he wrote: "All will die in this same way! If not all, the majority. The finest of the generations succumb in order to redeem the faith of their elders which their youth has pierced, denounced, and fought. This was predes-

tined. It is sublime to realize that those who die at twenty have had time only to dream of country!" And elsewhere we again meet this cry: "Unhappy generation which only finds its glory through the losing of life!"

However, he did not die until he had loosened the span of the arch. I find in his letters several notes which at intervals indicate the normal progress of his development under the pressure of events, and under the natural unfolding of adolescence. At times he returns to the epic struggle before the war and like a child he passes in review his actions and his thoughts. On learning of the death of Guy de Cassagnac, he writes: "Guy and Paul de Cassagnac had proved that they are of good French blood, and one can only deplore in them, as one does in a thousand others, this divine madness which has taken hold of all Frenchmen from the Cassagnacs down to myself." And again: "How many young Jews, with whom I absolutely refused to fraternize, have fallen on the field of honor after having conducted themselves in the most heroic manner!"

On October 6, at the attack of Auberive,

while bearing despatches under a grilling artillery fire ("always volunteering his services for the most dangerous missions," says his official citation) Henri Lagrange was struck to the ground. He died in the ambulance of Montereau on October 30, 1915, at twenty years of age.

Nothing more beautiful yet more difficult to understand than these boys, to-day cold in their graves, who gave themselves for France, consumed as they were by virtues which were needed for her salvation. They anticipated the tempest which those who were older denied. With all the strength of their young lives they urged preparedness; they foresaw that this would be their own downfall, yet joyously they rushed to meet it.

"Joyously!" This is the word which Sergeant Léon Guillot wishes his people to insert in their announcement of his decease: "Doctor Achille Guillot, of the Chasseurs alpins; Mr. Paul Guillot, soldier, etc., etc., have the honor to announce to you the great loss which they have experienced in the person of Marie Léon Guillot, man of letters,

sergeant in the 171st Infantry, dead on the field of honor, and who died joyously for his country." (Authentic letter submitted to me.)

What a formula! I investigated this. Léon Guillot was of the rural middle class, filling certain municipal functions in his little village in the Jura from which he rarely absented himself. He was also a poet. Moréas had read his verses and liked them. In November, 1914, in the forest of Apremont, he composed his last sonnet upon the glory of Déroulède and dedicated it to Marcel Habert, who fought by his side.

"Joyously," is again the spirit of a young aspirant of twenty years, Jean Reverdot, of the 39th Infantry, who, shortly before his heroic death, writes to his mother:

"Fifty metres away are the Boches. Nothing ahead of us but a plain, intercepted here and there by barbed-wire entanglements. On a front of seventy-five metres it is I who must defend any encroachment upon our territory. It is funny when one thinks of it. So young, and yet to have seventy-five metres of the frontier all to myself.

I am very proud of it, just as you are, is it not so, my dear mamma? . . . "

And then to a relative: —

"I am chief of the section. This means, as you know, the responsibility of fifty fine fellows who are in your charge. If at the moment of the heaviest bombardment one feels a moment of weakness, the mere thought that there are fifty *poilus* who are looking at you is quite enough to give you confidence and to insure indomitable nerve. My men love me and I love them. When a shell explodes too near, I am afraid, just as they are, but I must remember to watch the bit of frontier which was given me to guard, so I remain erect. Even if the task is strenuous, you cannot imagine my joy and my pride in it." (July, 1915, private letter.)

What is there to say to such gayety? How can this joy be grasped, the mere echo of which is heartrending? "Joyously," "gayly," said these martyrs. Yet their terribly serious faces prove that their joy was no obstacle to sorrow. It would seem that our vocabulary, appropriate to the average requirements of life and befitting our daily

occupation, fails in expressions which could describe these extraordinary and very solemn conditions, but at least let us strive to understand them.

These good Frenchmen have the satisfaction of having found their right places and to have united themselves to something mysterious and superior for which their souls were thirsting and by which they were elevated and expanded. Their nameless joy, you will find in the "Lettres du Capitaine Belmont à sa famille," which Henry Bordeaux has published. But Belmont is a saint, and a man of great intellect. The letters of Jacques de Laumont, sergeant in the 66th Regiment of Infantry, killed by the enemy, near Arras, on September 22, 1915, at the age of twenty-three, are merely those of a young human being in whose blood there flows tradition. I know of no better text to enable us to picture "joyousness" in action to which these Traditionalists refer when they breathe the air of a belligerent and spiritualized France. A child wishes to be worthy of his family, of his new dignity as leader, of his flag; the idea of honor is the dominating

thought of his whole being; it is around this that all his sentiments operate and unify, and he vaguely imagines that in order to perfect this unity still further he must if necessary sleep in the midst of these vast horizons and become part of this sacred soil to which he, the little soldier, belongs. He suffers — what does it matter? His interior joy is so great that it controls the most acute misery which threatens from without.

On August 1, 1914, Jacques de Laumont wrote to his mother: "With all my heart I will fight for France and for you. I will be very brave, you will see."

Having received his baptism of fire, on August 25, at Champenoux, and having fought during the whole Battle of the Marne, he was evacuated to Pamiers, threatened with an amputation of the arm! Hardly on his feet, in October, he warned his father: —

"Have arranged to be evacuated to-morrow as cured without convalescence. May be at the front within eight days. You will see, I shall come back in splendid health, and even if I should die, I find that it is a splen-

did death and one to be envied. Long live France!"

On November 16, 1914, he wrote from Wlamertinghe: "Our general assembled the officers to-day. He congratulated them upon the heroism of the regiment. Our flag is to be decorated. The 13th and the 14th were trying days. We remained in the trenches only thirty metres from the Boches, under falling bombs which they hurl from rapid-firing guns and which make holes as big as houses. We were up to our thighs in liquid mud which at night was covered with ice. This held us fast. What a hell and what a nightmare! All of us ready to sacrifice our lives, but the bullets and the shells are as nothing in comparison with the rain. In our regiment there are only five active officers who remain."

A few days later this boy wrote to his mother this sentence which is so intensely romantic and profound: "Do you believe that Napoleon's soldiers suffered as much as we do?"

On November 29, 1914: —

"We have received two hundred recruits

of the class of 1914 and the flag, badly torn by shells and by bullets, was presented by Commander de Villantroy commanding the 66th. The latter in an address told us that a colonel of cavalry came to him, saying: 'Sir, how I envy you, and what an honor it is for you to command such a regiment! I have written to my son: "If ever you should meet a soldier of the 66th Infantry, salute him with the deepest respect, for in this regiment all the men are heroes!"' And the commander added: 'I would rather command the 66th than be either king or emperor. 66th, I salute you' (and he raised his kepi), 'and I admire you!'

"What would n't a man do after hearing such words and with such leaders as this? We all wept. We had at Poelcapelle five regiments of the Prussian Guard who fell one after the other before the 66th. During twenty days the 9th Corps held in check three hundred and fifty thousand Boches without losing one inch of ground."

I have only to quote these simple and enlightening phrases. I insert them here so that their spirit may be widely felt: —

"We are starting off in the first line," wrote the young soldier, on May 24, near Arras; "we have still another summit to seize; this will be a tough job, but the word 'impossible' is not French; besides it is the opening towards Lille where the wedge has already been entered. I think of you all so often and my only sorrow is the realization of your great distress on my account. Were it not for this, I should be perfectly happy: I am like a fish in water. It is a wonderful life, and I am convinced that, when it is all over, I shall be sorry that the Boches could n't have held out longer."

On June 9 he sent some photographs to his father: —

"Number one is my flag. It is awfully torn, and you can see the bushes through it, but I am proud to send you a picture of this glorious bit of silk which is a little of *me*, because it is all of us. It is the portrait of the 66th; like the regiment itself, it is torn and reduced, yet nevertheless the same, and like the 66th, it will soon be borne to the victory which thanks to our bayonets will be ours."

On June 13, 1915, writing again to his father: —

"It is half after four, in an hour and a quarter we start; my men have just come back after getting their ration of soup, and in order to fight well I mean to eat well. I divided the provisions which were given out: one must not be too heavily charged in an advance; and you will read in the official news that Vimy was taken, as the 66th is always the 66th. It is a splendid night for me, because to-morrow, perhaps, will be an Austerlitz. I am proud to be going. Au revoir, perhaps adieu, although I do not believe this. I embrace you all, while I cry in a loud voice: Forward! Long live France!"

On June 26 to his father: —

"Yesterday was a terrible day: a hurricane of iron and enough water to drown us. Suddenly *psch! psch!* Every man fell on his stomach; it was a 105 coming. I did as the others: I threw myself flat on the ground, my mouth against that of a corpse. I never experienced such a sensation. I have carried the dead, dressed the wounded whose blood was spurting, I have even sat upon dead

bodies, but this, from the very unexpectedness of the contact, gave me an awful impression and, ashamed as I am to acknowledge it — I was afraid! For two seconds I had a horrible feeling! The general of the division, in congratulating us this morning upon our 'indomitable courage,' added: 'One might say in history: To hold fast like the 66th!'"

On July 13 to his father: —

"If you only knew how much comfort I find in your letters! It is so good to know that a whole family is standing back of one, and when I am in line, in my dugout, I shut my eyes once I have read the letter, and I fancy that I am with you all. This gives me more strength and courage and I feel ready for anything. Your letters are like the words of our leader which restore the courage of the men and which stir the blood. Sometimes when one hears nothing more, on account of the incessant firing, I open my kit, I re-read your letters, and I am no longer afraid."

And here, dated September 14, 1915, is the last letter, which would not have arrived at

its address had not the presentiments it contained been made actualities through fate: —

"Dear Papa, I am writing this letter on the chance, does one ever know? This is n't the first time that I have written to you like this; the others have been destroyed after the blow was struck — this one, I imagine, will fare likewise. To-morrow morning, at dawn, about four o'clock, we shall start into action. Victory is almost certain and we shall write history with the points of our bayonets. To the 66th is given the honor of opening the attack, and this with my battalion, the 1st, at the head. I am proud that the general thought us worthy of this position.

"If God wishes that I should be left on the field, may His will be done. My only sorrow, my only regret, is to think of the grief which my death would cause you. But why weep? We shall be again united some day, a little earlier or a little later.

" I ask you, should I be killed, to let me be buried there where I fell. I do not wish to be imprisoned in a cemetery, which would

mean suffocation. I shall be better off and more in my right place as a soldier resting in the soil of France, in one of those lovely open fields for which I give my life, joyfully, I swear it to you. I have learned to love this French soil, these marvellous lands, while tramping over them, these lands of ours; since the war, while on the march, I have felt the poetry of these boundless plains, which lie outstretched under the blazing sun, and the beauty of a sunset over the Lorraine woods. The thought is very precious to me that, at least once in my life, I have proved of some service. I embrace you all, you who have been so good to me, and whom I love from the bottom of my heart."

In this splendid boy you feel his race speaking. The Gallic lark rises from the furrow and bursts into song with the first rays of the sun. Jacques de Laumont has something which is refreshing about him. The other young Traditionalists have expressed their reflections, their systems, their preferences, and their dislikes. I do not know how much of tenderness, of sadness, or of exaltation is in their letters. I detect a

whisper of it — "Ah, if only they had listened to us! All this might have been avoided." In their completeness is something of bitterness. Yet it is all of the highest order, for it is devoid of reproach, it arises from the soil, it is an offering to destiny; it can no more understand than would a spouting spring, the defilement of that world which it has redeemed!

Jacques de Laumont is the young Frenchman whom Déroulède would have best appreciated, this little soldier in the ranks, setting the pace for his comrades, to all the warriors of immortal France. In him there was nothing unusual; perfectly satisfied with his lot in life, he lived, he died, he crowned his country with glory to the limit of his powers, without desiring more than to be one of those numerous, anonymous, silent *poilus* before whom our generals say they wish to bend the knee. What ball of fire, what burning torch is it that inflames these heroes? From whence comes their spirit? Where will it be revived? It is born of France, it is to France that it shall be restored.

Never more than to-day have those sacred forces hidden in our people been more active and more pronounced. These young men, the pride and the salvation of France, are now answering the traditions of their race and of their soil. Our old provincial families have become electrified by danger and attack. "Fine lads," they say to their children, "go in our name to defend our country." It would be proper to write a chapter upon the regeneration and the efficacy of regionalism during this war, and to illustrate this with the portraits of Frédéric Charpin, the Provençal nationalist; of Eugène Nolent, the Norman nationalist; of Jean Marc Bernard, who signed himself "Jean Marc Bernard, Dauphinist."

We have already had in former times the Royal-Champagne, the Royal-Auvergne; here we are returning to it a little, and local recruiting has in it an element that is infinitely more touching than when dealing with a recruitment of five millions of men of all kinds and sorts. How much satisfaction is felt by the soldiers from Lorraine in *together* doing great things, and it is the same

with the men from the North, the Parisians, the Bretons, the Normans, and all the rest. They have recognized the peculiarities of their own localities; they wish to do them honor, even to ennoble them, to wear the decoration collectively, and to put the Croix de Guerre on their flag. Our army corps from each district become rivals to each other. If at times in this spirit of emulation is mingled any hostile feeling, I would say that this also contributes to a more perfect French sympathy and understanding. To each the great business of the hour is to devote himself to the common cause better than does his neighbor. What is the 20th Corps and the 21st? The offering of our cities and of our villages of Lorraine to France! What is the 1st Corps? The offering of the North which wishes to restore Lille to France. To-day locality, and the memory of the fidelity to tradition which is the life of the soul, are the real inspiring influences of our army.[19]

CHAPTER VIII

CATHOLICS, PROTESTANTS, SOCIALISTS, ALL WHILE DEFENDING FRANCE DEFEND THEIR OWN PARTICULAR FAITH

A COMMON trait in these several spiritual groups during the war is that all feel that the best, the highest in themselves, the divine spark within their souls, is that part of them which is now engaged in this drama and which would surely perish should France be lost.

"My God and my King," "For God and for France," such was the universal cry of our ancestors when marching upon the enemy. To-day we diffuse the same thought under ten different names.

Our soldiers know that in consecrating themselves to France they save, the one the Catholic Church, the other the Protestant churches, still another the social Republic, and some the domain of free thought. Each confounds his religion and his philosophy with the cause of France. What a miracle, they all are right!

The Catholics are justified in believing that a German victory would result in a serious dwindling of Catholicism. What would have been the religion imposed upon Western Europe? It is hard to predict, but you must realize the Prussian dream and its brutal thirst for domination. Catholicism, or at least that which would have been allowed to subsist under this name, would become enervated and reduced to slavery. Catholics dread the German influence, its philosophy and its Biblical criticism. This has been considerably discussed since the beginning of the war. It is possible that the largest number of Catholics on the other side of the Rhine are neither disciples of Kant nor hypercritics, and that their modernism has been exaggerated, but that which cannot be over-emphasized is their fetish worship of power, hence their tendency towards schism. Never in France, at no period of our history nor of the history of the Church, nor above all of the monastic orders, has there been such blind idolatry of force as we recognize to-day in the German priests and monks.

There are many distinctions to be noticed in Catholic unity. The piety of the Neapolitan, for example, differs in expression from that of the Englishman; while all may profess the same *Credo*, the nations preserve their differences. The theologian speculating upon the absolute, upon the simple necessity of a revealed dogma, need not take into account these divergencies which in no way menace fundamental truths; but how could a nationalist philosopher be prevented from noting them? One can surely admire the Catholicism of Francis d'Assisi and that of Saint Theresa, and yet at the same time find that taken all together the most beautiful and the most sound tradition of Catholicism is found in France.

In France, surrounding Pascal and Saint Vincent de Paul, those beneficent heroes who said, "The right of power is to protect," — here we touch heights after our own heart and soul. And we find in "Polyeucte," in that masterpiece of the great poet who deserved to be a saint as well as a prince, expressions which move us most profoundly. "Polyeucte" is an example of discipline and

of independence wholly opposed to that servility of German Catholics in the face of power. It is the book in which is preserved the tradition of Duty and of Honor sanctified by Faith; that is to say, the summing-up of the whole of Christianity as accepted by the families of France.

We are justified to speak of French saints and of French Catholic tradition, because grace does not destroy nature, but merely perfects it, while preserving all that is of value in individuality. If with Pascal, Vincent de Paul, Bossuet, Fénelon, and the elevated sentiments which are found in their works, the French mind was submerged, contorted, destroyed by a German victory, it would be Catholicism itself which would be deprived of one of its virtues.

France has always occupied a privileged place in the Church, and the Popes have frequently proclaimed to what rank our country is entitled. Never more than to-day have our claims and our services been conspicuous. Many times before have Catholics thought that in defending France they were defending the Church; but never have

they filled this rôle to the same extent as at present and during this war. Why? How? Because of the simple conception which they have of God. There is only one God; the Christians of France and of Germany both confess this, but He can be interpreted in several ways. This appears only too clearly in this war. And the French Catholics can honestly affirm that they fight to save themselves and also to save the world from the God of the Germans, the God in whom is mingled those coarse and brutal elements familiar to that land.

The Protestants, on their side, say that the real tradition of the Reformation is in France, that the salvation of France means the salvation of Protestantism, and the Comité protestant de propagande française, in its "Réponse à l'appel allemand aux chrétiens évangéliques de l'étranger," declares: "We have resolved to march side by side with our English brothers, and elbow to elbow with our friends in America, in French Switzerland and in Holland, in the Scandinavian countries, having the common conviction of representing the purest tradi-

tion of the Reformation of the sixteenth century, that which intends to bind still more closely to the evangelical faith the practice of justice, the respect of individual independence, and the establishment of universal brotherly love." This is precisely what the pastor John Viénot still emphasizes when he exclaims to his German co-religionists: 'Sons of the Reformation, what you? No — you are that no longer. You are only worshippers of brute force, you are merely pilgrims without soul, kneeling before the calf of gold.' (French words spoken in the oratory of the Louvre.)

As for the Socialists, they are a thousand times right in believing that if France were crushed, it would be the end of a social republic. The social republic would no longer even be conceived, for there is no real socialism outside of France and of England. What if Karl Marx in ignoring these two countries had ignored the origin of workmen's ideals? It is in England and in France that he saw the germination of the thoughts and of the sentiments of the working classes, and where he realized the new forces which

were awakening. To these phenomena he gave a German form, while taking the reverse side of the German doctrine of Metternich (an Austrian reaction) and of the Swiss Haller (a Prussian reaction).

Metternich and Haller saw that there were general providential truths which they could not change. For instance, between the social powers there exists a balance in favor of strength, and the strong always dominate the weak. This is a profound and divine truth; it cannot be overthrown; it may be disturbed, but only temporarily; the equilibrium will always be reëstablished. Now the strong are those who always direct the military power; they are the country squires, the favored class born to bear arms.

Marx cherished this doctrine, but only to reverse it. He stated the same general truth: that there was no such thing as justice. And against justice, his sarcasms were hurled. He yielded to force, the queen of all life. Only force is not any more where it was once apparent; it has passed into the hands of those who only yesterday were dominated. The masters of the night before

are obliged in their turn to become subjects. They can only swallow their regrets.

Such is German socialism. And when ours strives after harmony with Fourier, or after justice with Proudhon, the Marxists sneer and call it "utopian verbosity."

Our own socialistic thought would be engulfed by our defeat in the present war. On the contrary, our victory will give the lie to the German Socialists before their French associates, and will liberate the latter so that they will return to the French socialistic tradition.

Thus, all of our spiritual groups in fighting for France persistently believe that they are defending a principle, a soul of which they are the custodians, and which can be of value to the whole human race. France need not fear the reproach that she may become too self-centred, and she should never discourage those of her children who bear most conspicuously the stamp of their soil, those whom she thought too restrained by the atmosphere of the home. The French mind, the most indigenous, the most local, always contains universality.[20] This is never a

standard merely for us, but a standard for all, that our finest thought aims to attain. There is not a French Christian who can conceive the old German God. For us this idea of a beneficent God, who is the especial property of the Germans, has no more a parallel than has Pan-Germanism. We have no word Pan-Gallicism. That which Karl Marx dreamed, namely, to interpret the organization of labor through Pan-Germanism, is unintelligible to the French working classes. The idea of a labor organization in the world, which would only favor French workmen and which would impose upon the workmen of other nations French foremen and French engineers, is as opposed to the thought of our Socialists as is to them the rule of capital.

Our various spiritual families indulge in dreams that are universal and possible to all, dreams which they defend while defending France. This catholicity, this preoccupation as regards the whole of humanity, is the stamp of our national spirit; it is a deep and noble note which lends harmony to every diversity of expression.

CHAPTER IX

A NIGHT ALREADY LEGENDARY (CHRISTMAS, 1914)

THE supreme moment of this spiritual life of our armies was doubtless the Christmas of 1914. At the front there were midnight masses, Protestant services, little gatherings, an overflowing of each soul, whether in sadness, joy, hope, or fraternity. The battle did not stop, but across it shot a ray of peace.

From nightfall of the 24th, more than one chaplain commenced the round of the trenches, followed by a young soldier who carried a full basket. Sentinels who were only some few feet away from the Germans watched his coming with emotion. He handed a little parcel to each, and thus his visit recalled the happy days and the remembered scenes of family life. Many believers received communion kneeling in the mud. All along the lines was observed the same

religious activity, more complete and more normal as the locality became less disturbed.

B. E., chaplain of a division, goes into a barn where the stretcher-bearers are rubbing the maimed feet of the men who had been crippled. He is called hither and thither; he slips along as best he can and stretches himself on the straw in order to hear some confession. During the night he returns with his little altar, his chalice, and his chasuble. Those whom he awakes, over whom he stumbles in the dark, wax impatient. "Come on, turn on the light, it is for the midnight mass." Good nature triumphs. The priest, standing in his heavy boots and voluminous chasuble made of cloth of gold, is erect before the altar which has been raised in the straw. All intone the "Noël Chrétien" with him, and then his address brings back memories to each and every man. Who has not cherished in the depth of his soul the picture of a doorway in some little brightly lighted church at the end of the village street, upon which the snow is falling? In this seems mingled the sweet voice of a mother clasping our hand in hers. Many celebrate the birth of

the Christ Child while thinking of their own last-born. The sighs, the tears, the courage of our French women (of all ages) seemed present in this freezing barn. For some it was a most tragic vigil prefacing the bearing of arms.

L. L., chaplain of a Colonial division, describes how he officiated in the rear of a stable beside two sleepy cows. "Those who assisted were to fight the moment the mass was over, under such conditions that the majority would never return. I was much moved in pronouncing before them — as the guns roared — the word Emmanuel, 'God is with us.' Nearly all received communion, officers, soldiers, all helter-skelter with General Reymond at their head, whose eyes I was to close in death the following day after he was struck to the ground by three bullets." ("Impressions de guerre de prêtres soldats," recueillies par Léonce de Grandmaison.)

The Protestants conducted their service as best they could, a simple and solemn little "upper room." "On Christmas Day," relates one of them, "we found ourselves in a

garret, around a table covered with a cotton blanket, five soldiers in all, one of whom was a prisoner awaiting court-martial. A touching reunion for those of us who had been deprived of communion for so many months! The confession of sins, the reading of the Bible, stood out in marked relief. Like the Wise Men of the East, we had seen the star shining above the stable. Once the service was over, the prisoner was duly led away, the less impressionable moved on, we had broken the bread in a plate, poured the wine into a large glass, and without any liturgy, simply reciting the passage from St. Matthew, we had commemorated the greatest gift of all times, which united us to our parents in hope, to our friends in deepest affection, and to our ancestors in faith." But most frequently, the Calvinist soldiers, too scattered to organize anything for themselves, would enter the Catholic chapel. Why did the Jews not come? They had given this God to the world. This feast celebrated a memorial of Judea, the cradle in Bethlehem, a dawn that was sublime. And so to-day, on the slopes of that Calvary in

France, Israel becomes associated with these children of Christ. The Christian Church is open to all, sings and prays before all, for all, without asking or seeking any explanations. Each may dream, may become gentle, may be happy in his own way, and when the priest begins the "Pater Noster," what man could shut his heart? This is God's own prayer. The unbeliever finds therein his desire which has after all been formulated for two thousand years. How could he withstand the solace of repeating with the crowd, with the saints throughout the ages, that which to-night his heart suggests to him! "*Adveniat regnum tuum, fiat voluntas tua.*"

Many went to communion. Not a smile from those who formerly would have made fun of such a scene! Each felt that all this would turn out well for the country. Little did it matter from what source their comrades gathered that strength which would benefit the common cause.

After these solemn moments then all would partake of food together. There was no family so poor as not to send provisions

to his soldier-son, husband, or parent. Most of this was shared. A sacred banquet, a banquet of the people — such as Michelet imagined! It was this hour which bound souls together. Men, doctrines, opinions were all there at the one time, elbow to elbow before this family table which bade them welcome.

During all the previous weeks these soldiers had learned to realize an existence deprived of necessities, but one full of sincere and personal friendships. Nothing is better calculated to level class distinctions than the sharing of misery, everything to be in common, and death forever facing them as they stand side by side. The privileged of previous times, seeing themselves stripped of all, each became the *unus multorum*, a unit in the crowd, yet at the same moment, a unit which had been cleansed, purified, and healed from all hardness of heart. At last they recognized in those whom before they had regarded as their inferiors, and whose views even they had suspected, a wonderful wealth of spirit and an absolute prodigality of human sympathy. They felt the con-

tagion of universal charity and enjoyed the happiness of relaxing fraternally with their comrades at arms. The mere idea that perhaps they might be buried together — did this not suggest a sort of relationship? A whole world of new thought or rather of new feeling had been stirred. The Protestants and the Catholics believed that they had returned to the time of the primitive Church. A sector with its trenches and dugouts greatly resembles those little recesses in the catacombs where the first communicants gathered or some wretched quarter where the poor might live closer than brothers inspired by the same faith and by the one hope. These miseries of the war establish one life in common, a collectivism resultant from the trenches. This affected the revolutionists. Socialism is born of wretchedness. They said: "We live under shell fire in a social republic; if such a fraternity were prolonged there would no longer be any need to struggle one against another."

The horror of the present projected all these men into the future, whether it be their own or that of their children. They

mingle their dreams, their trials, their jokes, and the full repertory of their songs. The coarser of these (if such there is) fails to shock. One knows the comrade who sings it; one has seen him suffer, one has witnessed his courage, one feels that his soul is honest, pure, and brotherly. All converges towards our national anthem and so becomes purified in the "Marseillaise." Arriving at that sublime verse, "Liberty — Beloved Liberty," many while singing it, glance at their neighbor who is singing and imagine that they receive from him a promise of brotherly love and an acquiescence in their own ideas. This night was rich in hope and in the spirit of mutual understanding. It was not possible that there could be no compensation for such evils. A test that was so terrible must surely make those who were left behind all the finer and better just as those present felt that it had made them.

Certainly their days were full of misery, but all believed in the sovereign virtue of their sacrifice. If there was one of the *camelots du roi* at this repast who began to sing his song of joy and struggle, the prophetic re-

frain became contagious and spread around the table: —

> "Demain, sur nos tombeaux
> Les Blés seront plus beaux."

The guests at this great feast listened to each other, recognized each other, and became justified in each other's eyes. France understood the unity of her soul. As the result of this night, which deserves to live as the climax of the religious history of all humanity, the spirit unfolded its wings above the sacrificial body. All believed that their dream had at last become a reality.

On the following day thousands of letters in which they hastily described their emotions went forth to tell the entire country how to the soldiers of France had been half-disclosed the reign of God upon that field of awful carnage.

CHAPTER X

THE SOLDIERS OF TWENTY SACRIFICE THEMSELVES IN ORDER THAT A MORE BEAUTIFUL FRANCE MAY BE BORN

TO EDMOND ROSTAND AFTER HEARING THE "VOL DE LA MARSEILLAISE" AS IT UPWARD SOARED

THE French soldiers die full of a trust and of a confidence which will not be betrayed. The prayers, the vows of the trenches will be answered and their friendship will endure. Witness this glorious youth which is a treasure and a blessing for all time; witness these young classes in which the France of to-morrow can be already felt.

For two and one half years, while our young soldiers have been learning the lessons of war through sledgehammer blows and in such a furnace of fire, the differences and the divisions which yesterday seemed unsurmountable have to-day completely disappeared. Upon a foundation of such adoles-

cence as this nothing can stand except the divergencies of nature and of history composing the metal which is the base of our French alloy. For the past two years, shoulder to shoulder, they have won their majority, their Croix de Guerre, their shoulder-straps, and have based themselves upon one and the same model; they have become initiated in the rules of discipline and of hierarchy, in the secret of coördinate action; they have been building a treasure house of serious thoughts and of lasting affections which will serve them as a compass throughout their entire existence. To-day each of them belongs forever to this world of trenches by virtue of his profound impressions, by his initial and marvellous experiences. An education such as this is France unified and purified. In them we see accomplished the glorious resurrection of our most beautiful epochs compared to which I can find nothing more surpassing.

Already we have met them in the various groups which we have been studying, these *bleuets* found in every family, brilliant children, full of vitality, loving nature, adoring

their parents, their country, and so simply accepting death. But let us see how they look into the future.

This scrutiny of a never-to-be-forgotten purity of purpose which questions the horizon, not as to its own fate, but as regards the fate of its country, — how can this be made obvious? I have reverently tried to record their expressions, the vibrations of their souls, when suddenly I have realized with disgust that it was only my voice which would be heard. The best method, therefore, is to take some of them from the ranks (at haphazard from the four corners of France) and let them speak, let them reflect to us, without any intermediary, their prodigious determination and their absolute acceptance of the sacrifice demanded by their country. Let us listen to these little soldiers, beloved of their comrades, unknown to their leaders, lost in the ranks, while they talk freely with their families.

To sum up, the task which they have set themselves for the development of their country is only to be bought with their blood. They wish France to flourish from

this carnage and hence humanity to be benefited through France.

Young Alfred Eugène Cazalis, son of the pastor, a student at the theological seminary of Montauban, soldier in the 11th Infantry, who, at only nineteen years of age, was to die for France, wrote to his parents: —

"More and more, before those who have fought and who have died, in the presence of the supreme effort which has been undertaken, I think of the future France, of the divine France which is to be. I could not fight at all were I not persuaded that in the birth of this new France I shall be amply rewarded for having killed and for having died for her." (Letters published by the editors of "Foi et Vie.")

Jean Rival, born in Grenoble, son of a college professor, student at Lyons, who, at nineteen was to die for France, wrote to his younger brother: —

"My greatest consolation, during the trying moments through which I am now obliged to pass, is the thought of you all, my little brothers and sisters, you, too, who like me are doing your duty. My duty is to fight

valiantly; yours, your very own, is to work with an equal courage. Insignificant, small as you may be in this great country of France, you owe it to yourself to learn how to grow, how to become finer, how to be nobler. After the war France will need brains, ideas, and strong arms; it is you, the children of to-day, who will be the youth of to-morrow. Each of you in turn must then be ready to replace one of the soldiers who has died for his country." (Private letter.)

Léo Latil, son of a physician in Aix-en-Provence, sergeant in the 67th Infantry, who, when only twenty-two years of age, was to die for France, wrote to his family: —

"The sacrifices will be very precious, if our victory is complete and glorious, if it will shed more light upon souls; if out of this shall spring a more perceptible and a more beloved truth. Never must this fact be lost sight of, that we are going to fight for great principles, for the very greatest imaginable. In any event, the victory which we shall have will be a victory won through the force of idealism." (Letters published by Henri Brémont, of Bloud's.)

Young Antoine Boisson, born at Lure, of a family of soldiers, in one of those small eastern towns redolent of military virtues, left college to enlist at the very opening of the war. A student officer in the 47th Artillery, he was to die at eighteen years of age for France, and he wrote in his notebook while travelling, on the date of January 1, 1916: —

"This begins the new year: it will be the year of victory. What will it be for me? If God allows me to live, it will doubtless prove the greatest year of my whole existence. I am going to wage war, real war, holy war, which has during the past seventeen months numbered so many victims, my friends, my comrades, my companions. Whatever fate awaits me, I do not wish to pause even to question the future. Yet only this morning I asked myself: 'What will have become of me when another year replaces the one upon which we are entering?' Happily my conscience quickly replied: 'Do your duty, all your duty.' This is the only thought worthy of a soldier who has volunteered like myself. The mind and the heart have simply to annihilate the animal instincts and the rebellious

expressions of nature! There must always be before one a wonderful dream to realize, an aim to attain. Is this war not intended for the training of character? It is this which has developed within me sentiments of which I am proud, proud without being able to explain why.

"I am proud of being a soldier, of being young, of feeling brave and full of life; I am proud of serving my country, of serving France; loyalty to the flag, love of my native land, respect for a spoken pledge, a sense of honor, are not merely idle words, empty of meaning; they resound in my heart of eighteen like a clarion call; and it is for them, should it be necessary, that I shall press forward to the very limit of sacrifice." (Private letter.)

Thousands of similar voices rise from the classes of '14, '15, '16, '17, in the order that the country calls them.[21] A young non-commissioned officer, charged in November, 1914, with instructing the Marie-Louises, Normans and Bretons, in the barracks at Saint Lô, asked them to write out the usual composition: Subject: "Your impressions on

arriving at headquarters." Here, then, taken haphazard, is one of their papers: —

"Tremble, ye Germans; France has hastily called class '14 — in which rests her greatest hope. They are twenty years of age. Children, you will say; what can they do against the 'colossal' German army? You ask what can they do, these young fellows whose already trained muscles grasp the butt end of their guns with affection? They will do as did their elders, as those at Valmy, at Austerlitz, at Rivoli, and at Solferino; they will conquer!" (A file submitted by Sergeant Gosset.)

These expressions are as one in their sublimity. However many pages I may tear from these youthful notebooks of the war, just so many interpretations of the same theme do I always find. There are no two leaves alike in this great forest, but in the storm all aspire to strew the ground in order to fertilize the soil. These lads consecrate themselves to a more happy future. Thus, while creating the France of to-morrow, they are at the same time creating it in themselves to-day. Already this miracle is seen appear-

ing on the surface of their being, in their words, in their deeds. Oh, holy prefiguration!

I do not wish to fall into the error of confining their enthusiasms, their aspirations, to any system, thus prematurely hardening that which is tender and nascent. Let us rather study them living, breathing, coloring their budding sensibilities, so that day by day, in reading their letters, in following their emotions which they transmit to their families, we will discover that their impulses work into place and become organized. Upon a vast expanse of water streaked with terrifying currents, thousands of little coral islands become united and welded, and lo! we see a new land in the process of formation.

Léo Latil leaves his native town of Aix-en-Provence, where near his family he had prepared his master degree in philosophy under the direction of Maurice Blondel, the noted author of "L'Action."

"What beautiful hills, what lovely rivers!" exclaimed this young Provençal as he journeyed towards the north; "truly this land of France is well worth fighting for."

He arrives in the woodlands of the Meuse, in close proximity to the hillocks, the brooks, and the groves of Jeanne d'Arc: —

"A shady hillside furrowed with three lines of trenches, — facing this, the other slope of the valley which *they* are defending. What a lovely country! The most restful in France. If only you might realize how these woods become the soldier's friends. One can clamber out of the holes and these dugouts of foliage; one can bathe in the clear streams; the airmen cannot see you. There is only one unpleasant thing; it is the fact that those villainous monkeys on the opposite side are slyly climbing the trees and shooting at us."

I know of no pastoral poems which are more limpid, more transparent, than these letters in which one is suddenly reminded of the hare of Cowper and of the partridges of Francis Jammes. The young warrior looks on with the gaze of a kindly child.

"That which softens every trial is to live always thus close to nature, growing to understand it beyond the comprehension of any civilian. One night the little schoolmaster and I arrived too late; there was n't a vacant

place in the huts; side by side we stretched ourselves at the foot of the great beech when suddenly the rain began to sing through the leaves. The big tree no longer protected us. But I thought: 'What possible harm can come to me from Nature which I so dearly love?' Another night, when in a hidden valley, I heard a nightingale singing so gloriously that for a long while his voice compelled us to silence. Nature is my consolation; she is my friend, I am intimate with her; I have watched her every moment both night and day. I have seen in these woods of the Meuse, which I choose to call my woods, every new leaf unfold and each thicket become once again clad in verdure. They shelter me, they protect me, each time that I am distraught."

This intimacy with Nature, very common to our young soldiers, is really most touching. They find in her a mother which at their age, under happier conditions, they might never have recognized. While listening to Léo Latil, I have the vivid impression of studying an exile, an unimportant descendant of Theocritus and of Virgil, a Sicil-

ian shepherd in our Lorraine woods, and when I wish to say this it is he who anticipates my thought: "The moonlight is magnificent; I have slept like a shepherd upon his bed of dead leaves, despite the horrible noise of the 75's which are resounding behind us."

Others have loved Nature as much as does this lad, and Maurice de Guérin, when he came up from his lovely South, felt very much as did this little Provençal under the northern sky; but what did they do, these great artists with their unbridled enthusiasm? Léo Latil transformed it into a virtue. "I wish to deliver these hillsides, these woodlands full of harmonious undulations, which lie back of the enemy's trenches." He says it and he repeats it. And this commingling of these calm and sweet impressions in the forests of the Meuse with a heart full of the desire of sacrifice moves us to a sense of sadness. This little soldier lad solves the problem which one has imagined as existing, between the worship of Nature and that of Christian heroism. The immolation, the spirit of sacrifice, seemed to us irreconcilable with the adoration of this enchantress. Yet

here without any apparent effort he subjugates the great god Pan to that divinity which was crucified! The beauty of the sky, of the woods, of the rivers, of French soil, furnish him abundant motives for the accomplishment of his duty.

And it is the same with the memory of family life; the daily letters simply exhale a perfume of happiness and of tenderness pervading a sympathetic home, and which, instead of enfeebling this young heart, only serves to give it strength. A child is born in the family; Léo Latil writes to the young mother: —

"I congratulate you. As the *poilu* must not be considered an object which cannot break, it is necessary to think of replacing him by another. And then it is a joy to realize that we are fighting for all of these babies who thus will be insured a free and a peaceful life."

This heart, drawn towards the home in Aix-en-Provence, or dreaming in the midst of nature, remains always faithful to the battalion and punctilious in the performance of his duty.

"I wish that you could see the procession of *poilus* returning to the rear of the trenches; they have long beards and long hair; they are literally clad in mud, leaning on sticks and carrying on their backs as baggage an odd and cumbersome collection of blankets, tools, and camp utensils. One might imagine that the poor wretched men who composed this cortège had been gathered from every street and from every road; yet their spirit is so beautiful that we all wish to applaud it.

"I am doing my apprenticeship as sergeant. There is nothing difficult about it, merely a constant preoccupation about a thousand minor details. Feeling always an extreme anxiety to be just, one must exact much; to have authority and to acquire more, without losing the personal touch with the men; one must learn how to strengthen and to console. All this has to be acquired and to be deserved. . . ."

This high standard of the dignity of a commander, this noble desire to fill to his highest ability this most modest service in the hierarchy, makes us recognize the fact

that beneath this perfumed poetry always gay and in perfect taste, reminding us often of Mistral's immortal verses, there breathes a vigorous soul.

"Do not pray," he said to his family, "in order that suffering will be spared me: pray that I shall bear it and that I shall be given all that fortitude for which I hope."

Such beings contain no dark and hidden corner.

We can plainly see the working of all the springs, even those which are the most secret. His family, the soil of France, his comrades at arms, his religion, all these are the influences which combine in this harmonious child and which admonish him to perform his duty. He is ready now to leave the country of Jeanne d'Arc, to leave it in September, when this land of Lorraine takes on its most charming aspect, and in this same month this young hero will fulfil his destiny.

"If you could have seen the farewells! At night a country kitchen, a huge kitchen so familiar in Lorraine, very clean, with a great fire burning in the immense fireplace. Day-

light was fading and over the field a fog was creeping. The master had sent for some bottles, which strewed the table. We were standing and resting upon our guns; two little girls backed against the wall were sobbing as though their hearts would break; even the old man himself was very much moved. We joked, we big fellows, and I made a great bluff as I held my American pipe between my teeth. We touched glasses once more and kissed, the salt tears running down our cheeks. Then off we started, dragging our guns across the floor. It was like a color print of Épinal, one of those supreme moments of poetry and of legend such as one believes can only exist in books."

Before getting too far away from us and from that Lorraine of which he writes: "Lorraine with her green-clad hills, her rivers, her meadows, and her forests, we shall make a pilgrimage there after the war." Before he dies, let us take one more glimpse of this young Provençal in the region of Bar-le-Duc: —

"We were in a fruit garden, lying down and awaiting orders. I forbade the men to

pick the plums: they were only allowed to gather those which had fallen from the trees upon the ground; but the village children, who always follow us, climbed into the trees and shook them. What a shower of mirabelles, and how good they tasted! . . ."

O Jean-Jacques, how much better this was than your cherry tree at Annecy and the two charming young ladies! Here the grass is full of young heroes, and it is the urchins of Lorraine who "shake" the plums. One more minute; we can never have too many sketches of these young dead. Let us draw from this one, in a few brief lines, a moral portrait which I beg will be accepted abroad as a typical picture of a young Frenchman. They who can appreciate its measure and its depth will know that then they are capable of understanding the true worth of our nation.

"It happens," said Léo Latil, "that sometimes I indulge in a dream, but more often I am only living in the midst of my men, sharing their life with all my heart. The majority of them are so kind! I revel in this solitude which at times is so tinged with

bitterness, in these constant physical mortifications and in these inclinations of a soul thus sorely tried and which so readily resorts to prayer."

Thus speaks, in the country of Saint Louis, of Jeanne d'Arc, and of Pascal, a child of good birth who possesses a combination that is so essentially French, these three attributes, a power to dream, generosity, and high spirituality. A perfect young man!

Léo Latil fell on the night of September 27, 1915, in a German trench, to the west of the Navarin farm in Champagne, in a bayonet charge, while he was leading a section of the 67th whose lieutenant had been killed.

Listen now to Alfred Cazalis, son and grandson of missionaries. Alfred Cazalis represents an active yet sympathetic orthodoxy, a dogma which is interpreted through charity and sentiment; such a dear and delightful child who said to God: "I belong to Thee and also to all of my brothers." Wrapped up as he was at eighteen in this intense fervor of religion, his piety naturally pervaded his brief life at war. With this boyish Calvinist saint vision assumed an alto-

gether unusual form, a form, however, which merely stimulated that ardent desire natural to all of these young soldiers, which was to create a France that would finally become more beautiful.

"My important preoccupation," said he, "is to be certain of the legitimacy of this war. I am convinced that our cause is just and fine and that right is on our side. But this war must be made productive, and from all of those who are dead must spring a new life for the good of humanity. I dream eternally of the France of to-morrow, of this young France which awaits her hour. She must be a France that is consecrated, where none will have any right to live except for duty. One will only live to the extent to which he may recognize this duty, hence struggle to accomplish it. And it is to us Protestants, or rather to us 'believers,' that will belong the privilege of revealing this new life to the world.

"Our duty is to become apostles. Jesus has defined it; 'Be ye, therefore, perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.' Perfect in ourselves; this means to

develop our individuality to its full power, to make it give all of which it is capable, to lift it towards that perfect model revealed to us in Christ. And still further to be perfect with others (for do we not believe in the communion of saints), which means that we should pray for them, in order that they may learn how to attune their wills and their consciences to the royal will of God."

Here are his first thoughts, here is the point of departure of this child redolent of a religious spirit inspired in his home, and day by day during his short year of apprenticeship to the realities of life, he eagerly longed to learn those lessons only to be acquired through facts.

From headquarters he wrote: "I am striving to profit from these days of rest to prepare myself still further. I have time for reading and meditation. In the mornings I try to get away to the hills so that I may pray, and at night I spend a moment in the church so that I may be fortified."

But above all it is in action that one acquires knowledge. "I had often dreamed of this hour when I should stand face to face

with reality." One day, while in the trench, he thought of death and sought for it a remedy: "It is infinitely sweet, in moments like these, to feel that there are other souls near you who, should you be unable to do it, will still hold high the torch which we have been bearing in the lead."

Then suddenly he pauses, he dismisses this flight of birds of ill omen.

"Others!" he exclaims. "I have too much faith in life and in its value to stop at this hypothesis. I do not wish to prepare for death, but for life. For eternal life undoubtedly, but also for the immediate present — for life on earth. When I return I must have radically changed: I shall no longer have the right to be as I was before, otherwise what service would the war have rendered me? It should restore humanity, and our duty, is it not to be first restored ourselves?"

Thus, in order to reconcile the *black* possibilities with his youthful passion for life, he decides that he will win, that beyond the grave he will still be working, and that in eternity he will pursue his spiritual earthly task.

"A solemn hour arrives; we must go forward with bayonets ready. Should I fall in action, I ask one thing, namely, that the few consecrated forces in me may react upon those I have loved and who have loved me, and upon all my comrades in idealism and in work."

And at the same time this other sibylline paragraph: —

"I feel myself already altered. That part of my being which was abstract is gradually falling away. Many of the realities in the spiritual order, which up to now have been mere shadows, have, through a constantly recurrent experience, become visualized and vital. I am learning to live."

What is there to say? What is this life which this child learns at the same moment when he is learning to die? This is the great secret. But I seem to hear with wonder the fateful speech of this young man. Existence, he tells us, can be a perpetual discarding, a progress, an unfolding which commences here and which continues when the being, "in leaving for heaven," expands whatever it has created within itself. Eternal life, if I

correctly understand this mysterious young Levite, is not a rest; outlined here, it does not after death change its character; after death men are to continue their noble task begun on earth. The young soldiers who have died for France will never cease their holy patriotic work.

Couched in this inadequate and delightful language (one might call it a bad translation of the "Son of the Angels"), I see and I admire to what extent the discipline of this war has conquered in these young hearts the ferment of anarchy in which we formerly found so much of beauty. How strong is the tendency towards life in groups! How great the need to bridge time and space with an indissoluble unity with those who are capable of constructing! What superb intention to become eternally associated with the best! Four days prior to his death, this religious boy, disturbed by presentiment, wished to establish his state of soul and to recapitulate his chief experiences: —

"First, my experience with men. In such hours as these, when at every moment one's life is exposed, they show themselves as they

are, no longer able to boast of good or of evil. All that is in them that was merely artificially acquired and masked must disappear and under such circumstances one knows souls in a way that will never exist again.

"Then the experience of the communion of saints. At no previous moment have I ever felt so near my own family and those whom I love; never would I have deemed it possible, despite the distance, to be so closely united to those who are fighting with us.

"And it is this which leads me finally to the most sublime of the three experiences, namely, to the unique and marvellous efficacy of prayer."

Four days later, on May 9, 1915, at Roclincourt in Artois, Alfred Cazalis died in a bayonet charge by the side of his lieutenant. His commander, who was to fall only three days later, then wrote to the clergyman, Mr. Cazalis: "I weep for them all, my dear little soldiers, but especially for yours who prayed with me the evening before."

I copy from such pages, I breathe the aspiration of these young heroes, I refrain from any other attempt to classify their

thoughts than by the ever-ascending line of my admiration.

Jean Rival, at nineteen years of age, is a student officer in the 14th Battalion of Chasseurs. Like Antoine Boisson, Alfred Cazalis, Latil, like all of these little comrades of the war, he loves life. In the midst of danger, these young fellows make their declaration of their love of light, of space, of movement, of hope; but they give preference to France, and Jean Rival wrote to a young relative a letter where the song of farewell, that eternal song of the twentieth year, becomes mingled with and subordinated to the canticle of resignation: —

"I feel within me such intensity of life, such longing to love and to be loved, to expand, to admire, to breathe the open air, that I cannot believe that death may touch me. Nevertheless, I am thoroughly aware that our position at the head of the section is extremely perilous; to lead men into action is to become a target for shells. Many soldiers have fallen, many more will fall; I have just heard of the death of several of my comrades who as officers have recently reached

the front. If this should be my fate, I rely upon you, my dear J——, to console my parents. You must tell them that I died facing the enemy, protecting France with my breast, and that they did not raise me in vain to the age of twenty, since they were thus able to give one defender to France. Tell them also that my blood has not been uselessly shed, and that these many sad sacrifices of individual lives will eventually save the life of France."

These children in the midst of their hard life do not wish to be either pitied, spared, or admired.

"I learned with astonishment," he writes to his parents, "that M—— went to see Captain V—— and Major de R—— on my account. That is too much wire-pulling! If M—— would not be anxious, if she would not become agitated, if only she would remain calm. Why do you always address me as 'My poor Jean'? We do not like to be pitied in this fashion. Call me 'My dear Jean,' or 'My brave Jean,' or 'My little Jean,' but why 'poor'? Is it because I am doing my duty just like every other fellow?"

And what is his duty? What kind of an existence is it in that awful sector of the Tête de Faux?

"We are thirty or forty metres away from the Boches. One can only creep around in the narrow and deep communicating trenches, filled with mud and puddles of water, and separated by great stones which make us stumble. At the slightest sound of firing we imagine an attack. During the night I make the rounds, and during the day I must superintend the work which is in progress; thus literally I never have a moment to myself; I barely have time to rest on damp straw, in some dugout into which I creep on my knees. Despite all this my morale is excellent.

"I command half a company, that is to say, two sections; my own and that of the adjutant who was wounded by a shell. Thus I have a fairly great responsibility, but little by little one becomes accustomed to the job. It is only the relieving of the troops which is tiresome. To leave at midnight, to tramp through the pines in inky darkness along a stony path, covered with ice; to pre-

serve absolute silence, to fall down, to get up, to lose one's way, to find again the road, and at last when at one's destination to place the sentinels, to make the men lie down, to note in case of attack what trench would be defended; and finally, to think of one's self, to tumble on the straw, a revolver in the belt, — this is what the relieving of troops means."

Yet listen to the cry in these places of sorrow and death by this young boy on Easter Day, 1915: —

"Happy Easters! Happy Easters! Forgive the brevity of my letter. I am no longer resting. I am in the first line in an obscure dugout where it is raining and where I have no alternative except to remain on my knees. At this moment I am commanding two sections; thus I have plenty to do. But there is time enough yet for me to assure you that I am very well, that I love you, and that I am very happy. Joyful Easters!"

How intensive must be the interior life suggested by such a conclusion; and again this exclamation which I quote from another letter: —

"Land of Alsace which I adore as equal to our Dauphiny!"

This is admirable, the spirituality of such an acclamation in a lad of twenty of humble rank who suffers night and day in the mud! From what source does he gather this wonderful inspiration? Listen to this message from a young French gentleman whose heart is pure and simple: —

"My dear J——: How can I ever thank you for all the good that you do me: for your letters so full of sincere and comforting expressions, so sweet like those of an elder sister whose existence I have always missed, but which I find so very dear coming from you! What can I do to prove my gratitude? To fight well, to protect you well, and to defend, through you, all the young girls in France, who at this moment are devoting themselves for their brothers at the front: to fight well so as to spare you from any odious contact with those barbarians which we have been holding back, one battalion against two, during the last month and a half.

"The day of the attack, my dear J——, at

the critical moment when, at the captain's signal, I aroused my section by the cry of 'Forward! With your bayonets!' — at that superbly tragic moment when one's life was at stake, I thought of you, you can be certain of this. 'Forward, boys! Forward with bayonets drawn for our women, our sisters of France!'"

The boy transports himself to the threshold of every paradise which is still unknown to him and yet longs to protect it without any thought of himself. How foggy becomes the brilliant song of young Sophocles addressed to Salamine when compared to this sacred fire fed by no earthly condiment! All are in the same vein! To the cry of Jean Rival's "Forward! With bayonets drawn for our women, our sisters of France," corresponds the exclamation of young Bernard Lavergne. What does he say? On May 23, 1915, in Artois, Bernard Lavergne shouts: "It is the hour of attack. Forward! To the bayonet charge for France and for our mothers!"

To this tender exaltation is joined the firmest sense. These children, whom a care-

less observer might imagine encased in only a vaporous enthusiasm, in fact possess an intelligence that is rare. Not born of theories, but of experiences which have actually been their very own. Jean Rival considered himself as a leader whose business it was to create the weapon of victory by inspiring in the men a certain state of mind. In the course of a personal letter this lad of nineteen wrote a page which the historians of this war had better preserve: —

"If collectively there exists here a fine and noble spirit, it is wholly different from that found at the rear or at headquarters. In the one instance is an attitude of carelessness and of fatalism; in the other one of superb courage, while with some only calm resignation. Soldiers as a whole are far from being heroes — very few of them are this in fact. The newspapers with their absurd and theatrical anecdotes would make us believe that all of our *poilus* are solely preoccupied with the sense of the duty they owe their country. This is all nonsense, and it has been a great surprise to me to learn that the soldiers and their officers are not always united in a single

and the same thought, that of victory, to realize that our effort must be directed towards influencing the mentality of our men, in order primarily to convince them of the grandeur of the task set for us to accomplish. Believe me, this is not arrived at in a day, this converting of these loutish peasants who are longing for their cattle, or of these facetious workmen who invariably have their local slang on the tip of the tongue.

"I have more and more the impression that this war is not, as is so frequently said, a national war; it is a war promulgated by the best that is in the nation, in order that the entire nation shall be benefited thereby. Personally I have always believed in the necessity of an élite, but this favored element must, indeed, be worthy of its name, alive to its sense of obligation, an active and educational force in our midst. This élite at this time is bravely tenacious; it directs the war and understands how to lead it to a happy issue, for the masses, in fact, are enduring, patient, and susceptible of being nobly inspired and thrown into battle. The

officer holds in his hand a sturdy weapon. If he himself is a good workman, that is to say, if he passionately loves his profession and his country, rest assured that he will produce a work of art."

The marvel is that this little warrior, who knows how to avoid the extreme of sentimentality and the prejudice of a demagogue, preserves in his soul an ennobling humanity, and it is in this that one perceives the miracle of the French mind, that divine suppleness of our race, when it reaches its point of perfection.

"The eccentricities of our chasseurs at Grenoble? Yes — I am aware of all this, yet they are good fellows. If they know how to fight, they also know how to amuse themselves, and, my Heavens, who should reproach them for this? Here, after our men have been a whole month in the trenches, when they go down to Plainfaing, they behave like sailors after a long voyage, 'they go to extremes,' bottles, cigars, gay songs — everything enters in. And their chief cannot deal severely with it; in fact, he should not do so. How little it matters if, after all these

careless pranks, these poor devils can dash bravely forward and 'over the top.' It is superfluous to assure you that the follies of your nephew are of a very limited extent. A few extra glasses of old wine, some cigarettes, and, to be quite honest, some smiles for the young Alsatian girls, that's all. Do not fear the damnation of my soul."

What think you of this? Old Nestor, so much prized by those garrulous Greeks, was he not a tyro by comparison with this little under-officer only nineteen years of age?

Has the world ever seen anything like this experience, spattered with blood, yet allied to an intact freshness of heart? One cannot read, save with an admiration bordering upon sadness, such a letter as this, in which the boy allows it to be seen to what extent he has been overcome by assisting at a first communion in the village; and then suddenly breaks off, having returned to the trenches, to demand of his men self-control and energy; another letter of appreciative gratitude, in which this child who, while giving his life, still worries regarding the modest comforts he owes to the small sums sent him

by his family, a generosity from which he fears his home may suffer: this letter, in fact, destined for his father's birthday, to whom he writes, shows him wholly unmindful of his own sacrifice: "Believe me, that I well understand the grief which a father must feel when he sees his son of twenty starting forth towards the great unknown of the war, the son whom he has raised through his own labor, care, and self-denial." And all that follows. Is it not beautiful, this firm purpose which, while responding to life, nevertheless dominates his sympathetic soul?

It is about this time, when, having estimated his own qualities, his own courage, and the devotion of his men, that he says: "All is ready." And now follows the supreme letter to his young confidante: —

"My dear J ——, to-morrow at dawn, to the tunes of 'Sidi-Brahim' and the 'Marseillaise,' we shall charge upon the German lines. This attack will probably be murderous! I wish, on the eve of this great day which may be my last, to recall to you your promise. Reassure my mother, — that she will receive no news from me for a week.

Tell her that when men go to the front they can no longer write to those they love; and that they have to be satisfied in only dreaming about them. And should time roll on and still no word from me, leave her some hope, help her. If finally you learn that I fell on the field of honor, let your heart utter, my dear J——, the words which will console.

"This morning, when only a few yards from the trenches, I heard mass and with faith received communion. Should I die, I will die as a Christian and as a Frenchman. I believe in God, in France, in victory. I believe in beauty, in youth, in life. May God protect me to the end. Yet, should the shedding of my blood aid towards victory, my God, let Thy will be done!"

In order to make this young, resolute nature understood and beloved, I might have confined myself to transcribing these *ultima verba*, and possibly only that youthful salutation, "to beauty, to youth, to life," but through reverence I insert those extracts which endow our nation with such honor. With Rival, as with all of his comrades, no preoccupation as to glory can ever be de-

tected, no wish other than to do what is right; they exhale the soul's perfume, without the slightest regard to the effect this may produce, they compose the adornment of France; it is for this that we make them public and not on their own account, in whose debt we shall ever remain, but for the glory of France.

The attack on the Linge mountain began on July 20, 1915, about eleven o'clock. At one o'clock Jean Rival, leading his section, fell, struck by a ball on his skull. His remains rest in the holy soil of Alsace.

I pause, but with such regret! A multitude of young soldiers are the equals of those I have just described, they should all be heard. Joseph Cloupeau, dead on the field of honor at nineteen, said: "It is good to be of some service even if one dies for it"; and discovering through this dawn the beauty of a harmonious life, he might have added: "I am not two beings, a Christian and a soldier, I am only a Christian soldier."

Young Alfred Aeschimann (who was later to die for France), as he was about leaving the headquarters at Aubagne, walking in

the sunlight on a Sunday morning in February, 1915, in the midst of pine groves and olive trees, expressed himself as follows: —

"It is so hard, when one is only twenty, to become reconciled to death! I am always obliged to dwell upon the great motives for which I fight, to compare the feeble price of a petty and ordinary personality with the moral principles which are the glory of the human race." ("Le Semeur," August, 1915.)

The young volunteer, Paul Guieysse (who has since fallen on the field of honor), confided to the friend who accompanied him to the recruiting station: —

"I so dearly love life that if I did not have absolute faith in the immortality of the soul, I should perhaps hesitate before enlisting." (Private letter.)

Michel Penet, nineteen years of age, Chasseur à Pied, 8th Battalion, relates: —

"I wished that you might have been present and heard as I did the requests to go. The lieutenant was there holding in his hand the decision of the War Office. Which of them wanted to become part of the invading

army? In an instant every hand was raised: 'I, I!' I saw these soldiers quarrelling with their officers because the latter could not give them permission to leave; I saw one even who was crying with rage. We all have our dead to avenge."

The 8th Battalion had already been withdrawn eight times from the firing line. The lieutenant had said to Michel Penet and to his comrades: "Realize that the Chasseurs are not created in order to survive."

Cheerfully the little soldier goes forth to meet his fate. He says: —

"I leave full of confidence in divine mercy; of course it is hard to make such a sacrifice when one is barely twenty: this is the age when it is good to live. To-morrow we shall be in Argonne; it will be war to the end. I will fight for France, offering my heart to God, and at night, when the battle is over, I will enjoy a few moments of rest, my thoughts will fly to you who love me so well and whom I love even more. When night falls our hearts will unite."

On his way, he notes: "That which has most struck me are the old women. How

many I have seen wiping their eyes as they watched our fine battalion pass."

He reached the trenches on April 20, 1915, and on May 29, he fell heroically.[21] (Letters published at Chambéry, without the editor's name.)

How it pains me to stop these quotations! And yet I have only allowed the dead to speak. This is through consideration, in order that they may have entire freedom of speech; yet the living are their equals. I am fearful of seeming unjust towards those who are alive. Instead of the supreme moment of consecration they possess the glory of continuing their service. Struck or spared by the merciless shots, these youngsters are all worthy of their vocation. Hardly out of childhood, each one of them conforms in a marked degree to the spirit of their generation. They expand the beauty and render us the perfume without having had time to become petrified in order to remain individuals. Supple bodies, souls that are gentle and tender, in which precocious force awakens, true and modest even to humility, realizing their honor and their duty, these sol-

diers of seventeen, eighteen, or twenty are "the sons of France" as they are called by the entire world. They are wholly this, one and all. Each exclaims: "Fatigue? It is more a question of energy, of moral resistance than of physical strength." Each of their biographies would be only the story of the depth of human souls at the bottom of which would be found one and the same faith. Have you observed that they all continuously refer to God and that they all pray?

Captain André Cornet-Auquier, a Protestant, dead for France, relates: —

"A Catholic captain said the other day that before each battle he prayed. The major answered that this was not the moment and that he would be better employed in making his preparations.

"'Major!' replied the other, 'this does not prevent me from establishing my plans and from fighting, I shall only feel all the stronger for it!' Then I said: 'Captain, I do as you do; and I also am the better for it.'" (Letters of André Cornet-Auquier, for private circulation.)

Here are two believers, you will say: these are always to be found. Very true, but they are of different faith and still they agree. Upon what? One fact. What is prayer for these two soldiers? They tell us that it is something which gives them strength and for which they are the better.

We have already read this, but these two, out of their own experience, insist that it is so. Fifteen years ago, in a never-to-be-forgotten interview, the famous Stanley told me, to my infinite surprise, that in Africa, if he were hesitating, terrified, or in danger, in order to find counsel he would open his Bible.

"All very well," I said to myself. "He is an Anglo-Saxon." Nevertheless, the difference of nationality did not furnish a complete explanation. And so now, to-day, fellow-countrymen, neighbors, children we have reared, placed under conditions which stir their whole being, feel and reason just like this Englishman, and my friend Hassler, older than they are, and who does not share their faith, looking about him, writes: "One must not conceal the fact that many men

are sustained by the idea of a Superior Being to whom they can confide." ("Ma Campagne au jour le jour," par le capitaine Hassler.)

This is very beautiful, this *jungamus dextras* of these loyal soldiers; it is beneficent, this calm submission of believers and unbelievers to the same fact: but kindly note that my amazement extends further. How great is the religious spirit in this younger generation! They have not all reached the same stage, and in no sense the same *Credo*, but all history will say of them as wrote Léo Latil: "The spiritual element is the dominating force in this war."

Whence spring these little soldiers without fear and without reproach? The daughter of the judge in Holy Scriptures said: "We pray that we may have fifteen days in which to weep for our youths." With them there is not a tear. This illuminating side, this glance full of repose, these sublime thoughts which rise without inward conflict to the surface of their existence! Are they really our young brothers? They seem twice born; from the soil of France, from an ancient

lineage where all were noble, and again from that peril which has now become national. French mothers, the very tenderest, the most apprehensive who can be found in the world, said to their sons in 1914: "I would encourage you with my voice should I see you falling upon the enemy." (Words of Madame Cornet-Auquier to her son.) These children have received an old treasure chest as their inheritance: many virtues slumber within it: they have restored them all to life.

While contemplating them and while reflecting upon them one assists at many a resurrection. The qualities of the soul which in us have lain fallow begin once more to be productive and these young men possess hidden riches which we had lost. Without detracting anything which has been our treasure (for they display, ever as much as we, positive qualities combined with a sense of external actualities), they leave no trace of sadness in these innermost workings of their soul; and yet they have recovered that power born of centuries of enthusiasm; owing to this they have more rounded characters than were those of their elders, and thus

they approach more nearly the type of a perfect man.

Acceptance of sacrifice, sense of a higher presence standing by their side, this is habitual with them; and if one needs a picture that will symbolize them, I know of none more real than that to be found in an extract from Bernard Lavergne, the thirteenth child of the painter on glass, Claudius Lavergne, who thus wrote to his family: "This evening we start for the trenches. To-night I shall watch over you, my gun in hand; you know who watches over me." (Private letter.)

What an abridgment! To have reached this climax of thought! Oh, you young men, whose value is so much greater than ours!

They will live, but even were they dead, France will be rebuilt from their souls which are like living stones. This sublime sun of youth sinks into the sea and becomes the dawn which will hereafter rise again.

CHAPTER XI

A DEEP-SEATED UNITY IN WHICH WE SHALL CONTINUE TO LIVE

PROBABLY we shall not remain at this great height; we fall from it whenever we leave the firing line; we shall fall still farther as we become farther removed from it by time. Already the religious life of the armies is not as it was during the years of 1914 and 1915: souls which had been aroused by the violence of the first shock, whose depths had risen to the surface, have again become dormant; and we must also realize that many of the very finest men are at rest to-day under the sod of France; yet after all none will return from this war quite the same.[22]

This period of misery will remain as an ideal in the minds of those whose youth has been lived in the midst of it. It has covered them with a glory which will single them out to their dying day and which will maintain in them more poignant memories than all of

our quarrels. With what joy they will meet together in festivals of annual commemoration! With what authority will these be invested! They are our appointed arbitrators. They will always remember the exact nature of this sacred union during the war; they will never allow it to be said that it was merely the natural excitement or the expediency of a people surprised by danger.

This sublime unity never consisted in any abjuration of creeds, or of relegating them to one side to be discussed later, after the fashion of some useless object. It does not involve the slightest forgetfulness of aught which animates our consciences; on the contrary, it is born of our beliefs, which, owing to all that is purest and best in them, are at one in the depths of their experiences. Each spiritual family has preserved its integrity, but in its purest form and thought; thus it has even found itself drawn to other families which otherwise might have been considered as enemies.

We shall always remember that in our divergent divisions, in our respective and wholly different places of worship, we have

found men who were alike even when professing dogmas and philosophies which were at variance. Our soldiers have preserved a clear-cut mental poise in the midst of this sacrifice and suffering, according as they may have been inspired by such and such a belief; yet, with all this, and despite the coloration resultant upon doctrines that are opposed, the traits remained alike to the extent superimposed upon them: they were the eternal traits of France.

I have merely noted dazzling, resounding facts, the witnesses on the summits; they, indeed, suggest silent adherences, a mass of similar cases which only fail to touch us because they have been reticent. It was only possible for me to collect the expressions of men of intellect, but they are not of lesser value, those who were mute since the beginning of the war, the simple citizen, the peasants who go forth with courage, without even writing a line, and who feel no need of asking themselves why they are so ready to be killed. Our great national strength lies in being a race of landholders who do not speak, who exist upon bits of the cate-

chism and such simple instruction as they have received in the primary schools. All these ideas which we have encountered, all this similarity of sentiments, all these rare thoughts find their root in things of long ago, which the crowd may not express, but which nevertheless it feels quite as much as we do ourselves. We are united in France because from the man of intellect to the humblest peasant we encounter the clear vision of something higher and nobler than our own trifling personal interests, and scent an instinct that the active sacrifice of ourselves for the glory of this ideal would be joyfully accepted. In ancient times a crusader found it a matter of course to pay with his life for the liberation of the tomb of our Lord: old Corneille captivated his entire public with his tirades upon honor; Vincent de Paul is always sure of finding those who will follow him in his mission of charity. As for our contemporaries, we have just heard them. It is this clear vision and this unerring instinct which have made the map of France. All the traditions of our past, all the testimonials of to-day which I have gathered to-

gether, are one and all the products of the same conception, made simple in France, which stands as the champion of well-being upon the earth. We all know that the French are there in order that there may be less misery among men. In this sense France is a pacifist, in this sense France is a warrior. The idea that this war is to be the last war is an old and a popular idea: "It is we who must suffer in order that our children may be happier!" — a formula that is very simple in its generosity, this forgetfulness of self in which all of our centuries and all of our classes meet and mingle.

"The churches of France are in need of saints," said some one on the eve of the war. They are born daily on the fields of battle and here are their names written above the portal. These saints of France belong to every creed, and the old village church, mother of generations, heart of hearts, welcomes them all with the same tenderness, for she says to the unbelievers: "You are my sons who are asleep. It is I who brought you on and on, up to the height of your moral life. *Multi intus sunt qui foris videntur.*

Your death gives you back to Him who has said: 'There is no greater love than that a man should lay down his life.'"

These marvellous times, in which one may again find himself, times in which the splendor of our profound unity is revealed: they have left their mark on history. Together we have already built cathedrals; what may we not build to-morrow? What will be born of the stupendous emotion of victory? What will be born I know not, but I do know that the national soul has become converted.

At the same moment when we are liberating French life in the recovered territory that was devastated, we shall be liberating it within ourselves, and as the country will emerge from this heroic crisis with a finer physique, so each of us will find in it a broader spirit.

It is necessary to free and to deepen the spiritual life in France.

The war has taught us that our hearts, while at moments contracted, irritated, nevertheless possess the power of loving, of understanding, and of ministering to other hearts and to other souls which previ-

ously had been regarded as enemies. In each of us rests the whole of France, eager to expand in living deeds. Let us no longer harass her; let us do away with the obstacles of yesterday, those rotten barriers, the palisades of parties; let her grow even as she did during the war.

It is related that one night, during a squall and in a torrent of rain, a chaplain, a pastor, a rabbi, friendly associates as is often the outcome of life spent in the same post, met again in a corner of the battlefield where the soldiers were busily engaged in removing the corpses. These three men, as they gathered around them, exclaimed: "We dare not bury our comrades without first having said a prayer over them. To what faith did they belong?" "We do not know," was the answer, "but perhaps you can settle this amongst yourselves." "All right! We can bless them each in turn." The Catholic began, the Protestant continued, and the Jew ended; then each in succession shook the hands of the soldiers who may or who may not have been themselves believers.[23]

This scene (am I too exacting?) remains for me a magnificent setting whose inspiration seems a trifle vague. I find in it a paucity of suggestion. If we have found a deep and actual unity, it must be to sustain it, to draw from it its own support, and then we must continue to live it. In order to finish this picture through which I have tried, as a faithful secretary to France, to draft the verses of an eternal and national Bible, I wish to relate what occurred at the death of the most astonishing of the many heroes I have named, a captain-priest, Millon, who fell before Verdun, after having modelled his last days upon the last days of Christ.

Captain Millon had become closely intimate in the trenches with the head of his battalion, Captain P——, a freethinker and a freemason, a man of generous impulses. When Millon was killed, Captain P—— went to find the Catholic soldier, Joseph Ageorges, and said to him: "The death of Millon has distressed me terribly. Had I been the first to be called he would have said a mass for me. I have no belief, but can one ever know? If the soul should be immortal, Millon will

be glad to have me think of him. Are you willing to go with me and ask the curé to offer a mass for his intention?" "We went together," said Joseph Ageorges. Captain P—— wrote the announcement of this mass in his report. He was present at it with his soldiers, the people of the village, and the children from one of the war orphanages. After the Gospel, the curé made an address, and when he had finished, acting upon an impulse of his heart, he stepped to where the captain sat and invited him to speak. The captain, freethinker as he was, mounted the steps of the altar and spoke to the little orphans in terms of the most touching praise of the captain-priest. As he finished, he proclaimed before the bier of this hero (and can you not hear his voice resounding above the tombs?) that the France of to-morrow would be in need of the very closest coöperation, a coöperation uniting priest, officer, and teacher.[24]

THE END

NOTES

(1) In July, 1914, the Jeunesse Catholique counted in its four thousand groups, 150,000 followers. The war called from these ranks an immense army of 100,000 combatants. After having seen them in action for two years under the falling shells at Rheims, Cardinal Luçon paid them the following tribute: "Scattered with their comrades in the ranks, the Jeunes Catholiques most certainly performed through their spoken word and their example a real apostolate, and effectually aided that of the soldier priest." The survivors are rare, affirmed one of their leaders, and giving utterance with pride to this awful thought, he said: "It is too true that the young Catholic generation lies buried in the trenches. But those deaths will not prove in vain." One of these combatants wrote: "We should infer from the frightful losses of our association, not that we will disband, but that we will establish a future more beautiful than the past: it will yield much fruit, that selected grain which has been so lavishly cast upon the blessed soil of France."

(2) "These Catholic heroes seem to breathe with calm, in an almost supernatural atmosphere." Of this intimacy with the supernatural, I have so many remarkable instances which I might quote that I will refrain from mentioning any. Through the entire chapter upon Catholicism I restrained myself

to merely illustrating by the aid of some magnificent examples my otherwise unemotional description; although, at this very moment (January, 1917), while correcting my proof-sheets, the letter of a very dear friend brought me a charming story which I now attach to this page: —

"During these last days, before our first line, there was a sudden and violent shelling. Beyond the trench the cries of some wounded man in an isolated post, 'Stretcher-bearers!' 'Stretcher-bearers!' One of these leapt to the top of the parapet. He had been a foreign missionary priest. His name was Montchalin and he was born in Auvergne. The drum-fire of the shells beat louder. 'Wait a minute! Not now!' they yelled up from below. But he, standing above the smoking and deserted fields, turned angrily and exclaimed with such an accent: 'What do you think all this matters to me? If I am killed, I shall go straight to heaven!' Upon this he dashed into the open and afterwards was only seen carrying the wounded man — the plucky fellow."

(3) We must make up our minds to leave out most important groups of Catholic soldiers; nevertheless there is one category to be introduced if only through noting a single example.

François de Torquat, lieutenant in the 116th Infantry, son of a magistrate rejected at the moment of suspension of irremovability in the judicial body, refused in February, 1904, to aid in the expulsion of the Christian Brothers at Ploërmel. He wrote to his father: "I think that you will not be displeased with your son who loves you and who

has tried to imitate you." The War Council acquitted him, but his name was placed on the retired list.

When twenty-six years old, he, with five other officers of his regiment who had been victims of the same decision, left for Canada. There they founded a ranch known as "Jeanne d'Arc" and over their modest bungalow floated the tri-color flag.

He had married the eldest daughter of one of his companions and three little children had gladdened the prosperous home when suddenly resounded the call to arms.

The news arrived on August 4th: on the 6th, leaving his crops ungathered and allowing his livestock to roam at large, François de Torquat rushed to serve France.

At first a sergeant, then a lieutenant, then a captain, he wrote to his wife: "You must realize what a responsibility my company is; pray fervently and often so that your poor husband may be equal to his task and to the part which he is called upon to play; cold chills run down my back when I think of the many lives which will depend upon me. Their eyes will be fixed upon me; therefore pray earnestly that I may be at the height of the situation and that I may set an example; finally you must pray that if it is the will of God, we may see each other and love each other for a long time to come."

All these letters are accentuated with a sincere and reasoning faith. Rumors of an attack are in circulation. He prepares his family for the worst: "Pray to the good God very earnestly, dear little wife, that this great upheaval which cannot long

be delayed may be crowned with success . . . say to yourself that suffering is a grace offered to us by God and a blessing to those who know how to derive benefit from it. Say to yourself that what is done by God must be well done. He leads us: let us take His hand; we shall be safely guided."

The assault was on May 9, 1915. He reassures his men and encourages them: "Do not fear. I shall fall with the first, but you will get through."

A great statue of Christ which had stood in the plain is there with outstretched arms at the entrance to the trench, the enemy shells had destroyed the left arm; His right arm seemed to point out heaven to the soldiers who were about to die and who saluted it as they passed.

Hardly had François de Torquat left the parapet, cheering on his Bretons, when a first ball broke his wrist. The wound was sufficient to force his retirement; he did not admit this — Quick! Just a bandage, and he is once more at the head of his company. But the bombardment was appalling, the rank thinned, at ten o'clock in the morning he succumbed. And while the German machine guns swept the field, François de Torquat, one leg broken, his eyes turned towards the Christ of the trenches, renewed once more his sacrifice for France and for those dear to him in the home.

The order of the day, appearing in the "Journal Officiel" of June 9th following, summed up this life in a few words: —

De Torquat de la Coulerie (François-Marie-Joseph), captain in the 48th Infantry: retired officer, settled abroad, hastened to France from the

first moment that the hostilities began. Splendid type of officer, chivalric in character and of a rare nature. Wounded when the attack began, he nevertheless cheered on his men with magnificent courage to seize the enemy's trenches, on May 9, 1915, and this despite a violent firing from the enemy's machine guns. He fell mortally wounded.

(4) In all of this chapter it must be observed that in passing from Catholic heroes to Protestant heroes I expected to find in the latter a certain predominance of the ethical life over the religious life. This reflection of my thought seemed inaccurate to certain of my readers. Therefore I leave them to speak.

Mr. L. Maury, professor in the Free Faculty of Protestant Theology at Montauban, does me the honor of writing to me: —

"Our Protestantism, preoccupied, of course, with the ethical life, seeks the source of this life in doctrines of faith, and relies upon those impulses which lead to heights through a communion with God and with Christ. Our interior life is not wholly based upon morals. This is the only criticism I permit myself to make upon your article."

From the Reverend Jacques Pannier, military chaplain, this other letter: "Here is the statement which I admit shocked me: 'In the reformed religion the sacraments for which the priest is indispensable do not exist.' Allow me, sir, to go on record as denying this in the name of many officers and soldiers to whom I give communion, and also in the name of the Reformed religion."

"The Reformed orthodox acknowledge in their

seminaries two sacraments: baptism and communion. "For Calvin as for St. Augustine" (to whom he especially refers in this connection) "the sacrament is the visible sign of invisible grace."

It is not, therefore, exclusively the Catholic priests who "live in an atmosphere disseminating the belief in the supernatural which at the same time is encouraged by outward and visible effects." These words apply equally to the offices of baptism and of communion as performed by the Protestant clergymen.

"I shall not attempt to explain how this suggests to us Protestants a real presence (spiritually, not materially real). Together with many others, Bossuet and Claude discoursed upon this at length! Whatever value Catholics may recognize in these sacraments as administered by Protestants (and they at least admit the value of baptism), one fact must be accepted, that for Protestants sacraments do exist. Between Catholics and themselves there is not merely, as at the funeral services at Nîmes of the Reverend Mr. Babut, a manifestation of touching sentiments, 'a deep communion in which the same hope and the same suffering are mingled.' There is a whole system in common, consisting in doctrines of an essentially religious character."

I am ready to acknowledge that my thought was hardly expressed in theological form. Here is a letter which young Alfred Aeschimann, born in Lyons in 1895, killed for France on June 17, 1915, at Aix-en-Noulette, wrote from the front to the students of the Protestant club of Lyons. It corresponds thoroughly with my own observations: —

"Until now I had usually dreamed of a moral awakening in the youth of France; a religious revival seemed to me too remote and priceless to consider. Willingly I should have been satisfied with an ethical philosophy which, permeating all classes of society, would have enhanced the appreciation of ideas of duty, of solidarity, of personal self-respect, etc. My association with the comrades of my regiment soon dispelled this illusion. No, in order to regenerate France, better than any precepts, there must be a religion. For these ideas are not sufficiently penetrating and forceful except for the chosen few. They affect ordinary minds only rarely, partially, and momentarily. For precepts control wills only reluctantly; taken alone, they seem disagreeable rules of conduct rather than a life redolent of interest and of inspiration. Religion, on the contrary, unifies the human soul. A marvellous constructor of individuals it is at the same time a leader of classes. It gives to each a realization of life. But beyond this, it binds the most humble man to his task and sanctifies it in his eyes. The next generation will prove that religion is simply a blooming of every flower which our standard of manhood allows to bud."

This message is interesting through its analogy to the expressions of a young Catholic, Pierre de Lescure, published in the "Revue des Jeunes." "Powerful creator, powerful organizer, such is the Church," he says. "She bestows upon us a guiding thought. Our liberty in order to be complete requires discipline, our development must be regulated by direction. We look for some moral support

for our mental creative forces. The flights of our ambitions seek some basis of spiritual mortification in order that they may soar still higher. We wish safety protectors in order that we may reach the summits." ("Nous les jeunes." Number dated October 10, 1915.)

(5) Here is the beginning of this discourse full of grief and yet preserving an admirable self-control. It is a model of dignity. The old man, who is almost blind, did not see those to whom he had just spoken of "our mournings."

"You all know assuredly that at the commencement of the past week I had lost my son for the country as have so many others — in full manhood so that there was every reason for him to love life and for him to make others love it. I, as well as all of my family, am profoundly grateful for the sympathy which so many of you have expressed and which I am certain that all of you feel. But once this is said, it can no longer be a question of me standing in this pulpit, but of you, yourselves, and of the salvation of your souls. You are doubtless surprised that I did not stop the routine of my sermons on the day following such a loss, but at my age, above all, time is short: the opportunities offered to me to preach the Word of God are quite as precious as hereafter they may be rare, and I cannot but hope that this one will be especially favorable. You will listen to me with sympathy and you will realize without any difficulty that more than ever before, I have the right and the understanding to bear your sufferings with you."

(6) "First, they love Alsace. Many of them were born there." Referring to this Mr. Gabriel Puaux said to me: "In your country of Lorraine, Protestantism is chiefly represented by the Lutherans from Alsace. You recognize it through the German influence. But there are in the Cevennes, in Poitou, in Saintonge, communities of Huguenots who belong absolutely to the soil. They owe nothing to Geneva, to Germany, nor to Great Britain. They are Christians who sing their psalms in French and whose churches have been organized along the lines of modern societies. Realize that our traditions go back more than three centuries and that the land of France is peopled for us with memories. When on a dreary day in December, from the trenches of the wood of Saint-Mard, I saw beyond the German lines the roofs and the steeples of Noyon, how could I have helped suffering in seeing this city of Jean Calvin polluted by the barbarians within its walls?"

(7) "These Protestants are numerous to whom the idea of war seemed at variance with their thought of God."

This same conflict between the law of love and the war is felt and expressed a thousand times in all of the varied letters I have read. The Abbé Bernard Lavergne, who in every way evinces a genial radiation, writes: "Each day will experience its own sorrow and at the same time its own grace. To each moment there will be a definite duty peculiar to that moment: *præceptum Domini lucidum illuminans oculos*. Humanly speaking, no one knows why, in this business ahead of us, one can be as brave as a

lion and as gentle as a lamb. What matters it? Is there not always the great, the unique love of Christ from which nothing can separate us?"

And this leads to the question: What is divine love? It seems to me difficult of definition. One risks making it humanitarian, ascetic, — how do I know what? The advisable thing is to re-read the parable of the good Samaritan, which is found in the tenth chapter of St. Luke.

The greatest French soldiers may at any time read it without being ashamed.

(8) "One can pray God, not according to the German fashion, for one army rather than for another, but for the preservation of justice."

In the same spirit, the Catholic priests say: —

"Not God with us, but we with God. We do not bring God down to our level, but we strive to raise ourselves to His."

(9) "The death of Francis Monod," Mr. Raoul Allier writes to me, "is one of the most severe blows dealt to our spiritual family. He had written some admirable pages upon the social duty of an officer. The notebook which contained these, left after the funeral of Francis with the pastor at Rheims, has disappeared as the result of the terrific bombardment which in a few moments destroyed the entire presbytery."

This preoccupation of their responsibility as officers haunts these young men during the war the moment they foresee a higher rank. I quote expressions by Rigal, some by Latil and in fact twenty

others. The young Protestants readily adopt the ideas developed by General Lyautey upon the social call of the officer. This is very apparent in the letters of Roger Allier, who died for France at Saint-Dié, at the age of twenty-four, assassinated by the Germans while a prisoner and without defence. Notice his emotions as a young officer who is in contact with the war spirit of his men. (Letter of August 10th, page 237, "Roger Allier," a volume prepared by a group of relations and friends.)

(10) This was a young soldier barely twenty-two, named Gaston Verpillot who was a clock-maker by trade at Reconvilier (Bernese Jura). He had been wounded during the day at Marcheville. (Consult the "Croix de l'Ain" of May 16, 1915, and the "Feuille paroissiale protestante de Montbéliard" of July 1, 1915.)

(11) Again from this letter by Henri Gounelle, dated June 15, 1915, six days before the young soldier fell by the Tranchée de Calonne: —

"The soul becomes exalted and made richer through this conflict. Much has been said of sacrifice in connection with our soldiers. I am not very partial to this idea, unless the word is taken in the ancient sense — *consecrated to*. In the modern acceptation of the term there is in it a suggestion of loss. Now this is not the case. We have all to gain here, nothing to lose, if our soul grows and becomes purged. The beauty of life is of more value than life itself."

(12) "I wish that I might have found more ample and more precise data as to the part these Jews from Algiers have played in this war." Some one authorized to speak for them thus writes to me: —

"The majority serve in the Zouaves and until very recently have represented about one fourth of these regiments. They were in the battles in Belgium, in the Marne (especially at Chambry), before Soissons, at Arras, on the Yser, in Champagne, below Verdun, in the Somme, at the Dardanelles, in Serbia. These were chiefly the 1st, 2d, 3d, 4th, and 8th Zouaves, organized in Algiers where they were originally enlisted. The 45th Division, inscribed at Oran, from the reservists and from the territorials, were the troops which crossed Paris in those early days of September and which Galliéni sent to the outskirts of Meaux there to give the blow which proved decisive."

(13) "The documents which I possess shedding light upon the moral attitude of the Jews only reveal mentalities devoid of religious traditions." Referring to this, a young Jewish officer, an industrial from Lorraine, who was the recipient of a splendid citation in the order of the army, has written me an interesting letter beginning in these words: "I am a Jew, a sincere believer and attached to my religion." I will extract some passages: —

"Let us take for example," says this officer, "a Jew who would be considered one of the middle classes, in fact the sub-lieutenant who is writing to you. I have had an ordinary education (classical courses in the high school, Carnot, then preliminary

studies in law). My parents are of Alsatian origin, and under King Louis Philippe, one of my grandparents was the Mayor of Altkirch. As for myself, I did my military service, the same as all the other young men I knew, without feeling either any great pleasure or enthusiasm, and never thought of war save when my father talked of his campaign in 1870.

"Suddenly, in 1914, came the moment of tension, this followed by the mobilization. Would that you could have witnessed our joy, the joy of us Jews who, according to you, sir, have no real love of their country, or who only have it through gratitude to a land in which they have not been martyrized. I remember that Saturday night when my parents accompanied me to the Gare de Lyon. My mother wept and my father laughed with joy, notwithstanding a tear in the corner of his eye. For myself, I give you my word of honor as a soldier, I was instinctively happy, happy to fight for my country which I loved. All my friends to whom I said *au revoir* without thinking this to be a good-bye, were rejoicing at heart at the idea of recovering that Alsace from which the majority of us come.

"I insist upon this *instinctive* sentiment of patriotism; I would that we were better known, we Jews, who are not ashamed of our race and who do not spend our fortunes in offering shooting parties to ruined noblemen. I fear that you only see two kinds of Jews:

"First, the small aristocracy with enormous fortunes, and who are of little interest (characterized by its humility before the great names of Catholicism).

"Secondly, the Polish Jews who overrun our country, and who in order to live, follow all employments (these latter only interesting because of the misfortunes which they have endured in Russia).

"But there are still the orthodox Jews, who are sincere, profoundly loving their country, not seeking to dazzle others by their fortune and their luxury of bad taste: in fact the good middle class. You are too prone to think that the Jews are a people apart having some peculiar mentality. Between a 'Nucingen' and a 'Gobseck' there is something else.

"At the front I have experienced some trying times, for during the first winter we had not yet accustomed ourselves to this war of 'moles,' and in the Vosges (col de Sainte-Marie) we suffered terribly from the cold. The only thing which counted for the men was physical suffering, but, as an officer, I passed painful days. The inaction weighed upon me. The solitude of our wooded mountains engenders melancholy, unhappy sentiments, and finally a general sense of lassitude. It was then that my faith came to my rescue and saved me morally. I remembered the prayer that I had been taught to say when a child before kissing my mother at night and which is very similar to your 'Our Father.' I prayed and the Lord sustained me, gave me calm. Each time that I was forced to a decision I thought of Him and I was at rest.

"At the moment even of attack, duty imposes enough upon you, enough to do, so that one has little time except to receive orders and to carry them out as best one can. But before that! The half-hour preceding the advance or the offensive recon-

noitring assumes a tragic grandeur. Every one, Catholic, Protestant, or Jew, pulls himself together, and the real believers at this moment are easily recognized by a calm which cannot be fictitious.

"I write this in all sincerity. Each time that I saw I was facing death, I thought of Him, and my duty seemed natural and unworthy of any praise. When I lay buried, I thought that I was mortally wounded and my first thought was still of my God.

"The Jewish religion is not made for the masses, for it does not consist of small, external practices, but solely of the idea of God and of the survival of the soul. This explains why there are so few believers.

"It has happened to me, wishing to fortify myself, that I have gone into a church and knelt down, and I cannot feel that this was any sacrilege.

"I have now shown you simply the very state of my soul, knowing that I could rely upon your sympathy." (Letter from Sub-Lieutenant L., December 29, 1916.)

Upon the same subject a letter signed by a name that is important in Parisian society: —

"I cannot allow you to believe that the consciences of Jews who have lovingly died for France only reveal mentalities devoid of religious traditions. I cannot submit written proofs without formally asking you to regard these as anonymous. First through a sense of modesty and also in justice to the unknown heroes, I wish the name of my son reverently guarded and ask that it should not be published. . . ."

With regret I respect this restriction; I will preserve in silence the name of this hero who occupied a high post; I will confine myself to the analysis of the little bundle of papers entrusted to me.

Aged 33, sergeant in the 360th Regiment of Infantry, this Jewish soldier took part in the battle of Rémeréville, Crevic, Bois Saint-Paul, Velaine-sous-Amance, from August 25 to September 14, 1914. On this date he wrote a letter to his parents which was to be the last: —

"Adored papa and mamma. Thanks for your dear cards and letters which duly reached me, although in a packet. Last evening those of August 31st and of September 1st. I am very certain that you are a splendid nurse, but this time I shall not require your services. We have returned to-day from the firing line where we have been since August 26th and above all since September 2d, now to remain for some time in the rear. I have not received a blow, nor a scratch, and yet I feel almost certain that this will come, so persistently was I permeated with the powerful sense of God's protection, which He would grant me for you and through you, my honored parents. As the result, I deserve no credit because I exhibit no hesitation in rushing in between the bullets and the *obus:* I see them scatter around me. In fact I have performed no act of bravery, none at all, and I hasten to add that I was glad to go wherever I was told to go."

Three days later, having volunteered to lead a reconnoitring party, he reached the village of Bezange-la-Grande. A young peasant warned him "to go half way round." He replied: "I have been

ordered to reconnoitre, I must go further"; and almost at the same moment he fell, struck in the head by an explosive bullet. He had said to his father when leaving him: "Either I will bring Lorraine back to you or I shall die there." The village folk buried him and the mayor was able to return to his family the religious medal found on their son: it bore the traditional inscription, "Thou shalt love the Eternal." In the document which he had prepared before his departure and in which he had expressed his last wishes, he invoked the sacred Word: "He walked with God all the days of his life. Then suddenly he was seen no more because God had taken him." And again: "As for me, I know that my Redeemer liveth and that he will restore me to life and that when my flesh is destroyed I shall see God. I shall see Him with my eyes."

Regarding the Israel of faith — here is still another document of sacred union. Mr. Lancrenion, priest, an aid surgeon in the first group of the 39th Artillery wrote to the mother of young Charles Halphen, lieutenant in the 39th Artillery, who died on the field of honor May 15, 1915, a letter which ends as follows: —

"Friendship, which bound me to your son, has been transformed into respect and admiration before his heroic death. And I wish also to express this to you, that God who is all-powerful and merciful, in whom we all believe, although of a different creed from that which your son professed (this he told me), has gathered, let me hope, to Himself, this soul so pure and so loyal, who gave his life through duty, and may he be preserved throughout all eternity.

I prayed yesterday and to-day with all my heart to this God of mercy, to receive your son near Him, and to unite you to him when the moment dawns for your eternal and happy reunion. May this word of a minister of God, not lessen your grief, but bring you hope, fortify your courage, and help you to bear your sacrifice."

(14) They tell me: "You have shown exceptional Jews, either lately come amongst us, or perhaps some of high intellectuality"; and I am given to read the correspondence of Captain Raoul Block, killed on May 12, 1916, before Verdun, a man of the business world. His letters, of firm resolve, breathe the most wholesome patriotic and family sentiments.

Forty years of age, relegated to the ordnance department, he asked to be given active service.

"I wait impatiently to do my duty as I wish to do it and as I understand it; being a Frenchman and a Jew I should perform it doubly. In this country at the present time every man of sound health is needed for defence with arms in hand; I am in service which can be very well done by old men and those capable of less activity. It is my duty to offer my services elsewhere."

On January 6, 1915, he sends his wife this page full of the landholder's affection, natural to an Alsatian Jew: —

"How joyfully shall I go in the direction of Alsace and what memories while entering in uniform into this country of my dreams! Our poor fathers would turn in their graves! Yet it is the 'revenge' of which they have so persistently spoken and with

which their hearts overflowed! And my brave brother, my elder who had worn the soldier's coat, and under what tragic circumstances! With what delight will I avenge him as well as my brother Robert who was lost too soon! What an account to be paid by these bandits, and what a pitiless creditor I shall be! Tell every one, brothers and sisters, that never before, perhaps, have our hearts beaten so in unison nor have they communed so intensely together. I often think of those who surround you at this time with such tender affection and who help you to bear so bravely the heavy burden of our country which I have imposed upon you and upon myself. To be one of those who contribute directly to restore to you your very cradle; this is a very precious joy for me which crowns our married life, always so united and so full of sympathy. What a beautiful anniversary of our twenty years of married life, the 'rue de la Mésange' to become once again French! What more splendid gift could I dream of bringing you! And Lauterbourg, Niederbronn, Bionville, all these once more under the tri-color! You must understand why I wished to go and why I should go; is not the whole of my family tradition with me? To be able to take you and our dear children into Alsace and Lorraine and say to them: 'Papa helped with everything in him to restore these two beautiful countries to France.' What a sublime reward for me!"

(15) "We observe that many of these men, while retaining much that is unchanged, have become in other respects quite altered."

Child of a Parisian workman, the marine, Luc Platt, is a Socialist. He goes for the first time on leave of absence, and upon his return writes in his notebook: —

"25th of September, 1915. — If I should be at the head of something, I would assemble all those who complain that it is long, who wish to sign a peace, and would force them here with cudgel blows! I shall make them spend three weeks in the trenches and stick their noses in the branches so that they may at least learn what it is. Afterward they can talk of peace! And what of our ruins? What of our dead? Is n't all this crying out for vengeance? I am no more of a patriot than others, but this, this is instinct. The front is a fine moral school for civilians!"

A little later, he learned of Vaillant's death: —

"22d December. — Jaurès! Vaillant! When one recalls these two names, one seems to see, in the midst of a human sea spotted with thousands of red banners, these two men of free gesture and of thrilling speech who, after the fashion of apostles, show to proletarians the city of the future, the whole world at peace, and not that life so near — that life in which no sensible person would then have believed: a life in which nothing else was spoken of save cannons, trenches, assaults, murders, and conflagrations. Where are we now? And yet there are still Socialists who can talk of peace! — who wish to reëstablish Internationalism! Internationalism — yes — but not with the Germans. These traitors have lied to us, they have slaughtered our hopes, they are morally responsible for the death of Jaurès, of Vaillant. They will be punished, for we Socialists, we will cry

out, not 'War against War,' but 'War to the End.' We must get their skins!"

Six months later, on February 13, 1916, he fell a hero on the Yser. ("Un Parisien sur l'Yser, the marine Luc Platt," by Jules Perrin.)

(16) Here is a letter from a schoolmaster which will be read with interest. Dated Monday, January 1, 1917, Mr. Arthur Gervais, well known in the teacher's world, wrote to me: —

"Your article upon the work and the life of my colleague, the Syndicalist instructor, Albert Thierry, singularly clarifies the view which, since the war, I have formed upon the real mentality of the trades-union teachers which formerly I had opposed.

"You are aware of the difficulties they have created for us, the trouble we have given ourselves, in the 'Instituteur Français,' anti-Syndicalist publication, to bring back to a state of simple common sense and to the most elementary prudence these irrepressible children of the large family of primary teachers whom nothing could stop, either their own preservation, or the wrong that they do to the School and to its masters, impulsive natures, which at the same time are generous, and incapable of supporting in any degree that which is arbitrary and unjust.

"For my part, I have become, during this struggle, angry more than once, which fact I shall always remember, but which on each occasion has disarmed the fine appearance, the patriotic speech in this time of war, of these turbulent fellows, enemies only yesterday of every form of discipline, and extreme pacifists as well.

"The Syndicalists of the School, accepting all which French socialism contains of broad humanity, fraternized with the most rabid of the Socialists, the least disciplined, but those whose directing body is the most defiant because the logic of their teachings led them to wish to extend to the bodies of the Right the same liberty which they demand for themselves. Hence springs the difficulties of our administration which this attitude considerably complicated.

"We — the moderates — the so-called reactionaries, in the 'Presse de l'Enseignement,' through principle, through respect for order, discipline, — we sustained the Administration, which frankly felt no obligation to us for this, for reasons readily guessed; and with an equal logic, we fell severely upon the Syndicalists, the revolutionaries, who were inimical to all authority.

"This struggle fades away into a past which seems far removed, and now that the grievances have been forgotten in the heat of battle, that the common dangers have brought together, side by side, these enemies of yesterday, it becomes easier to grasp the intention in the fact, formerly considered reprehensible, when occasion reminds us of these ancient histories. The syndicate of office-holders, an error yesterday, may become the truth of tomorrow. Before the war it was represented as a state of anarchy, dangerous to a society which felt itself threatened by the relaxing of discipline necessary to every social organization and which based all its hope upon the good example of those representing authority, and in the good example of the

official. Yet it is possible that the day following the war he may become the necessary moderator of tyrannical power drawing his full authority from the law of plurality, the law of the strongest.

"The Syndicalist teachers, will they not then have been the sowers of a happy and fruitful idea, to be realized possibly in the near future? That which was needed by these intensive and well-intentioned minds was an intellectual training produced by a higher degree of culture, and one better balanced than could be produced by an incomplete primary education; it is furthermore that moral restraint resultant upon a religious faith, which they do not possess and which they would even combat as hostile to the false idea of human liberty which they have established for themselves. This dual discipline of mind and heart was furthermore missing in us French; we were neither sufficiently cultivated, nor sufficiently religious, hence this anarchistic condition in which we lived prior to the war. But our instincts of social preservation warned us of the risk we were running, therefore our efforts to get free from the chaos.

"The war revealed in us the virtues of the race; its heroism, its generosity, its disinterestedness, its warlike qualities, and its inventive genius. These sufficed with what remained to us of high culture and of religious faith to yield, in these hours of great crisis, to that discipline which we so sorely needed.

"Shall we profit by these lessons of war in these moments of false security born of peace? Shall we impose upon ourselves the necessary efforts to pre-

serve and to increase the spiritual and moral treasures amassed throughout the centuries, to avoid every surprise and to walk firmly towards our highest potentialities?

"Our duty is clearly traced: to watch over that which reawakens in us the double torch of classical Latin culture and of Catholic faith which is marvellously adapted to the spirit of our race." (Arthur Gervais, retired school teacher, Fabrègues, Hérault.)

Compare these views with those of Georges Guy-Grand ("La Philosophie nationaliste — La Philosophie syndicaliste," published by Bernard Grasset), and the whole movement of the teachers' union. In our conference of March 16, 1917, upon teachers this is what we said: "The Syndicate, perhaps the little country of the future for a large number of the French."

(17) Pierre de Rozières fell the same day and in the very place as Hugues de Castelnau, who was also serving in this 70th Division from Lorraine, where his father General de Castelnau left so many memories amongst older men of the 37th from Nancy, scattered through the 237th and the 360th. He was buried in the cemetery of the parish of Petit-Servins, near Ablain-Saint-Nazaire, under the shadow of the church where he had come so often to pray God to give victory to our army and surely to offer his own life as a sacrifice.

(18) The great opening of that first speech by Déroulède, upon which was founded this League and which still animates it (I recalled this on the

12th of July, 1914, in accepting most unworthily, the succession to our chief) is: —

"Republicans, Bonapartists, Legitimists, Orleanists, with us these are only pre-names. The name of Patriots is the family name." I am doing nothing in this book except to conform myself to the thought and to the intention of the League.

(19) Catholics, Protestants, Jews, Socialists, Traditionalists, it is very certain that I have not exhausted the analysis, nor finished the picture, not even the enumeration of our various spiritual families. I have traced the frame and have put some few real touches in a sketch of the whole. One should carry out the drawing still further and even multiply these chapters.

For example, there are republicans, democrats, and laymen, adepts in the philosophy of the rights of man, based upon a principle of judicial order and not upon an economical order, revolutionaries if you please, but who bind themselves to the views of the Constituent Assembly. Very numerous with us, they date back to a great French and English tradition of the eighteenth century. One of their pilgrimages would be to the grave of Stuart Mill in Avignon — you will find an echo of their thought in the chapter which I dedicate to Socialists, to freethinkers, to pacifists, to internationalists. In any event they are not humanitarians. These republicans, "democrats, and of the laity," find their principle of action in the "Declaration of the Rights of Man": "We fight, say they, German militarism." To them it is rather a war of independence than one of "nationality"

— a certain fog envelops their thought; yet they are very numerous, and to see them in full beauty one may think of Renouvier.

On the whole, the number of these spiritual families, should I follow certain of my correspondents, would be almost unlimited. Jules Véran told me that one night, at Mort-Homme, when the hour of the attack drew near for a Provençal regiment, and when the leaders, dreading a frightful bombardment, asked themselves whether their signal could be heard, a voice intoned the "Coupo Santo," by Mistral. It is a religious hymn of whose rare beauty you are aware, written to the glory of the soil and its traditions, and which unites by virtue of its enthusiasm all the sons of the Provençal spirit. A voice chanted, all joined in with it and the moment sounded. It was to the strains of this "Marseillaise" of Maillane that the soldiers of the 15th Corps won the citation of which to-day they are so proud.

(20) "The French mind, the most indigenous, the most local, always contains universality."

The philosopher of French regionalism, an extreme nationalist, such as Charles Maurras, has always insisted upon this idea of universality which is natural to France and which she has inherited from Rome and from Athens. He wrote in the dedication of "L'Étang de Berre" (1915): "This little volume . . . says . . . the city and the province expanded . . . in the kingdom . . . for progress . . . of the human species"; in the preface of "Quand les Français ne s'aimaient pas" (1916, "bringing

to light the service rendered to beauty and to truth by men of French blood"), he specifies that this should be considered "without for a moment losing sight of the fact that reason and art have the universal as object." Other older writings, going back as certain chapters of the "Anthinea" to 1896 and 1898, make us also observe that "at the supreme moment when she was only herself, Athens was mankind."

(21) When I speak of the "Marie-Louises" of France, how far I am from exhausting this subject of such heart-rending beauty! Since we are in company with that noble boy, Michel Penet (who has a delightful mind, full of poetry), let him present to us the little chasseur Chocolat. The story most certainly is a little too literary — yet it is of value. A soldier of nineteen protects a soldier of twelve: —

February 14th, 1915. "A few days ago I went with one of my pals to drink a glass of warm wine in a little inn.

"By chance I came across the little chasseur Chocolat, the child of our battalion. I had already noticed him on our marches, this little urchin so wide awake and who blew on a small clarinet. Hardly had I sat down than he jumped upon my knees.

"'Kid,' said I, while stroking his light hair, 'where is your father?'

"His blue eyes looked up at me sadly —

"'I have n't any,' he answered gently.

"'And your mother?'

"'I have n't any either.'

"'Then you have no one to be interested in you, no sister, no brother?'

"'Brothers, oh, yes, I have some,' said he, clasping my neck. And he began to play with the three medals which hung on his breast from a tricolor ribbon; one represented the Sacred Heart, another the Blessed Virgin. In the centre glistened the Military Medal, a medal in white metal which possibly later would be in silver.

"Our little chasseur has been in the war with his big brothers. He carried munitions to them in the trenches." (Letters from Michel Penet, February 14, 1915.)

(22) "Already the religious life of the armies is not as it was during the years of 1914 and 1915 . . . yet after all none will return from this war quite the same." When this article appeared in the "Écho de Paris," I received from the trenches several very interesting corrections and comments. Here is one of the letters (dated January 20, 1917): —

"No — I do not believe, as you assert, that the moral level of the army in 1917 is no longer as high as in 1914.

"For a long time I did believe this and it made me despair; frequently I said to myself while listening to my companions: 'The war lasts too long! What has become of those great hours of enthusiasm and of unity as in 1914?' When, lo, and behold, only a short time ago, being separated from my usual group of friends, I was thrown into a close and constant intimacy with certain of my associates who, in abridgment, seemed to me to represent the en-

tire nation. There were laboring men and farmers, chaps from the north, the south, the centre, and the east. Little by little I saw how much, even though they themselves were unaware of it, suffering had done its work in them, how much it had purified them, how much they would come forth changed by the war.

"In 1914–15, I believe that the change had been chiefly superficial. Like those nights of imperceptible cold which suddenly cover the ponds with a thin coating of ice, this war had brutally seized us and blended us into one great mass; doubtless a mass of splendid exterior, but which was only a motley conglomeration fatally destined to become exhausted. The crystallization of new sentiments only commenced at a later date, and not on the surface, but through deeper layers, the subconscious strata of our souls. This transformation especially occurred, I imagine, during those hours — the hardest morally, perhaps — through which we have lived since the offensive in Champagne, since the crumbling of our hopes which we had nourished that this war would be relatively short; we were then obliged to fall back upon ourselves with the certainty of a much longer war, one much more painful than we had imagined, and one in which we were to suffer far more than we had yet done; and at this moment was imposed upon us the necessity to create a "soul of war"; the majority of us yielded to it in fact without realizing it.

"Until then we had preserved intact our mentality which had obtained before the war; we had merely clothed it in a mantle of enthusiasm. This

cloak became gradually worn; to-day with nearly all it has completely disappeared; this explains why the mass seems less conspicuous than during those early days, yet I feel that despite this an important and deep change has nevertheless been at work and that its mission will continue. At present it is our small ideas which appear on the surface, and if at moments we justify them, very often we have no faith in them. There is now only a scum over the French conscience; let the breath of victory come, then all will be swept away in a great wind of union and of national pride, our sufferings will be forgotten; they will have been paid for in glory, glory of which we French will always remain the eternal lovers." (H. B. de Lille.)

(23) Having read my book, the great and learned Saint-Saëns remarked to me: "Most assuredly, this union of a priest, a pastor, and a rabbi is extremely touching; but must one admire it? Viewed from a serious religious standpoint, it is not commendable. A faith which is tolerant is no longer a religion but religiousness. It is through such tolerance, so greatly the fashion, that religions perish, for they die of themselves, they are not killed by any one; when persecuted they become strengthened."

Saint-Saëns is not wrong. Nevertheless he is only half right. One must quote such incidents as the atmosphere of the all-pervading charity engendered by the war. None are lukewarm. All are zealous. And what a theme of inspiration a musician of talent would find in the scene which I am about to note, in which two civil war themes become inter-

twined and rise closely reconciled above an humble coffin!

"One day in the autumn of 1916," writes to me the Reverend Jacques Pannier, "a shell killed, at their post, two artillery non-commissioned officers, intimate friends, one a Catholic, the other a Protestant. At the funeral service the other chaplain and I walked together side by side following the two coffins; in fact, there were not two services in succession, but a double ceremony, in which the alternating parts harmonized perfectly. The priest said the 'Pater,' I said the 'Creed.' Why should we have twice repeated the same prayer, the same confession of faith? The priest said: '*Requiem dona eis, Domine!*' I prayed for the two families. Then a Catholic officer—a relative of the non-commissioned Protestant officer — spoke at the side of the grave and expressed his appreciation of having heard the representatives of our two Christian churches thus in symphonic accord."

Ah! Saint-Saëns, what an opportunity for your genius! What an oratorio this would inspire! I also make reserves, such as an instinct of taste would suggest to us, upon these understandings which in the chill of our daily lives would only be compromises; but in the fraternity of sacrifice for France and for civilization, our heroes spontaneously receive the help of every prayer, this overflowing of all consciences unsettled by the same sublime influences.

(24) "The France of to-morrow would be in need of the very closest coöperation, a coöperation uniting priest, officer, and teacher."

I ask the priest, the officer, and the teacher that they should take under their protection the propaganda for the "suffrage of the dead." It is the proper conclusion of such a book as this. This memorial, in which is resplendent the union of all the soldiers of France, cannot terminate save through the most ardent appeal for a survival and a continuance after the war of the hopes and of the desires of the men killed in action.

Here is the petition which I ask all of my readers, not only to sign themselves, but to get others to sign, and which they can procure at the offices of the Ligue des Patriotes, 4 rue Saint Anne, Paris: —

"Appeal for the suffrage of the dead, submitted to Parliament in behalf of the families of those who have been mobilized.

"Gentlemen Representatives of the Nation, —

"Since the beginning of the war, hundreds of thousands of Frenchmen have died. What are we going to do for them?

"In honor of those who are the most illustrious we shall erect statues in the public squares; for others pedestals in their mortuary sanctuaries.

"How barren this seems, how inadequate it is!

"These dead whom we recognize as superior to ourselves and whose voices we shall hear to the end of our days, can we admit that hereafter they shall remain silent and that they shall no longer be consulted in the reconstruction of the country which they have saved?

"We do not merely dream of proving our gratitude. We are preoccupied by our own interests. The sudden elimination of possibly one tenth of our

electoral body will cause great disruption in dealing with public matters.

"After sacrifice upon sacrifice the combatants and their families will at last find themselves controlled by the non-combatants. Certain communes, certain districts, depopulated by the fortunes of war, and by the conditions of recruitment, will find themselves in a deplorable electoral inferiority.

"How can we prevent this equilibrium from being so unjustly impaired?

"The names of the dead should continue to appear upon the lists of electors. They will vote through the intermediary of their families on whom they have bestowed a real nobility, and who have consecrated to them a pious devotion.

"The vote for women has been up to the present time in our country the object of adverse critics over whom its partisans have been unable to triumph. At the end of a war in which all the children of France were more beautiful than in any previous century, the country owes its homage to the wives and to the mothers of these heroes. The glorious enthusiasm of our men at war is born in great part from the courage and from the self-abnegation of the Frenchwomen, and these latter, when the fatal news strikes their homes, are worthy to use (in the defence of their family and of the country) the ballot of that soldier whose soul is one with theirs.

"No objection could be raised either from a public or a social point of view. Each group and every class in the nation is doing its duty; all will have paid their tribute to death; in maintaining for those who fell in the defence of the country their right to

vote, we would be avoiding an injustice without opening the door to any surprise.

"Therefore we ask that the electoral legislation should be amended so that it might satisfy our sense of gratitude and obligation due the families whose heads have died and to those regions which have been destroyed.

"And leaving to our legal guides the task of studying those questions which belong peculiarly to their calling, we claim the Vote of the Dead."

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