HISTORY

OF THE

PROTESTANTS OF FRANCE

BY G. DE FELICE

TRANSLATED BY

PHILIP EDWARD BARNES

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Title: History of the Protestants of France, from the commencement of the Reformation to the present time

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Translator: Philip Edward Barnes

Release date: August 27, 2024 [eBook #74322]

Language: English

Original publication: London: George Routledge & Co., 1853

Other information and formats: www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/74322

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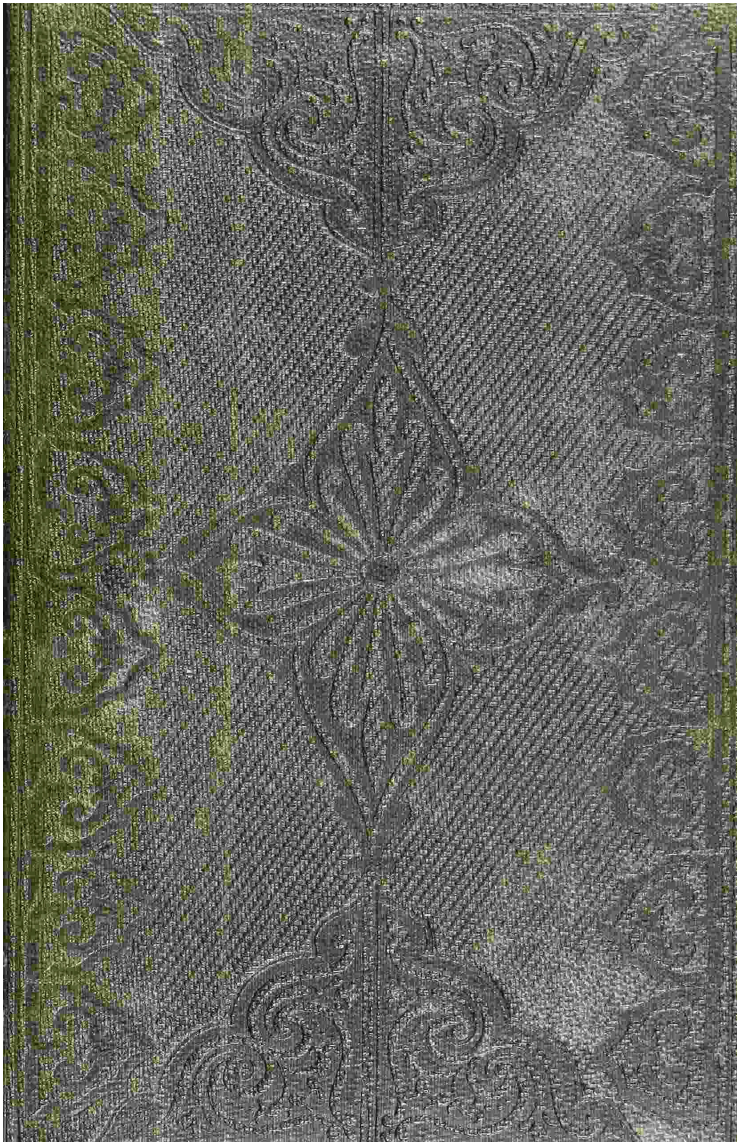
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HISTORY

OF THE

PROTESTANTS OF FRANCE,

FROM

THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE REFORMATION TO THE PRESENT TIME.

BY G. DE FELICE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE SECOND REVISED AND CORRECTED EDITION,

BY

PHILIP EDW. BARNES, ESQ., B.A., F.L.S.,

OF THE MIDDLE TEMPLE, BARRISTER-AT-LAW.

LONDON:

GEORGE ROUTLEDGE & CO., FARRINGDON STREET.

1853.

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

The reason of the translation of this book, is the same that actuated the Author of the original work, —not the glorification of a particular creed, but the inculcation of a lesson from the pages of history, whereby the reader may learn the expediency, as well as wisdom and justness, of the great maxim, that the fullest religious liberty is the right of all men. The illustration of this principle, so little truly recognised, yet happens in the present case, to bear against the members of the Roman Catholic Church: but all creeds and every sect may usefully perpend the moral of the narrative. To preach the duty of toleration to the members of the Reformed communions, whose chief dogma is the right of private judgment, might seem a supererogatory labour, did we not know how, in time, the best of causes may become corrupted by the mingling of the passions, until the fair tree is stifled under the baneful embrace of the insidious parasite. The necessity, then, of a frequent recurrence to first principles is obvious; and in no case can this necessity be so strong as in religious matters. To dissent from a dominant creed, has been hitherto to draw down persecution; and persecution will assuredly kindle a retaliative spirit of dogmatical oppression in the persecuted, unless these last continually bear in mind that the very ground of their difference was, in the outset, the privilege of

thinking for themselves. Let us, then, guard ourselves against this error, still more deserving of reprobation in Protestants than in Romanists; and let these finally convince themselves how futile it is to struggle against the onward progress of the human mind, daily absorbing more essentially the Christian spirit, and thereby strengthening to the task of social improvement under the advancing banner of mental independence.

If history is philosophy teaching by examples, a work that shall contribute in any degree to elucidate our views respecting the men and manners of past ages, will certainly be received as a desirable contribution to the general stock of knowledge. But at a period when Europe is yet throbbing with the repressed, not extinguished, throes of an almost universal convulsion, a narrative of the events of an often deeply-disturbed period, frequently offering somewhat similar features, must prove more than ordinarily acceptable. It is true, that a hasty glance at the passing history of European politics fills us with only a confused sentiment of conflicting forces, that seem to attract and repel the special atoms hither and thither with restless disorder; yet an attentive examination will not fail to show us that, influencing each vortex, and dominating over every other power, are the two antagonists that since the time of Luther have found a more equal battle-field,—the spirit of Reform, and the spirit of the Papacy. The nature of the struggle, in which the human race is engaged, is in the main the same now as when the Augustine monk of Wittenberg first reared the standard of the Reformation. In the organic revolts of every community of men, the actual principle contended for is that of freedom of thought, and the real foes are the partisans of priestly domination. Through all

ages the sacerdotal order have ever been the avowed or hidden opponents of all authority that does not originate with themselves, and the inveterate obstinacy the Roman hierarchy has displayed in promoting and establishing the supremacy of the Papal Church springs, as the unbroken tale of the Holy See demonstrates, from the determination to grasp at the most absolute temporal power. Claiming to be “lords over God’s heritage,” they deny all right of self-action, and only tolerate kings themselves as the tools of the universal despotism, to which they aspire. Even the enlightened and excellent men in their own ranks have been the foremost persecuted, and perhaps the most striking condemnation of the governmental system of the Papal Church is, that nearly all the great ecclesiastical reformers have been originally Romish priests themselves. If the bishop of Rome were only a spiritual head of a simple church organization, who can doubt that the great mass of the (Roman) Catholic clergy would gain immensely by the change, both in outward moral authority and internal discipline?

Nowhere is this arrogant assumption of a right to sole rule better seen than in this History of Protestantism in France; and nowhere has the resolution to attain the end been more unrelentingly pursued. To what extent a bigoted system will lead its followers, the early persecutions of the old Albigenses will show; but the renewal of the slaughter upon the inoffensive and industrious Vaudois for their adhesion to the cause of the Reformation, marks what little progress the Vatican, at whose instance it was perpetrated, had made in those Christian principles, of which it assumes to be the only veritable exponent: while the persecutions

inflicted upon the Protestants of France, in order to force them back into the Romish Church, continued in one form or another down to this very day, amply prove how vain it is to expect that the Church of Rome will ever abandon the notion of universal empire, that has always been its dream and aspiration.

But although the incarnation of ambitious priestcraft is to be found in the prince-prelates of the Holy See, the ministry of nearly every religious community is obnoxious to the charge in a greater or less degree as its constitution liberates it from the control of the laity. That this was the conviction of the early leaders of the Reformation is evident from the organization of their respective churches; and that the leaven has tainted the majority of the Protestant clergy of France is shown by their preference to be salaried by the State rather than to be free to recur to the independence of the admirable scheme of connexional union propounded by Calvin. The ultimate right and equality of the People, who form the brotherhood of Christians, is an essential principle of a Reformed Church, and the contrary practice has more retarded the spread of Protestantism than any other cause. To use the expression of M. Félice respecting the Reformed Churches of France, it would be unjust to lay the whole blame of the disasters of religion upon the enemies of the Reformation; the Protestants themselves must bear their due proportion. Like the Established Church of England and like the Wesleyan Connexion, the Reformed communion of France is most threatened with loss from this quarter, and if one or the other fail in that energy and earnestness, which respectively characterized them in the beginning, it is to be attributable to their departure

from the administrative institutions of the primitive Christians. The modern French Protestants may well deplore the sincere faith and fervid zeal of the early Calvinists, which re-acting upon their whole nature, rendered them as remarkable for their superiority in secular matters as in religious piety. If one were disposed to speculate upon the probable destinies of nations, and had certain events not happened, our imagination might picture a very different France in the present era; thus, had Henri-Quatre not apostatized, it is possible that the Huguenot party might have triumphed in the end; had the last siege of La Rochelle been delayed for two or three years, until a less doubtful friend of the new faith than our Charles I. wielded the power of England, the whole history of France for the last two centuries might have been changed; the principle of local self-government and strong political action, engendered by the efforts of the Huguenots to protect their liberties, would most probably have made France one of the freeëst nations of the world, have saved it from all its ruinous Revolutions, and possibly have given a wholly different aspect to the face of southern Europe.

Such was not, however, destined to be the fate of the Reformation in France, and far from being the arbiters of the fortunes of their native land, and the regenerators of Italy and Spain, the Reformed people have been reduced to become humble suitors to the State for an eleemosynary pittance to support their pastors. We cannot doubt that their condition will ultimately improve; for to hesitate to believe this, would be to fear for the progress of the human mind; but the present aspect of affairs is not promising. The establishment of the Empire, and the alliance of its chief with the Vatican, have, indeed, no semblance

of fixity; yet the connection between absolutism and the *parti prêtre* is so intimate, that it is to be dreaded serious discouragement will be offered to the Protestants. The law respecting political assemblies affords a convenient pretext for preventing the institution of new churches, and even for closing old ones, which might be made available against the Reformed congregations throughout the whole breadth of the land.

The principles of the Reformation have, in reality, raised a terror in the minds of the advocates of irresponsible government that will not be allayed, and we ought to awaken to the fact, that the causes of political and religious liberty are identical on the continent as in this country. Nevertheless, the present anomalous position of the Vatican cannot endure; but whether the support of popedom by the soldiery of Louis Napoleon be of short or long continuance, the effects must still be disastrous to the cause of the Papacy. The *prestige* of the Church of Rome daily wanes under such a sinister influence, and even the most zealous of her followers must question the propriety of an empire that cannot subsist without the aid of foreign bayonets, and has so little succeeded, even with all the authority of a paternal rule, often exercised by those whom she honours as saints, in gaining the affections of the people, that were it not for the sovereigns of the worst-governed nations in Europe,—Austria, the Sicilies, Spain, and France,—they would rise *en masse* against it. It is in Italy, therefore, that the great blow will be struck against the mental enslavement of the human race; and not until the bishop of Rome shall be reduced to his mere spiritual office, and himself and his court of cardinals be shorn of that mundane supremacy, which Jesus expressly denied to the

disciples, saying, “Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you,”—not until then will the consummation so devoutly to be wished for arrive.

That the late heroic rebellion of the Romans against the ecclesiastical tyranny under which they groan failed, although narrowly, of success, is to be regretted as a just revolt against an usurpation opposed alike to the injunctions of the Christian religion and to the dearest liberties of mankind. It is a consolation to believe that even as the fall of the Papacy was stayed by the hand of the most unscrupulous of mock believers, whom yet Pius IX. styles the very dear son of the Church (*carissimus in Christo filius noster*), it is only the brute power of material force that retains the pontiff on his tottering throne. The saying of the ancient king, that “Rome is to be fought in Rome,” has already had its purport illustrated. It is our blame that, sanctioning for worldly motives the interference of one people with another, when an open declaration that we will not suffer to be exercised on other nations that oppression we would repel, if attempted upon ourselves, would have averted and might still in other cases prevent the occasion altogether,—yes, it is a reproach to us that we have shared in the crime of having prolonged the despotism that darkens the lot of the fairest portion of the continent and millions of our fellow-beings, for whom may yet be in store, —and perchance also for ourselves,—the renewal of the worst crimes of spiritual despotism which this book records, and another instance of *the great fact* that Rome, in its intents and purposes, is, and ever will be, to the hour of its accomplished doom—SEMPER EADEM!



AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

This work was first sketched out several years ago. Different circumstances, and latterly, the general preoccupation of the country, have prevented the author from completing it sooner. The same causes will explain why he has comprised in a single volume a history which, if it were fully developed, would require several.

The book was, at the commencement, framed on a much more extensive plan. But the present epoch, with its uncertainties and its apprehensions, is unfavourable to lengthy undertakings. Hence all that will be found herein, is a simple abridgment of the rich and varied annals of the French Reformation.

To gain space, the indication of the sources applied to, has been reduced to the narrowest limit. It would have been easy to fill entire pages with what the Germans call the *littérature* of the subject. But these bibliographical details, while they must have occupied much room, would have been useful to the learned by profession alone, who do not require them; therefore, it is only when we have borrowed his own words from an author, or when we have related events, subject to controversy, that it has appeared necessary to cite our authorities.

The general histories of France, which we may suppose to be familiar to most of our readers, have also afforded an opportunity of abridging our own. A

few words have sufficed for whatever may be found everywhere, such as the wars of Protestantism in the sixteenth century, the intrigues of party, and court influences mixed up with religious struggles. To explain the succession of events, something of all this had to be told, but the simplest narration was all that could be required. The essential for us, was precisely that which other historians neglect to relate—the development, the life, the internal successes and reverses of the Reformed people. Instead of taking our point of observation without, we have chosen it from within. Here, indeed, is the *special* History of Protestantism, in which our literature was deficient.

Each one of the periods of the French Reformation has been treated, it is true, by ancient or recent writers; but there exists in our language no work that exhibits a condensed and altogether regular view of this history. There was, then, a void to fill up. We have undertaken the task, and we hope that this book, defective as it may be, will at least give some just idea of the affairs and the men of the Reformed communion of France.

It is sad to think how little the history of the Protestants is known in their own country, and even, it must be confessed, among the members of their own churches. Yet it offers chosen intellects and noble spirits for contemplation, great examples for imitation, and precious lessons to be gathered.

Protestantism has suffered from national opinion the fate of minorities, and of vanquished minorities. When it ceased to be feared, it ceased to be known, and under the favour of this disregard and indifference, every kind of prejudice against it has been received and believed. This is a denial of justice, which it ought not to accept, and a

misfortune, from which it ought to relieve itself. History is the common property of all.

Nevertheless, we treat here of only one of the two branches of French Protestantism. The Lutherans of Alsatia, or Christians of the Confession of Augsburg, annexed to our country from the reign of Louis XIV., and who form about a third of the total number of the Protestants, will be completely excluded from this book. They have a separate origin, language, and form of worship, and although all the disciples of the Reformation of the sixteenth century may be united by the most intimate ties, the followers of Luther and those of Calvin have distinct annals. The first have already in Alsatia more than one historian of note, and it was not for us to take a work in hand, which they are better able to accomplish. It is, therefore, of the Reformers, properly speaking, or of those Huguenots, whose name has so oft resounded in the France of old, that we desire to write.

No spirit of sect or of system must be looked for in this work. The latter is, perhaps, useful in a theological or a philosophical history; it allows us to measure all events and all opinions by one invariable standard, and to subordinate them to a high and controlling unity; but such has not been our design. Our office is that of a narrator rather than of a judge, and our purpose is to tell the history, not to make it speak in favour of a theory. One conceives that in ecclesiastical history generally, which has been told and re-told again and again, an author should endeavour to bring it back to a systematic point of view; that is the only way to give to his work a character of originality, and, so to speak, the reason for its existence. But for the history of the French Protestants, which has never been written as a

whole, it was first requisite to collect and arrange the facts in a simple, clear, and impartial manner, without adopting a type, which might have distorted their nature. Other writers will follow who, finding these facts, will re-construct them by means of philosophy or theology.

It was equally fitting that we should abstain from taking part in the questions, which divide Protestants among themselves. It was not for us to decide who was right or who wrong in these matters, and our pen would have betrayed our will, if, in the following pages, it could be supposed that any class of opinions would find an apology, or meet with an attack. Truth and justice are for all, as far as it has been possible for us to discern the true and the just: we could aspire to nothing less, and nothing more can be required of us.

This impartiality is not the neutrality of indifference or sloth, or of what is sometimes called *impersonality*. In the great struggles of Protestantism, we are on the side of the oppressed against the oppressor, of the victims against their executioners, of right against brute force, of equality against privilege, and of liberty against despotism. The principle of the inviolability of the human conscience, which the peoples of modern times have gathered from the Gospel, is ours; and we shall esteem ourselves amply rewarded for our efforts, if the perusal of this work shall inspire, together with the sentiment of the happy effects of the Christian life, a deeper abhorrence of all religious persecution, under whatever name or pretext it may seek to cloak itself.

Liberty of thought, liberty of faith, liberty of worship, under the safeguard and within the limits of

common right: complete equality of religious creeds, and even above that equality itself, charity, fraternal love, which feels for the erring while reprobating their error—these are our maxims. They have constantly guided us in our labours, and God grant that our conviction may pass in its entirety into the spirit and conscience of the reader! The generation of our day is still in too much need of teaching of this kind.

It was impossible to write this book without relating from period to period, the last excepted, deeds of frightful injustice and of terrible cruelty; for that is the history itself of Protestantism from its origin down to the eve of the Revolution of 1789. No Christian population has been so long persecuted as the Reformed people of France. The duty of the historian must be fulfilled; but wherever the task was painful, we have striven to extenuate, by insisting upon the piety and perseverance of the proscribed, much more than upon the crimes of the proscribes. In the midst of massacres, in the face of the scaffold and the stake, in the bloody expeditions against the gatherings in the wilderness, we have only glanced at the oppressors, and our eyes have dwelt upon the victims. This restraint has been of twofold benefit to us, both as a precept of charity, and as a rule of literary composition. Every work, which excites the mind without elevating it, is bad.

The old passions, besides, must be extinguished, not only among those whose forefathers underwent so many sufferings, but also in the heart of the men, who at the present time occupy the places of the most inveterate enemies of Protestantism. However the (Roman) Catholic clergy may declare itself immutable in its creeds and maxims, it is to be hoped

that this immutability does not apply to the principle of persecution. The advance of public morals has penetrated more or less everywhere, and the sword of intolerance, which has, alas! in disastrous days recoiled upon the priest himself, would, doubtless, fail to find a hand to wield it again.

The Reformers of France never would become in their country a Protestant Ireland. If they have too often stood apart from the great national family, this was their misfortune—not their fault. They did not separate themselves; they were driven forth; and each time the door has been opened, though it were but half way, they could, without betraying their sacred and inviolable obligations to God, return to the bosom of the nation, and they have done so with joy and sincerity. Now that the civil law is the same for all, they form in no sense, either near or afar off, a distinct political party, and they hold it as a point of honour to be confounded in that vast unity, which is the strength and the glory of France.

Theodore de Bèze said in his day to King Henry IV.: “My desire is, that Frenchmen should love one another.” This wish of the venerable Reformer is that of all Protestants, and truly, the circumstances which surround us, render it now more than ever an imperative duty. Not that we partake of the discouragement of many estimable men; we confide in the love of God, in the power of His Spirit, in the progress of the human race. Where others discover the seeds of decay, we behold the beginnings of a new and higher life. But the transition will be wearisome, the success difficult; and to secure a happier lot, there must be the full concurrence of all sincere Christians and all good citizens.

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INTRODUCTION.

The Reformation of the sixteenth century is the greatest event of modern times. It has remodelled everything in Protestant countries; and has modified almost everything in Roman Catholic countries—religious and moral doctrines, ecclesiastical and civil institutions, the arts and sciences, in such sort that it is impossible to advance a step in the investigation of an idea, or a fact whatsoever, without meeting this immense work face to face. The Reformation marks the starting-point of a new world: God alone knows its development and its end.

It is important to examine how, in the first years of the sixteenth century, it arose out of the intellectual wants and the general conscience, of mankind. It was at the same time the expression of a profound state of uneasiness, the means of a mighty improvement, and the pledge of a progress towards a better future.

The Papacy, without doubt, had rendered more than one service to Christianity in the barbarous ages. It would be unjust to refuse it the honour of having served as a centre of European unity, and of having often made right prevail over brute force. But gradually as the peoples advanced, Rome became less capable of leading them, and when she dared to erect herself as an impassable barrier before the double action of the spirit of God and the spirit of man, she received a wound which, notwithstanding

vain appearances, widens from generation to generation.

In matters of belief and of worship, Roman Catholicism had admitted, by ignorance or by design, many of the Pagan elements. Without denying the fundamental dogmas of Christianity, it had disfigured and mutilated them to the extent of rendering them difficult of recognition. It was the world, to say sooth, which, forcing *en masse* the doors of the Christian church, had borne in with it its demigods under the name of saints, its rites, its feasts, its consecrated spots, its lustral water, its sacerdotal system; everything, in fine, to the very insignia of its priests; so much so that polytheism survived itself, in great measure, under the garb of the religion of Christ.

This mass of errors and of superstitions had naturally extended itself during the long darkness of the Middle Age. Peoples and priests had each lent their hand. Out of the false traditions of Catholicism some new falsehood was seen to rise from time to time, and it is easy to mark in the history of the Church the date of all the great changes that Christianity has undergone. The most devoted defenders of the papal throne confess that the corruption was extreme at the outset of the sixteenth century. “Some years before the appearance of the Calvinist and Lutheran heresy,” says Bellarmine, “there existed scarcely any severity in the ecclesiastical laws, purity in manners, learning in sacred literature, respect for holy things, or religion.”[1]

Preaching, although very rare, contributed to thicken the darkness, it would seem, rather than to dispel it. Bossuet acknowledges this with precautions

which but half conceal his thoughts: “Many preachers preached only indulgences, pilgrimages, alms to the religious orders, and made the essence of piety to consist in these practices, which were but its accessories. They did not speak so much as they should have done of the grace of Jesus Christ.”[2]

The Bible was silent beneath the dust of old libraries. It was kept in some places fastened with an iron chain; sad image of the interdiction with which it was stricken in the Catholic world.

After having forbidden it to the faithful, the clergy, by a very simple consequence, had closed the Bible in their own schools. A short while before the Reformation, the professors of Germany had been prohibited from explaining the Holy Word in their public and private lectures. The original tongues of the Old and New Testament were, so to say, suspected of heresy; and when Luther raised his voice, it would have been difficult to find in the church of Rome any doctors capable of discussing with him the text of the Scriptures.

In this deep silence of the sacred authors, ignorance, prejudice, ambition, avarice, had free speech. The priest frequently used this liberty not for the glory of God, but of himself; and religion, destined to transform man into the image of his Creator, ended by transforming the Creator himself into the image of cupidinous and intolerant man.

Theology, after having shone with a splendid light in the brilliant days of scholasticism, had by degrees lost its ardour as well as its authority, and had become an enormous collection of curious and frivolous questions. Incessantly occupied with sharpening in puerile disputes the point of its logic, it no longer answered the wants of the human mind

any more than those of the human heart.

The masses of the people appeared to follow, in general, their accustomed way; but from habit and tradition, rather than from devotion. The enthusiasm of the Middle Age had evaporated, and it would have been vain to seek in the Church for those mighty inspirations, which caused all Europe to rise at the time of the crusades.

Some pious men dwelt in the presbyteries, in the cloisters, among the laity, striving to seize the truth through the veil with which it had been covered; but they were scattered, suspected, and cast down with grief.

Discipline had shared the alterations of doctrine. The pontiff of Rome having, under favour of the false Decretals, usurped the title and the functions of universal bishop, pretended to the exercise of most of the rights which belonged, in the first ages, to the heads of dioceses; and as he was not ubiquitous, as he was obedient to his passions or to his interests more than to his duties, he aggravated the abuses which he ought to have extirpated.

What the sovereign pontiff was to the bishops, the mendicant monks, the venders of indulgences, and the other vagabond agents of the Papacy, were to the simple curates and the parish priests. Regular and legitimate authority was compelled to give way to these intruders, who, while they promised to reinstate the flocks, did nothing but pervert them.

All was disorder and anarchy. A despotic power was at the summit of the Church; midway and below, were growing usurpations, scandalous and never-ceasing contests; Christianity had much less reason to complain of being too much governed, than of

being badly governed. Illusory in the ranks of the clergy, discipline had actually become a source of demoralization for the laity. To the long and severe penances of ancient times had succeeded the redemption of sins at a money price. If, at least, it had been necessary to pay for each transgression separately, it would yet have been necessary to number one's vices. The extreme evil was, that they might be redeemed all at once, they might be redeemed beforehand, for all one's lifetime, for all one's family, for all one's posterity, for a whole parish altogether. Thenceforward, there was no more authority. The absolution of the priest was derided, because absolution had already been paid for out of the purse; and the clerical power that Rome maintained on one side, she overthrew on the other.

The traffic of indulgences was carried on by the same means as ordinary barter; it had its contractors on a large scale, its directors and sub-directors, its offices, its tariffs, its travelling factors. Indulgences were vended by auction, at the beat of the drum, in the public places. They were sold by wholesale and by retail, and those agents were employed, who best knew the art of deceiving and plundering mankind.

It was, above all, this sacrilegious industry which gave the fatal blow to the Romish church. Nothing irritates a people so much as to find in religion less morality than in themselves; and this instinct is just. Every religion should ameliorate those who believe in it. When it depraves them, when it makes them descend beneath that condition in which they would be without it, its fall is certain; for it possesses no longer its essential and supreme reason of existence.

How, moreover, could the members of the clergy enforce a respect for moral duties, which they were

the first to transgress? We will not here recount the disgraceful and universal licentiousness so numerously attested by authentic declarations, among others by the *hundred grievances* which were presented to the diet of Nuremberg, in 1523, with the signature of a legate even of Pope Adrian. Many priests paid a public tax for the privilege of living in an unlawful commerce, and in many localities in Germany this disorder had been rendered obligatory, so that still greater offences might be avoided.

Besides indulgences, Rome had invented all kinds of methods for increasing its revenues: appellations, reservations, exemptions, provisions, dispensations, expectatives, annates. The gold of Europe would have been completely absorbed if the governments had not placed some barrier; and even the poorest nations were compelled to impoverish themselves yet more to gorge pontiffs, who, like the grave, never exclaimed—"It is enough."

The bishops and the heads of monastic orders did the same in the different provinces of Catholicity. Everything helped them to swell the possessions of the Church; peace and war, public triumphs and misfortunes, private successes and reverses, the faith of these, and the heresy of those. What they could not obtain from the liberality of the faithful, they sought in the spoliation of those who disbelieved. And so, as the grievances of Nuremberg state, the regular and secular clergy possessed in Germany one-half the territory; in France it held the third; elsewhere, still more. And the ecclesiastical domains being exempt from all taxation, priests and monks, without bearing the burdens of the state, monopolized all its benefits.

Not only did they enjoy enormous privileges for

their property; they had others for their persons. Every clerk was an anointed of the Lord, a sacred thing for the civil judge. No one had a right to place his hand upon him, until he had been tried, condemned, and degraded by the members of his own order. The clergy thus formed a society wholly distinct from the general society. It was a caste placed without and above the common law; its immunities prevailed over the sovereignty of justice, and authors entitled to our credence relate that wretches entered the sacerdotal order or the cloister, solely to commit crimes with impunity.

If the priests did not suffer the magistrates to attach them, they arrogated to themselves the right of interposing without end in the suits of the laity. Testaments and wills, marriages, the civil condition of children, and a host of other matters which were called mixed, were carried before their tribunal; so that a considerable part of justice depended upon the clergy, who themselves depended upon their peers and chief alone; an organization, useful perhaps in the times of ignorance, when none but ecclesiastics possessed any knowledge, but which, by perpetuating itself down to the sixteenth century, after the revival of letters, became the most iniquitous of prerogatives, the most intolerable of usurpations.

There are in the present day writers who draw a magnificent ideal of the state of Catholicism before Luther. But have they ever studied that epoch? And those who declaim with the greatest violence against the Reformation, would they suffer for one day the abuses it has destroyed?

And it must be said, for the honour of mankind, that from period to period, fresh and courageous

adversaries have arisen against each error, and each encroachment of the priestly power. In an early age, Vigilantius, and Claude of Turin; then, the Vaudois and the Albigenses; then, the Wickliffites, the Hussites, and the Brethren of Moravia and Bohemia —small and feeble communities—were crushed by the popes leagued with the princes, but who from their scaffolds and their stakes, transmitted to each other the sacred flame of primitive faith, until, reared aloft by the powerful hand of Luther, it spread afar its rays over the Christian world.

Another protestation, parallel to the preceding, and which has been styled Catholic Protestantism, had constantly manifested itself in the bosom of the Church itself, particularly after the appearance of the mystics of the Middle Age. Among the theologians, Bernard de Clairvaux, Gerson d'Ailly, Nicholas de Clémangis; among the poets, Dante and Petrarch; even councils held at Pisa, Constance, and Basle; men the most renowned for their piety and their character, for their genius and their learning, had raised the same cry: "A reform, a reform in the Church! A reform in the head and the members, in the faith and the manners!" But this Catholic movement always failed; because it never attacked the root of the evil. The secret of obtaining all—is it not that of desiring and daring all?

Whilst the Papacy persecuted the former of these protestations, and tried to seduce the other, a new enemy presented itself: the most redoubtable of all, because it could assume the most diverse forms; because it displayed itself everywhere at the same moment; because neither artifices nor tortures could subdue it. And what was this antagonist?—The human mind itself awakening from its long sleep.

The fifteenth century had restored to it the books of antiquity. It suddenly felt itself animated with an intense want of investigation and renewal; and resuming, at the same time, philosophy, history, poetry, the sciences, the arts, all the wonders of the most flourishing ages of Greece and ancient Rome, it was aware that it could and would march onward in its independence.

The discovery of printing came to help the revival of learning. The old world reappeared in its entirety at the same time that Christopher Columbus discovered a new one. More than three thousand writings were published from the year 1450 to the year 1520. There was a prodigious activity, which knew neither fatigue nor fear; and what could the Church oppose to this first expansion of the human mind, so happy and so proud of entering again upon the possession of itself? The martyrdom of Savonarola did not intimidate it; at the most it took a by-turn in the treatises of Pomponatius, to arrive at the same end. The Vatican, which had sometimes been so skilful, was not so in the face of this vast movement. Several popes succeeded each other, feeble, or covetous of money, or stained with the foulest crimes: Paul II., Sixtus IV., Innocent VIII., Alexander VI., Julius II. The last, Leo X., having the voluptuous tastes of the race of the Medici, to which he belonged, without sharing their grandeur or their courage,—a priest without theological learning, a pontiff without gravity, setting his buffoons to dispute about the immortality of the soul, and amusing himself with the frivolous diversions of the theatre, when Germany was on fire,—seems to have been chosen from on high to level the path of the Reformation.

Thus everything was ready. Scarcely do we place our foot upon the threshold of the sixteenth century, before we hear those hollow sounds which, in the moral world, as in the physical, announce the approach of the storm. The heart is oppressed, the mind is disturbed: something extraordinary, we know not what, is about to happen. Kings upon their thrones, the learned in their closets, professors in their chairs, pious men in their oratories, even warriors upon the field of battle, tremble and reveal, by brief words or acts of violence, the presentiments which pursue them.

In 1511, the emperor Maximilian and the king Louis XII. convoke a council at Pisa, in order to recall Julius II. to his duty, and to remedy the evils of the Church. Several cardinals attend, in spite of the prohibitions of the Vatican; and on the 21st of April, 1512, the pope Julius is suspended, as notoriously incorrigible and contumacious. “Arise, Cæsar,” write with one accord the members of this assembly to the emperor Maximilian: “Arise, be firm and watchful; the Church falls; the good are oppressed; and the wicked triumph.”

Julius II. opposed council with council, and assembled in the basilic of the Lateran the prelates who remained faithful to him. But even there, before this pontiff, who possessed no other knowledge than that of arms, Œgidius de Viterbo, general of the order of the Augustines, accuses the priests of having abandoned prayer for the sword, and of haunting, after battle, houses of prostitution. “Can we contemplate,” he asks, “without shedding tears of blood, the ignorance, the ambition, the immodesty, the impiety reigning in the holy places, whence they ought to be for ever banished?”

As they hearkened to these cries of distress descending from such high places, the troubled nations appealed to a new general council, as if experience had not taught them that these great assemblies, so prodigal of words, were barren for a work of reformation! But the multitude knew not whence deliverance might come, and, in its anxiety, it clung to the illusions of its old recollections.

In the midst of this universal and restless expectation, the enemy grew bold. Reuchlin maintained the rights of knowledge against the barbarous teaching of the universities. The noble Ulrich of Hutten, the representative of chivalry in this grand struggle, announced by appeals from the sword to public reason, the advent of a new civilization. Erasmus, the Voltaire of the epoch, excited the laughter of kings, lords, cardinals, and even the pope, at the expense of the monks and doctors, and opened the door by which the modern world must pass. Then Martin Luther appeared.

It is not part of my task to write the history of the Reformer. Sent to Rome respecting the affairs of the order of the Augustines, he found there a vast and profound incredulity, a revolting immorality. Luther returned to Germany heartbroken, his conscience agitated with bitter doubts. An old Bible, which he discovered in the convent of Erfurt, revealed to him a religion wholly different from that which he had been taught. Still the thought was not yet born within him to undertake the reformation of the Church. Pastor and professor at Wittenberg, he confined himself to spreading around him healthy doctrines and good examples.

But John Tetzel, a vender of indulgences, audacious to effrontery, covetous to cynicism,

whilom condemned to prison for notorious crimes, and menaced with drowning in the Inn by the inhabitants of the Tyrol, dared to interpose his vile traffic between the word of Luther and the souls confided to him. Luther became indignant: he re-perused his Bible; and in 1517 he affixed to the door of the cathedral of Wittenberg those ninety-five theses destined soon to raise throughout all Europe such a formidable echo.

It was the revolt of his conscience, which made him seek in the Bible fresh weapons against the church of Rome. It is the same moral revolt, which will gather around him thousands, and soon millions of disciples. Luther has placed himself at the head of all the irritated people of worth.

To the dogma of justification by works, which has produced so many extravagant practices and shameful excesses, he opposes justification through faith in the redemption of Jesus Christ. All his doctrine is summed up in these words of the apostle Paul: “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.”[3] This doctrine had the double advantage of resting for support upon Biblical texts, and of overthrowing by the same blow indulgences, supererogatory works of saints, pilgrimages, flagellations, penances, artificial merits. It thus accorded with the highest ideas, with the best religions, the intellectual and moral aspirations of the era.

Luther had taken a first step. He again appealed, nevertheless, from the pope ill-informed, to the pope better advised. But instead of an ordinance of reformation, Rome sent a bull of excommunication. The doctor of Wittenberg solemnly burnt it, with the Decretals of the Holy See, on the 10th of December,

1520, in the presence of innumerable spectators. The issuing flame lighted up all Europe, and cast a sinister glare upon the walls of the Vatican.

On the 17th of April, 1521, Luther appeared before the diet of Worms. He had against him the emperor and the pope, the two greatest powers of the universe; but he had for him the living forces of his age. When he was summoned to retract, he invoked the testimony of the Bible. If he were convicted of error by that, he would recant; if not, no! The envoy of Rome refused to open the book which condemned the papacy, and Charles V. began to perceive that there is here below something superior to the power of the sword.

The work advanced. It is interesting to observe that Luther did not arrive with a system complete and defined. He came with a first grievance against the abuses of the Romish church, then with a second; with one hand upsetting by degrees the old edifice of Catholicism, whilst with the other he constructed the new edifice; he did not himself apprehend the extent of his mission but as he gradually fulfilled it.

After the upraising of his conscience, came the reordering of doctrine; after doctrine, the reform of worship; after worship, the establishment of new ecclesiastical institutions. Luther never went beyond his convictions, or outstepped the movement of public opinion. It was thus that he retained under his standard those who had gathered around it, and that he was aided in his labour by the public thought. Luther gave much to the contemporaneous generation, and perhaps received yet more than he gave.

One of his most laborious and useful works was the translation of the Bible into German. It fixed the

language of his country, and made stable its faith.

Eight years after the publication of the ninety-five theses, in 1525, Luther espoused Catherine de Bora, being persuaded, with Æneas Sylvius, who became pope under the name of Pius II., that if there are many strong reasons for interdicting priests from marrying, there are some much stronger for permitting it. In the performance of this solemn act, the Reformer equally avoided a precipitation which might have compromised his character, and a delay which might have degenerated or weakened his maxims. He was then forty-two years of age, and on the avowal of his opponents themselves, "he had spent all his youth without reproach, in continence."[4]

In 1530, Melancthon, the fellow-labourer of Luther, presented to the diet of Augsburg, with his accord, the Confession of Faith, which, during ages, has served as a rallying-point to the Lutheran reformation. The Protestants showed in this way, that they had shaken off the yoke of Rome only to accept, without reservation, the injunctions of the Bible, such at least as they understood them according to the measure of the intelligence of their time.

There were manifest and sore trials in the life of Luther: the excesses of the Anabaptists, the insurrection of the peasants, the passions of the princes, who mingled with religious questions political calculations; the over-zeal of some of his followers, the weakness and timidity of many others. He was often grieved, never cast down; for the same spirit of faith which had opened to him the road, led him along it with unswerving constancy.

Luther died in 1546. Some hours before his end, he

said: “Jonas, Cælius, and you who are present, pray for the cause of God and of his Gospel; for the council of Trent and the pope rage furiously.” And when the cold sweat seized him, he began to pray in these terms: “O my beloved Father in heaven, God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, God of all comfort, I thank thee that thou hast revealed to me thy dear Son Jesus Christ, in whom I believe, whom I have preached and confessed, whom I have loved and glorified. I pray thee, Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on my poor soul.” Then he repeated thrice in Latin: “Father, I return my spirit into thy hands. Thou hast redeemed me, O Eternal God of truth.” Then, without agony, without effort, he breathed his last.

While the Reformation changed the face of Germany, it penetrated also into the mountains and the valleys of Switzerland. It had even appeared there before. Ulrich Zwinglius was encouraged and fortified by the words of Luther, but he had not waited for them. “I began to preach the Gospel in the year of grace 1516,” he wrote; “that is to say, when the name of Luther had not yet been pronounced in our country. It is not from Luther I have learned the doctrine of Christ; it is from the Word of God.”

Another seller of indulgences, Bernardine Samson, drove Zwinglius, in 1518, to declare himself openly. Ever, we see, the rebellion of conscience against the disorders of Catholic authority. The Reformation was a protestation of outraged morality, before it was a religious revival.

This unfrocked Carmelite had brought from Italy an impudence which provoked the indignation of vice itself. “I can pardon every sin,” he cried; “heaven and hell are submitted to my power, and I

sell the favours of Jesus Christ to whomsoever will buy them for ready money." He boasted of having carried off enormous sums from a poor country. When there was a lack of coin, he took in exchange for his papal bulls, plate of silver and gold. He made his acolytes shout to the multitude that pressed around his stalls: "Hinder not each other. Let those come first who have money; we will try afterwards to content those who have none."

Ulrich Zwinglius, from that time, attacked the power of the pope, the penitential sacrament, the merit of ceremonial works, the sacrifice of the Mass, abstinence from flesh, the celibacy of priests; gradually growing more firm and more decided as the public voice answered his with increasing energy.

The Swiss Reformer was modest, affable, popular, and of irreproachable life. He had a profound knowledge of the Scriptures, a living faith, a solid erudition, clear ideas, a simple and precise language, an activity without limit. Stored with the Greek and Roman literature, and full of admiration for the great men of antiquity, he had some opinions which appeared novel and over-bold in his time. Zwinglius admitted, like many of the old fathers of the Church, the permanent and universal action of the divine spirit on humanity. "Plato," said he, "also drank of the divine fountain: and if the two Catos, if Camillus and Scipio, had not been truly religious, would they have been so magnanimous?"[5]

Called to Zurich, he taught there, not what he had received from the Romish tradition, but what he had gathered from the Bible. "This is the preacher of truth," said he to the magistrates; "it announces to you things as they are." And from the year 1520, the

council of Zurich published an ordinance, enjoining upon their ecclesiastics not to preach anything which was not found in the Holy Scriptures.

Three years after, Pope Adrian, seeing the growing authority of Zwinglius, endeavoured to gain him over. He sent him a letter, in which he complimented him upon his excellent virtues, and directed his legate to offer him *everything short of the pontifical throne*. Adrian knew the worth of the man, not his character. At the very moment when such high dignities were offered to him, Zwinglius was victoriously disputing at Zurich against the delegates of the bishop of Constance.

Other debates were commenced in the presence of the magistrates and of the people. At last, on the 12th of April, 1525, an ordinance for abolishing the Mass and celebrating the communion according to the simplicity of the Gospel appeared.

The difference of the age and manners should be noticed here. In the sixteenth century, the civil power decided upon the change of religion; in the nineteenth century this would be thought an intolerable usurpation. As civilization advances, it gradually diminishes, in spiritual matters, the authority of the state, and increases that of the individual.

The Helvetic cantons having taken different sides, some that of Rome, others that of the Reformation, a war of religion, the worst of all wars, broke out among them. It was an ancient custom for the chief pastor of Zurich to accompany the army. Zwinglius conformed to the practice. The historian Ruchat relates that he marched as if he were conducted to death, and that those who watched his demeanour observed that he ceased not to pray to God to guard

in safe-keeping his soul and the church.

On the 11th of October, 1531, he was struck down on the battle-field of Cappel. He regained his feet, but, pressed by the crowd of fugitives, he thrice fell. “Alas, what misfortune is this?” he cried. “Well! they may kill the body, but they cannot slay the soul.” These were the last words he could articulate. Stretched upon his back, with joined hands, and eyes bent on heaven, the motion of his lips alone showed that he prayed. Some soldiers having lifted him up without knowing who he was, asked if he wished to confess, and invoke the Virgin and the saints. He indicated his dissent by a sign of the head, and upraising his eyes, continued his silent prayers. “*It is an obstinate heretic!*” shouted the soldiers, and an officer stabbing him in the throat with a pike, put an end to his existence. According to some, Ulrich Zwinglius was forty-four years of age; according to others, forty-seven.

Many different judgments have been passed upon this tragic end, and we may still see in them the change of opinions. Our times would, at least, deplore the death of a minister of the Gospel in the midst of a scene of carnage: such was not the manner of thinking three centuries ago. “Discharging the duties of his ministry in the army, Zwinglius,” says Theodore de Bèze, “was slain in battle, and his body was burnt by the enemy: God thus honouring his servant with a double crown, seeing that a man could not die after a more honourable and more holy fashion, than by losing this corruptible life for the safety of his country, and for the glory of God.”[6]

In spite of checks of more than one kind, the Reformation spread rapidly throughout a great part of Europe, and took root.

In Germany, Saxony, Hesse, Brandenburg, the Palatinate, Pomerania, many secondary states, and nearly all the free towns; in the east, the majority of the population of Hungary; in the north, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and a part of Poland, burst asunder the chains of Roman Catholicism.

In England and Scotland, two distinct movements led the people to the Protestant faith: one guided by King Henry VIII., the other by the pastor John Knox. Hence, the diversity of principles and organization subsisting at the present day.

The Reformation penetrated into the heart of Europe, but could not establish itself. In Spain, the long struggle with the Moors had identified Catholicism with the national mind, and the Inquisition stood firm, supported by popular fanaticism. In Italy, the scepticism of the learned, the countless ramifications of the clergy, the interests of a multitude of families engaged in the maintenance of the old ecclesiastical order, the passion of the masses for the fine arts, and the pomp of the Romish worship, hindered the progress of Protestantism.

At the gates of France, Switzerland, on one side, with a few small bordering states, Alsace, Lorraine, the country of Montbéliard, which have since become French provinces; and on the other side, Flanders and Holland, listened with sympathy to the preaching of the new ideas. Thus the Reformation spread around all the frontiers of France, while it strove to penetrate and overrun it within.

We reach at length the history, which forms the subject of this book. It will place before our eyes great triumphs followed by great catastrophes, and fearful persecutions, only to be surpassed by the constancy of the victims. It is, altogether, one of the

most important chapters in the annals of the French nation, and one of the most interesting pages of the Reformation.

HISTORY

OF THE

PROTESTANTS OF FRANCE.

BOOK I.

FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE REFORMATION IN FRANCE TO THE OPENING OF THE CONFERENCE OF POISSY. (1521-1561.)

I.

Meaux was the first town in France that heard the doctrines of the Reformation publicly expounded. This was in 1521, four years after Luther had affixed his theses against indulgences upon the doors of his cathedral, and the very year in which he appeared before the diet of Worms.

Two preachers attracted, beyond all others, the attention of the inhabitants of Meaux: Jacques Lefevre and Guillaume Farel; the one aged nearly seventy, but still full of activity in a green old age; the other, young, decided, ardent, and, according to the testimony of his contemporaries, making the public places and the temples resound with a voice

of thunder.

Jacques Lefevre was born at Etaples, a small town of Picardy. Endowed with an expansive and inquiring mind, he had embraced all things in his studies,—the ancient tongues, *belles lettres*, history, mathematics, philosophy, theology; and in the course of his long travels, he had acquired everything that could be learned at the end of the fifteenth century. On his return to France, he was nominated to a professorship in the university of Paris, and gathered round his chair a numerous body of scholars. The doctors of the Sorbonne, distrustful of his learning, and jealous of his reputation, watched him with a hostile eye. Yet he displayed great devotion, being one of the most assiduous at mass, and at processions, passing whole hours at the foot of the images of Mary, and delighting in adorning them with flowers.

Lefevre had even undertaken to rewrite the Legend of the Saints, but he did not reach the end; for having attentively read the Bible to complete his work, he discovered that the holiness of most of the heroes of the Roman calendar bears but very little resemblance to the ideal of Christian virtue. Once on this new ground, he never quitted it; and always as sincere with his students as with his conscience, he openly attacked some of the errors of the (Roman) Catholic Church. To the justification of outward works he opposed justification by faith, and announced the advent of a new birth in the religion of the people. This happened in 1512.

It is important to notice these dates, because they prove that the notions of reform, not only in worship, or in discipline, but in the very fundamental principles, manifested themselves at the same time in

several places, without its being possible that the men, who put themselves at the head of the movement, could have acted in concert. When a political or religious revolution is ripe, it appears on all sides, and no one can say who was the first to move in it.

Among those who heard the new opinions of Jacques Lefevre with avidity, was Guillaume Farel, whom we have already named. Born near Gap in 1489, and instructed in the faithful observance of devout practices, he had sought in them, like his master, peace of heart. Night and day, as he has himself related it in a confession addressed *to all lords and peoples*, he invoked the Virgin and the saints; he scrupulously conformed to the fasts prescribed by the Church, held the pontiff of Rome to be a god upon earth, saw in the priests the sole channel of all celestial blessings, and treated as infidels whoever did not exhibit an ardour similar to his own.

When he heard his venerated master teach that these practices were of small avail, and that salvation comes from faith in Jesus Christ, he experienced a deep agitation. The combat was long and terrible. On one side were the lessons and the habits of his home, so many recollections, so many prayers, so many hopes! On the other, the declarations of the Bible, the duty of subjecting everything to the search after truth, the promise of everlasting redemption. He studied the original tongues, in order to seize more correctly the sense of the Scriptures, and after the pains of the struggle, he became fixed in new and firmer convictions.

Farel and Lefevre conceived for each other a close friendship, because there was at the same time

between them a similarity of principles, and a contrast of character. The old man moderated the impetuosity of the youth, and the latter strengthened the somewhat timid heart of his senior. The one inclined toward mystic speculation, the other to action, and they mutually bestowed upon one another that of which each was deficient.

There was at Meaux a third person, of higher rank, who encouraged them by his countenance and his words. This was the bishop himself, Guillaume Briçonnet, count of Montbrun, formerly ambassador of Francis I. to the Holy See. Like Luther, he had brought back with him from Rome little esteem for the papacy, and without desiring a complete secession (as we shall see), he sought to correct its abuses.

When he returned to his diocese, he was disgusted with the disorders which reigned there. Most of the curates appropriated the revenues of their benefices, without discharging the duties. They generally dwelt in Paris, spending their money in licentious living, and sending in their place wretched vicars without instruction or authority. Then, on the occurrence of the high feasts, came the mendicant monks, who, preaching from parish to parish, disgraced the pulpit by low buffooneries, and troubled themselves less about edifying the faithful than about filling their scrip.

Briçonnet attempted to put an end to these scandals, and to compel the curates to reside. As their only answer, they commenced actions against him before the metropolitan. Then the bishop, turning towards men, who did not belong to his clergy, called around him, not only Lefevre d'Etaples and Farel, but also Michel d'Arande, Gérard Roussel,

François Vatable, professors or priests of exemplary conduct, who agreed in teaching a purified religion.

At first their preaching began in private assemblies; then, their courage increasing with the number of their auditors, they ascended the public pulpits. The bishop preached in his turn; and as if he had a presentiment that he would deny himself in the day of persecution, “he had, in preaching, begged the people, that if he ever changed his opinion, they would take heed not to change theirs like him.”[7]

On hearing these discourses, which invited them to give, not their purse to the Church, but their heart to God, the surprise of the inhabitants of Meaux became extreme. They were, in general, mechanics, wool-carders, fullers, cloth-workers, and other artisans. The people flocked to the churches from the town and surrounding country, and there was no talk but of the new doctors.

Desirous of basing their teaching upon the only authority recognised by the Reformation, Lefevre d’Etaples and Briçonnet published the four Gospels in French. The bishop commanded his receiver to distribute them gratuitously to the poor, and to do so, *spared*, says Crespin, *neither gold nor silver*. Every one began to read them. Sundays and feast-days were devoted to this study. The Testament was even carried into the fields and workshops, to be at hand at meal-times; and these poor people asked each other: “How can they help us, these saints, when they have so much to do to help themselves? Our only mediator is Jesus Christ.”

As they became serious in their religious views, a reformation of manners followed. Blasphemy, drunkenness, quarrels, disorders of all kinds, gave way to a pure and more decent habit of living. The

movement spread far and near. The day-labourers of Picardy and other places, who came at harvest-time to work in the neighbourhood of Meaux, returned home with the seeds of the doctrines they had heard preached. Hence the beginnings of several churches. This influence was so great, that it became a proverbial way of speaking in France, in the first half of the sixteenth century, to designate all the opponents of Rome by the name of heretics of Meaux.

At the same period, Briçonnet sent the translation of the Bible to the sister of Francis I., Marguérite de Valois, who read and caused it to be read by those around her. Everything thus augured a very rapid success for the French Reformation, when the hand of persecution interfered to arrest it.

II.

The priests and monks of the diocese of Meaux, seeing their credit daily weakened, and their revenues diminishing, carried their complaints before the Sorbonne. They met with a favourable reception. The Sorbonne, railed at by men of letters, and attacked by the innovators, was in the difficult position of an ancient institution outstripped by public opinion. It felt that if it did not hasten to strike a great blow, it would be lost.

At the head of this faculty of theology was one Noël Beda, or Bedier, a doctor with no great learning, but active, bold, sharp in disputation, capable of upsetting everything for a theological point, and ready to look to the populace for support, in the absence of more creditable allies. His acolytes were the Masters Duchène and Lecouturier, who wholly swayed their brethren by the violence of their passions and their language.

Luther was invited to the Sorbonne, in 1521, for an examination of his book upon the *Captivity of Babylon*. This company declared that his doctrine was blasphemous, insolent, impious, shameful, and that it ought to be opposed with no other arguments than fire and sword. They compared Luther to the great heresiarchs, and to Mahomet himself, and demanded that he should be compelled by every possible means to make a public retractation. The mild Melancthon forgot his accustomed moderation in answering this sentence, which he termed *the mad decree of the theologasters of Paris*. “How unfortunate is France,” he said, “to have such doctors as these!”

The theologians of the Sorbonne received the

complainants of Meaux with open arms, and as a bishop was implicated in the cause, they demanded that the Parliament of Paris should interpose with a strong hand.

The Parliament had no affection for the monks, and distrusted the priests. It had maintained and defended against them, with persevering energy, the rights of lay jurisdiction. But it held for a fundamental maxim of the state this motto of the olden times: *Une foi, une loi, un roi*;—one faith, one law, one king,—and did not believe that there ought to be tolerated in the same country two religions, any more than two governments.

The chancellor, Antoine Duprat, used all his authority to urge the magistrature to violent measures—a man without religion, without morals, bishop and archbishop; without having ever put foot in his dioceses, inventor of the venality of incumbencies, a subscriber to the Concordat which excited the indignation of the Parliaments and even of the clergy, elected cardinal for having humiliated the kingdom before the Holy See—he accused himself on his death-bed of having followed no other law than his own interest, and the interest of his king only next to his own. Antoine Duprat had amassed enormous riches; and when he built, at the Hôtel Dieu of Paris, the new hall for the sick, Francis I. said, “He must enlarge it indeed, if it is to hold all the poor he has made.”

The court, which desired the support of the pope in the Italian wars, also favoured the spirit of persecution. Louise de Savoie, who governed the kingdom in the absence of her son, then a prisoner at Madrid, proposed, in 1523, the following question to the Sorbonne: *By what means the damnable doctrine of*

Luther might be crushed and extirpated from this very-Christian kingdom, and utterly purged therefrom. Beda and his coadjutors replied, that the heresy must be persecuted with the extremest rigour; if not, there would result a great injury to the honour of the king and of Madame Louise de Savoie; and that it was the opinion of many, it had already been borne with too long. These theologians took care, we see, to mix up the cause of the throne with their own.

Pope Clement VII. had recourse, two years after, to the same tactics: "It behoves," he wrote to the Parliament of Paris, "in this great and marvellous disorder, which flows from the rage of Satan and from the rage and wickedness of his imps, that all the world should strive their utmost to guard the common safety, seeing that this abomination would not only embroil and destroy religion, but moreover all principality, nobility, laws, orders, and degrees."

The clergy held councils at Paris, under the presidency of the cardinal Duprat, and at Bourges under that of the archbishop François de Tournon, at which the Reformers were accused of having plotted an *execrable conjuration*, and the very-Christian king was exhorted to smother in his dominions these *viperous dogmas*. The obstinate heretics were to be exterminated, and the less guilty to undergo in prison a perpetual penitence, with *the bread of grief and the water of affliction*.

We have somewhat anticipated our recital, in order to show who were the first authors of persecution in France. It will be seen that Italy played the chief part therein, by means of the regent, Louise de Savoie, with the cardinals, who are above all Roman princes, and with the monks and the priests, who profess to be the subjects of the Holy

See, before any tie to their own country. This observation will reappear in different parts of this history, and we shall prove in its place, that the massacre of St. Bartholomew was, to use the expression of a modern writer, an *Italian crime*. Let us return now to the church of Meaux.

The bishop of Briçonnet at first made head against the storm: he had even the hardihood to call the Sorbonnists Pharisees and hypocrites; but this firmness was of short duration; and when he found that he would have to answer for his acts before the Parliament, he retreated. It is unknown to what extent he abjured the faith he had preached. Everything was conducted with closed doors before a commission composed of two clerical counsellors, and of two lay counsellors of the Parliament. After having been condemned to pay a fine of two hundred livres, Briçonnet returned to his diocese, and tried so to live that there should be no more question about him (1523-1525).

The new converts of Meaux were more resolute. One of them, Jean Leclerc, having affixed a placard to the cathedral door, in which he accused the pope of being Antichrist, was condemned, in 1523, to be whipped during three days in the crossways of the town, and branded on the forehead. When the executioner imprinted on him the stamp of infamy, a voice resounded from the crowd, saying, “Long live Jesus Christ and his tokens!” The astonished people looked around: it was the voice of his mother.

The following year Jean Leclerc suffered martyrdom at Metz, which had not yet become a town of France.

The first of those who were burned for heresy within the old limits of the kingdom, was a native of

Boulogne, Jacques Pauvent, or Pavannes. A disciple of Lefevre, whom he had accompanied to Meaux, he was accused of having written theses against purgatory, the invocation of the Virgin and of the saints, and holy water. Crespin says: “He was a man of great earnestness and integrity.”[8]

He was condemned, in 1524, to be burned alive in the Place de Grève. Pavannes, yet a young man, had, in a moment of weakness, uttered a kind of recantation. But he soon regained his courage, and walked to execution with a calm front, happier to die confessing his faith, than to live by denying it. At the stake, he discoursed on the sacrament of the supper with so much power, that a doctor said: “I would that Pavannes had not spoken, even had it cost the Church a million of gold.”

The executions multiplied. One of the most illustrious victims of those times was Louis de Berquin, of whom Theodore de Bèze has said, doubtless with some exaggeration, that he would have been another Luther for France, if he had found in Francis I. another Elector of Saxony. The history of his life and death throws a great light upon the early days of the Reformation in France.

Louis de Berquin came of a noble family of Artois. Unlike the knights of old, acquainted only with the helm and the sword, he applied himself without intermission to exercises of the mind: frank, loyal, openhearted, generous to the poor, he arrived at the age of forty, without having been married, or incurred the slightest suspicion of incontinence: *a wonderfully rare thing among courtiers*, says an old chronicle.

Like Lefevre and Farel, he was very devout.

"Before the Lord had given him to know His Gospel, he was," according to Crespin's recital, "a great partisan of the papistical constitutions, a constant auditor of masses and sermons, and an observer of fasts and feast-days.... The doctrine of Luther, then quite new in France, he held in utter abomination." (p. 96.)

But two things detached him from (Roman) Catholicism. His enlightened mind despised the gross ignorance of the doctors of the Sorbonne; his guileless heart revolted against their dark manœuvres; and as he had free speech at the court, he descanted unconstrainedly before Francis I., who entertained a great affection for him and for his character, and also on account of his contempt for the monks.

A controversy which he held on scholastic subtleties with Doctor Duchène, or Master of Quercû, as he was called, led him to open the Bible. Berquin was altogether astonished not to find therein what he sought, and to discover what he did not seek,—nothing about the invocation of the Virgin Mary; nothing about many of the dogmas considered fundamental in the Romish church; yet, on the other side, important articles of which Rome scarce makes mention in her formularies. What he thought thereupon, the knight declared by word of mouth and by writing. The Sorbonnists, eager to catch him at fault, denounced him before the Parliament in 1523, and annexed to their complaints some extracts from his books, of which they had made *venom, after the manner of spiders*, says again our chronicle. But how, upon such complaints, could they condemn a councillor and a favourite of the king? He was acquitted. The doctors of the Sorbonne pretended

that this was a favour, which should excite him to repentance; Berquin answered, it was simply justice that had been done.

The quarrel increased in bitterness. The knight having applied himself to translate some treatises of Luther and Melancthon, Noël Beda and his underlings made a seizure of his library. New complaint arose before the Parliament, and citation before the bishop of Paris. Fortunately Francis removed the matter before his council, and restored Berquin to freedom, with an exhortation to be more prudent for the future.

But to this he paid no heed; strong convictions never keep silence. Then followed the third imprisonment of Berquin. This time, the Sorbonnists hoped he would not escape them. Francis I. was at Madrid. Louise de Savoie supported the persecutors. The Parliament was resolved to proceed to extremities. The days of Berquin were already numbered, when a royal order, dated the 1st of April, 1526, commanded the suspension of the matter until the king's return.

When again at liberty, the lukewarm and the timid beset him with their counsel. Erasmus, in particular, who, according to the historians of his time, wished *to remain neutral between the Gospel and Popery, and to swim between two waters*, having learned that he was about to publish a translation of one of his Latin works, with the addition of notes, wrote to him letter upon letter, to persuade him to desist. "Leave these hornets alone," he said; "above all, do not mix me up in these things. My burden is already heavy enough. If it is your pleasure to dispute, be it so; as for me, I have no desire of the kind." And elsewhere: "Ask for an embassy to some foreign country: travel in

Germany. You know Beda and his familiars; a thousand-headed hydra is shooting out its venom on all sides. The name of your enemies is legion. Were your cause better than that of Jesus Christ, they will not let you go until they have brought you to a cruel end. Do not trust in the protection of the king. But in any case, do not commit me with The Faculty of Theology."[9]

Erasmus had exhausted his common-place rhetoric to dissuade the brave knight. "And do you know how much I effected?" he naively asked one of his friends; "I have redoubled his courage." In effect, Berquin resolved to adopt the offensive, and like the ancient king, to attack Rome in Rome itself. He drew out from the books of Beda and his brethren, twelve propositions, which he accused before Francis of being false, contrary to the Bible, and heretical.

The outcry was tremendous. What! even the defenders of the faith, the pillars of the Church, taxed with heresy by a Lutheran, who had deserved death a thousand times! and after having prosecuted others, reduced to justify themselves!

The king, who was not sorry to humiliate these turbulent doctors, wrote to the Sorbonne, commanding them to censure the twelve propositions denounced by Berquin, or to establish them upon texts of the Bible. The matter was assuming a grave turn, and no one knows what might have happened, if an image of the Virgin had not been mutilated at that time in one of the quarters of Paris.

The Sorbonnists immediately laid hold of the accident. "It is a vast plot; it is," they cried, "a great conspiracy against religion, against the prince, against the order and tranquillity of the country! All

laws will be overthrown, all dignities abolished! This is the fruit of the doctrines preached by Berquin!" At the cries of the Sorbonne and of the priests, the Parliament, the people, the king himself, are greatly excited. Death to the image-breakers! No quarter to the heretics! And Berquin is in prison a fourth time!

Twelve commissioners, delegated by the Parliament, condemn him to make a public abjuration, then to remain incarcerated for the rest of his life, after having had his tongue pierced with a hot iron. "I appeal to the king," exclaimed Berquin. "If you do not submit to our sentence," replied one of the judges, "we will find means to stop your appeals for ever." "I would rather die," said Berquin, "than only approve by my silence that the truth is thus condemned." "Let him then be strangled and burned upon the Place de Grève!" said the judges with one voice.

The execution was delayed until Francis was absent; for it was feared lest a last remnant of affection should be awakened in the heart of the monarch for his loyal servant. On the 10th of November, 1539, six hundred soldiers escorted Berquin to the place of execution. He showed no sign of depression. "You would have said" (it is Erasmus, who recounts it on the testimony of an eyewitness), "that he was in a library pursuing his studies, or in a temple meditating upon things divine. When the executioner, with husky voice, read to him his sentence, he never changed countenance. He alighted from the tumbril with a firm step. His was not the brutal indifference of the hardened criminal; it was the serenity, the peace of a good conscience."

Berquin tried to speak to the people. He was not heard; the monks had posted bands of wretches to

drown his voice with their clamour. Thus the Sorbonne of 1529 gave the populace of Paris of 1793 the dastard example of smothering upon the scaffold the sacred words of the dying.

After the execution, Doctor Merlin, the grand penitentiary, said aloud before the people, that no one in France for perchance a hundred years had died so good a Christian.

III.

In spite of the persecutions, a great number of Lutherans had remained in the town of Meaux.[10]

These faithful, deserted by their preachers, and disavowed by the bishop, assembled in secret. An isolated hut, the garret of a woolcarder, the cover of a wood, anything sufficed, so that they might read the Scriptures and pray together. From time to time, one of them, torn from his humble asylum, went to seal his faith with his blood.

The preachers were dispersed. Jacques Lefevre, after long journeyings, terminated his career at Nérac, under the protection of Marguérite de Valois. Too old to play an active part in the French Reformation, he followed its progress from afar. On his death-bed, he said: “I leave my body to the earth, my soul to God, and my goods to the poor.” These words were carved, it is said, upon his gravestone.

Guillaume Farel was neither of an age nor character to be stopped by persecution. On quitting Meaux, he went to preach the Gospel in the mountains of Dauphiny. Three of his brothers shared his faith. Encouraged by this success, he went preaching from town to town and place to place.

His appeals agitating the whole country, the priests sought to excite it against him; but his ardour increased with the peril. Wherever there was a place to plant his foot,—on the border of the rivers, on the points of the rocks, in the bed of the torrents,—he found one to announce the new doctrine. If he was threatened, he stood firm; if surrounded, he escaped; if thrust from one spot, he reappeared in another. At last, when he saw himself environed on all sides, he

retreated by mountain-paths into Switzerland, and arrived at Basle in the commencement of the year 1524. Here, to supply the deficiency of the living word, he multiplied the written word, and caused thousands of New Testaments to be printed and disseminated through France by the hands of pedlars. The Bible is a preacher which may be also burned, no doubt, but it is a preacher which rises again from its ashes.

Here and there other missionaries of the Reformation arose. History must preserve their names: at Grenoble, Pierre de Sebville; at Lyon, Amédée Maigret; at Mâçon, Michel d'Arande; at Annonay, Etienne Machopolis and Etienne Renier; at Bourges and Orleans, Melchior Wolmar, a learned Hellenist from Germany; at Toulouse, Jean de Caturce, a licentiate and professor of law.

The last suffered martyrdom, and its circumstances are memorable. Three capital charges had led to his seizure in the month of January, 1532. He had proposed on the eve of the feast of the Kings, to replace the usual dances, by reading the Bible. Instead of saying: *The king drinks*; he had cried: *Let Jesus Christ reign in our hearts*. At length, he had held a religious meeting at Lemoux, his native town.

Brought before the judges, he said to them: "I am ready to justify myself upon every point. Send hither learned men with books: we will discuss the cause article by article." But such a trial was dreaded. Jean de Caturce was a man of great power of mind: he had a clear wit and ready speech, and quoted the Scriptures with marvellous aptitude. A pardon was offered to him, on condition that he would retract in a public lecture. He refused, and was condemned to death as an obstinate heretic.

Led soon after to the square of St. Stephen, he was degraded from the tonsure, and next of his title of licentiate. During this ceremony, which occupied three hours, he explained the Bible to the assistants. A monk interrupted him to pronounce the *sermon of the Catholic faith*, after the manner of the inquisitors. He had taken for his text these words of the apostle Paul: “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils...,” and he stopped there. “Go on, pursue the text,” said Caturce. But the other not opening his mouth, the martyr pronounced with a loud voice the rest of the passage: “Speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them, which believe and know the truth.”[11] The monk was silent with shame, and the people admired the singular readiness and presence of mind of Caturce.

He was made to don the dress of a buffoon, according to the custom introduced by the old persecutors of the Albigenses; and brought back to his judges, who read to him his sentence of death, when he shouted: “O palace of iniquity! O seat of injustice!” Two hundred and thirty years after, Jean Calas might have pronounced the same words, as he descended the steps of the same palace of Toulouse.

However, the violence of persecution did not impede the multiplication of proselytes. They were of all ranks, and they were already so numerous in one canton of Normandy, that it was called *Little Germany*, as we read in a letter of Bucer, addressed to Luther in 1530. More than one of the religious

orders threw off the gown to embrace the reformed faith. I will cite one example, which will be, to a certain extent, a type of a crowd of others.

François Lambert, born at Avignon in 1487, had conceived from his childhood, a profound veneration for the Franciscans, who daily passed before his door. “I admired,” says he, “their severe costume, their sedate countenance, their downcast eyes, their devoutly-crossed arms, their grave demeanour; but I knew not that under these sheepskins, foxes and wolves were hidden.”

The monks had also remarked the naïve exaltation of the young man. “Come among us,” they said to him; “the convent has an ample income: you will live in peace in your cell, and may there pursue your studies at your ease.” He was received as a novice when he was fifteen years and three months old. His period of trial soon passed. The monks took care to conceal from him their quarrels and licentiousness. “The following year I pronounced my vows,” adds Lambert, “not having the slightest idea of what I was doing.”

In effect, as soon as it was no longer feared that he would go away, what sad discoveries! what cruel misconceptions were there! He hoped to live among saints, and found only abandoned and impious men. When he expressed his regret, he was ridiculed.

That he might leave the convent without breaking his vows, he got himself nominated *apostolic preacher*; but his position was not thereby improved. He was accused of neglecting the interests of the order. “When I returned wearied with my rounds,” he says, “reproaches and maledictions generally seasoned my repast.” His brethren blamed him above everything else for censuring too severely those who

harboured them, although many of these were vile usurers, or haunters of evil resorts. “What are you doing!” they would say to him; “those people will get angry; they will give us no longer either board or lodging.” “That is to say,” continues Lambert, “that these slaves of their bellies are less afraid of destroying the souls of their hosts, than of losing their dinners.”

In despair, he conceived the thought of becoming a Chartreux, that he might write, if he could no longer preach. But a new storm, and the most terrible of all, burst upon him. The monks discovered in his cell some treatises of Luther—“Luther in a religious house!” they vociferated with one voice: “Heresy! heresy!” and burned these writings without reading a line. “As for me,” says Lambert, “I believe that Luther’s books contain more true theology than could be found in all the books of the monks ever since monks came into the world.”

He was ordered, in 1523, to carry letters to the general of the order; but suspecting some perfidy, he profited by his freedom to pass the frontiers of Germany, and went to seat himself at the foot of Luther’s pulpit. “I renounce,” says he, in concluding his recital, “all the rules of the Brethren, persuaded that the Holy Gospel should be my only rule, and that of all Christians. I retract everything I may have taught contrary to the revealed faith, and I entreat those who have heard me, to reject it as I do. I release myself from all the ordinances of the pope, and I consent to be excommunicated by him, knowing that he is himself excommunicated by the Lord.”[12]

He married in the same year (1523), and was the first of the religious orders of France who broke the

vow of celibacy. He returned to the frontiers, at Metz and at Strasbourg, and wished also to go to Besançon. But, having met great obstacles everywhere, he returned to Germany, was appointed professor at Marbourg, and helped to spread the reformed faith in the country of Hesse. He died there in 1530, with the reputation of a true Christian and a learned theologian.

While the new religion made proselytes in the towns, in the country, and even in the convents of the provinces, it began to penetrate into Paris. It found there a powerful protector in Marguérite de Valois. “Her name,” says Theodore de Bèze, “is deserving of perpetual honour, because of her piety, and of the holy affection she has shown for the advancement and preservation of the church of God; so much so, that we are indebted to her for the lives of many worthy persons.”[13]

Having heard of a reform which was shaking off the yoke of human traditions, she wished to know it, and conversed thereupon with Lefevre d’Etaples, Farel, and Briçonnet. Their ideas pleased her: she read the Bible, and adopted the new doctrines, at the same time with that tincture of mysticism, which characterized some of those, whose lessons she heard.[14]

The volume of poems which she published under the title of *Marguérite de la Marguérite des Princesses*, contains many touching revelations upon the state of her mind. She protected the preachers of the Reformation, gave them money for their voyages, sheltered them in secure retreats, and obtained the liberation of many from prison. Therefore, in their correspondence, they called her the good lady, the very excellent, and very dear Christian.

Intelligent and devoted, she had rendered her brother Francis I., during his captivity at Madrid, services not to be forgotten, and had acquired over him an influence which she turned to the profit of the new ideas.

Francis I. never well knew what he was, or what he wished, on the subject of religion. Endowed with qualities more brilliant than solid, he often mistook the variations of his humour for profound calculations. Proud, beyond all things, of being thought a knightly king, he had a passion for arms and adventures of gallantry, which distinguished the older chivalry, but without its stern loyalty and nice sense of honour. The Italy of the Borgias and the Machiavels had corrupted him, and if he had not protected the men of letters, who have acquitted themselves before posterity most generously of their debt to him, one might ask if he had anything but the appearance of the virtues, which have gained for him the appellation of a great king.

The Reformation pleased him as an engine for attacking the monks, whom he contemned; but it repulsed, by its austere maxims, a prince who had filled his court with female favourites. The priests, beside, never ceased to represent to him the followers of the new religion as the enemies of all social order. The historian Seckendorf cites a letter, dated from the French court in 1530, where they are accused of seeking the fall of princes, perfect equality of rights, and even the rupture of marriages and the community of goods. Francis I. was much alarmed at these calumnies, and Brantôme reports that he said: “These novelties have no other aim than the destruction of all monarchy, human and divine.”

This enables us to understand why, in certain

moments of his reign, although he was not naturally cruel, he showed such pitiless hostility against the Reformers. He was impressed with the notion that he was acting as a statesman, and he sought to smother in a sea of blood, the sinister phantoms with which the (Roman) Catholic clergy had peopled his imagination.

Otherwise, it was a strange and interesting scene to witness the struggle between Marguérite de Valois and her brother, upon the conduct to be pursued towards the Reformers. At one time the Christian woman had the sway. Francis resisted the Sorbonne. He promised to take from the Lutherans all he could, and to the utmost. He would give them, what has been called, *the mass of seven points*, or the suppression of seven abuses in the worship of the Romish church. At another time it was the Catholic or politic prince, who seemed to triumph. Marguérite de Valois bent before the stormy temper of her brother, shrouded herself in docility and silence, resumed even certain practices of Catholicism, and finally veiled her faith in such a manner that it is still a matter of dispute whether she died in the old or the new communion.

IV.

It appeared, in 1533, as if better days were about to dawn upon the French Reformation. The queen-mother, Louise de Savoie, who hoped to redeem by fanatic bigotry the libertinism of her youth, had just died. Francis I. had made an alliance with the Protestants of the League of Smalcald, and the credit of Marguérite de Valois had thence increased. She took advantage of the occasion to open the pulpits of Paris to Gérard Roussel, Courault, and Bertault, who leaned towards the Reformed doctrines. The bishop, Jean du Bellay, offered no opposition. He was a man of great reading, and in his letters to Melancthon signed himself: *yours cordially*.

The churches were crowded. Noël Beda, and other doctors of the Sorbonne, tried to raise the people; but they were banished by the Parliament. At this, the rage of the monks grew boundless. They performed, at their college of Navarre, a representation in which Marguérite de Valois, reading the Bible while spinning, was suddenly changed into an infernal fury. The Sorbonnists condemned at the same time one of her books, entitled *The Mirror of the Sinful Soul*, where no mention was made either of saints, or of purgatory, or of any other redemption than that of Jesus Christ. A Cordelier declared in a public sermon, that Marguérite deserved to be inclosed in a sack and thrown into the river.

Such insolence was too great for the king's endurance. He had the regents of the college of Navarre punished, and the censure of the Sorbonne disavowed by the university in a body. He even threatened to inflict upon the Cordelier the penalty with which the monk had menaced Marguérite de

Valois; but she interceded for him, and the punishment was commuted.

This disposition of Francis did not last long. Having had an interview with Clement VII. at Marseilles, in the month of October, 1533, for the marriage of his son Henry with Catherine de Medici, the pope's niece, and being desirous of an alliance with this pontiff for the conquest of the Milanese, the dream of his life, he returned to Paris with a mind bent against the heretics. Many Lutherans, or Sacramentarians, as they were then called, were cast into prison, and the three suspected preachers interdicted from preaching.

All the new converts, already very numerous, did not bear the stroke of persecution patiently, and were sorely grieved to be deprived of their pastors. At this juncture one Féret arrived, bringing from Switzerland placards against the mass, which he proposed to disseminate throughout the kingdom. The most prudent opposed the design, affirming that too much precipitation would ruin everything. But the enthusiasts, as always happens in moments of crisis, prevailed.

On the 18th of October, 1534, the inhabitants of Paris found on the public places, in the crossways, on the palace-walls, on the doors of the churches, a placard with this title: "Truthful articles concerning the horrible, great, and unbearable abuses of the Popish Mass, invented directly against the Holy Supper of our Lord, the only Mediator, and only Saviour, Jesus Christ."

This document was written in a bitter and violent style. Popes, cardinals, bishops, and monks were attacked with the sharpest invectives. It thus concluded: "In fine, truth has deserted them, truth

threatens them, truth chases them, truth fills them with fear; by all which shall their reign be shortly destroyed for ever."

The people gathered in groups around the placards. Horrible rumours circulated, such as the masses invent in their days of rage. The Lutherans, it was said, had laid a frightful plot for burning the churches, firing the town, and massacring every one. And the multitude shouted: *Death! death to the heretics!* The priests and monks, who were perhaps the first deceived, kindled the rage. The magistrates, although more calm, were irritated by so daring an attack upon the ecclesiastical order of the kingdom.

The tempest burst with equal violence at the Château de Blois, where Francis I. was at the time. A placard had been posted (many suspected, by the hand of an enemy) on the very door of the king's apartment. The prince saw therein an insult, not only against his authority, but against his person, and the Cardinal de Tournon imbedded this notion so deep in his heart, that he deliberated, says an historian, upon destroying all, had it been in his power.

Orders were immediately issued to seize the Sacramentarians, dead or alive. The criminal-lieutenant, Jean-Morin, obtained the assistance of a certain sheath or scabbard-maker, who had been a summoner for the secret meetings, and whose life had been promised him on condition that he should lead the serjeants to the houses of the heretics. Some, warned in time, took flight; the others, men and women, those who had condemned the placards, as well as those who had approved them, were thrust alike pell-mell into the prisons.

It is reported that the civil-lieutenant, having entered the house of one of them, Barthélemy Milon,

a cripple, wholly helpless of body, said to him: "Come, get thee up." "Alas, sir," replied the paralytic, "it must be a greater master than you to raise me up." The serjeants carried him off, and the courage of his companions in captivity grew firm through his exhortations.

Their trial was soon over. But for the Sorbonne and the clergy, the blood of the heretics was not enough. Their object was to strike the imagination of the people by a *generalissimo* procession, and, by persuading the king to be present, to bind him decisively to the system of persecution. This *fête* marks an important date in our recital; for it was from this moment that the Parisian populace took part in the contest against the heretics; and, once mounted on the stage, they never quitted it until the end of the League. In the chain of events, this procession, intermingled with executions, was the first of the bloody days of the sixteenth century; the massacre of St. Bartholomew, the Barricades, the murder of Henry III., and the assassination of Henry IV., could but follow.

A chronicler of the time, Simon Fontaine, a doctor of the Sorbonne, has left us a long description of this event. It took place on the 29th of January, 1535. An innumerable concourse had come from all the surrounding country. "There was not the smallest piece of wood or stone jutting from the walls which was not occupied, provided there was room on it for anybody. The house-tops were covered with men, great and small, and one might have supposed the streets to have been paved with heads."

Never had so many relics been paraded through the streets of Paris. The reliquary of the Sainte-Chapelle was then first brought out. Priests bore the

head of St. Louis, a piece of the holy cross, the true crown of thorns, a real nail, and also the spear-head which had pierced the side of our Lord. The shrine of St. Geneviéve, the patron saint of Paris, was carried by the corporation or company of butchers, who had fitted themselves for the holy office by a fast of several days, and each one was bent upon touching the precious relic with the tip of his finger, or with his handkerchief, or cap.

Cardinals, archbishops, and bishops, coped and mitred, figured in their places. Then came the king, bareheaded, holding a burning torch of wax in his hand; after him walked all the princes, knights, counsellors of the Parliaments, companies of the trades, and fraternities. In front of their houses stood the burgesses with lighted tapers, who sank on their knees as the holy sacrament went by.

After mass, the king dined at the palace of the bishop, with his sons, the queen, and the princes of the blood royal. At the conclusion of the repast, he called together the clergy, ambassadors, lords, presidents of the courts of justice, all the notables; and having seated himself on a throne, he protested that he would not pardon, even in his children, the crime of heresy; and that if he knew that one of the members of his body were infected with it, he would cut it off with his own hands.

The same day, six Lutherans were burned. The most courageous had had their tongues cut out beforehand, lest a word of faith or a prayer, issuing from the flames, might move the conscience of the executioners. They were suspended on a moveable gibbet, which, rising and falling by turns, plunged them into the fire or drew them out, until they were entirely consumed. This was the punishment of the

estrapade. The ferocious emperor of Rome, who wished that his victims might feel themselves die, had not invented that cruelty, and the Inquisition of Spain accorded to the Saracens and the Jews the favour of being more quickly burned.

On his return to the Louvre, Francis saw these executions. The hangmen waited for his passing, that he might witness the show.

An ordinance was soon published, decreeing the extermination of heretics, with pain of death against those who should conceal them, and a reward of a fourth of the goods of the victims to informers.

Francis I. had soon occasion to repent of having yielded to this excess of frenzy. The Protestants of Germany were indignant, and threatened to ally themselves against him, with the House of Austria. He sent them explanations through his ambassador, Guillaume de Langey, to say that those whom he had put to death were rebels, Sacramentarians, and not Lutherans. He even resumed, in order to effect a reconciliation with the League of Smalcald, the overtures which had been made to Melancthon, to attract him to Paris; and he published a milder edict, directing the release of persons suspected of heresy, on condition that they should abjure within six months. This edict of Coucy, drawn for diplomatic reasons, was never carried into execution.

Marguérite de Valois retired to Béarn, where her little court became the asylum of the celebrated men who escaped from persecution. Many refugee families brought thither their industry and their fortunes. Everything assumed a new face. The laws were corrected, the arts cultivated, agriculture was improved, schools were established, and the people were prepared to receive the teaching of the

Reformation.

The queen of Navarre died in 1549, wept for by the Béarnese, who loved to repeat her generous saying: “Kings and princes are not the lords and masters of their inferiors, but only ministers whom God has set up to serve and to keep them.”

Marguérite de Valois was the mother of Jeanne d’Albret, and grandmother of Henry IV.

V.

The prey of calumnies that descended from the throne, and from thence spread throughout all Europe; accused of sedition, blasphemy, enmity to God and to man; judged and condemned with closed doors; their tongues mutilated before undergoing their final sentence, the Reformers of France had no means of justification, and their very martyrdom was dishonoured.

It was then that the most energetic of apologies appeared in the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. "This," says Calvin, in the preface to his commentary on the Psalms, "is what led me to publish the *Institutes*: first, to relieve my brethren from an unjust accusation, whose death was precious before the Lord; and moreover, that, as the same sufferings were suspended over the heads of many poor faithful, foreign nations might be touched with commiseration for their woes, and might afford them a shelter."

This book announced the true leader of the French Reformation. Luther was too distant, and his German genius could not wholly sympathize with that of France. Guillaume Farel was too ardent; he had not that firm and solid character which was necessary for great undertakings. The others were obscure. The growing churches awaited a man able to place himself at their head, and Calvin was this man.

His life is everywhere; I will only recount that which enters into the plan of this history.

Jean Calvin was born in 1509 at Noyon, in Picardy. Destined from his infancy to the priesthood, he was presented with an ecclesiastical benefice at

the age of twelve. But his own will and that of his father led him from theology to the law, which he went to study at Bourges and at Orleans. He distinguished himself there by his precocious intelligence and the severity of his manners.

The Reformation agitated at that time all the schools of learning. Masters and students occupied themselves with nothing else, either through a spirit of curiosity, or through the yearning of conscience and faith. Calvin was among these last, and the Bible which he received from the hands of one of his relations, Pierre Robert Olivétan, detached him from Catholicism, as it had already rescued Zwinglius and Luther. The three great Reformers arrived at the same end by the same road.

He was not of those who are silent on what they believe. Listeners flocked round him, and the solitude he loved became impossible for him. “As for me,” he says again, in the preface to his commentary on the Psalms, “inasmuch as being naturally diffident and retiring I have always preferred repose and tranquillity; I began to seek for some hiding-place, and means of withdrawing myself from the world; but so far from obtaining my wish, every retreat and every secluded spot were to me so many public schools.”

Calvin comprehended that his time and his powers were no longer his own. He preached in the secret meetings at Bourges and at Paris. Theodore de Bèze says: “He advanced wonderfully the cause of God in many families, teaching the truth not with an affected language, to which he was always opposed, but with a depth of knowledge and so much gravity of speech, that no man heard him without being filled with admiration.”[15] He was at that time

twenty-four years of age.

A discourse which he composed, in 1533, for the rector of the university of Paris, and which was condemned for heresy by the Sorbonne, compelled him to fly. It is said that he escaped by a window, a few moments before the serjeants broke into his chamber.

He withdrew, under the name of Charles d'Espeville, to Angoulême, and was received into the house of the canon Louis du Tillet, where he had a rich library at his service.

He was already occupied with his great work on the Christian religion, and laboured upon it with such ardour that he frequently passed nights without sleeping, and days without eating. When he had finished a chapter, he read it to his friends; and on opening the manuscript, he was wont to say: "Let us find the truth."

He sowed the doctrines of the Reformation in Poitou and Saintonge, publicly when he could, secretly when persecution was too violent. There is still shown near Poitiers an excavation to which popular tradition gives the name of *Calvin's cave*. When there one day with several of his disciples, one of them represented that there must be truth in the sacrifice of the Mass, since it was celebrated in every place in Christendom. "My mass is there," replied Calvin, pointing to the Bible. Then throwing down upon the table his cap, and raising his eyes to heaven, he exclaimed: "O Lord, if on the day of judgment Thou reprehendest me for that I have been to Mass and that I have deserted it, I will say to Thee with reason: Lord, Thou hast not bidden me to it. There is Thy law; there is the Scripture Thou hast given me, in the which I have found no other

sacrifice than Thy immolation on the altar of the cross."

The supper was celebrated in the depth of the cavern by Calvin and his friends. So, fourteen centuries before, the Christians communicated in the catacombs of Rome; so, two centuries after, the Reformers of France have held communion in the wilderness; and still later, in the days of the Revolution, (Roman) Catholic priests have erected their altars amidst the woods.

Constantly in peril of his life, Calvin went to fix himself at Bâle, the city of refuge for the French, when the Geneva of the Reformation did not yet exist. There the last touch was put to his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, and it appeared in the month of August, 1535.

This was the first theological and literary monument of the French Reformation. There may be disputes about Calvin's notions (he belonged to his time, as we do to ours), but his genius cannot be contested. His premises, which corresponded to the intellectual and moral level of his times, once laid down, he pursued them with an incomparable vigour of logic. His system was completed.

Spreading abroad in the schools, the castles of the gentry, the houses of the burghers, even the workshops of the people, the *Institutes* became the most powerful of preachers. Round this book the Reformers arrayed themselves as round a standard. They found in it everything—doctrine, discipline, ecclesiastical organization; and the apologist of the martyrs became the legislator of their children.

We will not dwell upon the lofty style of the *Institutes*; Calvin cared little for literary fame,

whatever Bossuet may have said. He went straight to the point, and the expression came clear, energetic, full of life, from the very circumstance of his only troubling himself about the correctness of his thoughts.

In his dedicatory epistle to Francis I., he refuted the following objections addressed to the disciples of the Reformation: “Your doctrine is new and untried; you confirm it by no miracle; you are in contradiction with the Fathers; you overthrow tradition and custom; you make war upon the Church; you engender sedition.” In concluding, Calvin supplicated the king to examine the confession of faith of the Reformers, so that, beholding them to be in accordance with the Bible, he might treat them no longer as heretics. “It is your duty, sire,” he says to the king, “to close neither your understanding nor your heart against so just a defence, especially when the question is of such high import, namely, how the glory of God shall be maintained on earth.... A matter worthy of your ears, worthy of your jurisdiction, worthy of your royal throne!”

We are assured that the king did not deign even to read this epistle. Some court intrigue, or a caprice of the Duchess d’Etampes, absorbed, it would appear, his leisure. If one considered, not the hand of God, that orders all things, but the visible causes of events, upon what would depend the religious and political destiny of nations?

His *Institutes* were scarcely finished before Calvin went to Italy to see Rénée de France, daughter of Louis XII. and duchess of Ferrara, who had, like Marguérite de Valois, opened her heart to the Reformed faith. This visit established a

correspondence which was never interrupted, and Calvin still wrote to her when on his death-bed.

In 1536 he was appointed pastor and professor at Geneva. The religious, moral, intellectual, and even political revolution he brought into that town with him, is beside our work. Let us only add, that from his new country he never ceased to act upon France by his books, his letters, and by the numerous students, who, after having received his lessons, carried back to their churches what he had taught them. Calvin was the guide of the French Reformers, their counsellor, the soul of their first synods; and the immense authority he exercised over them was so well recognised, that the name of *Calvinists* was given to them about the middle of the sixteenth century.

“He was most restless for the advance of his sect,” says Etienne Pasquier. “When our prisons were gorged with victims, he incessantly exhorted, consoled, confirmed them by his letters, and never wanted messengers, to whom the doors were open, despite whatever trouble the gaolers might take.”[16]

Considering the irreparable loss the Romish church has suffered through this Reformer, we are little astonished at the anathemas she poured upon him, and with which she still pursues him. She has measured the strength of her blows according to the magnitude of her wounds. We are not penning Calvin’s apology, but some short explanations may not be out of place here. Calvin has been accused of ambition. He had only that which is common to men of genius, who are thrust into the foremost rank by the instinct of ordinary minds, and by the force of circumstances. Did they refuse to ascend, they would not be humble; they would be unfaithful to their

mission, and prevaricators. The vulgar herd, which sees their lofty position, raises the cry of pride: it judges the vocation of great souls by its own.

It is also said that Calvin was absolute and inflexible in his ideas. Yes, because he had strong convictions, with the consciousness of his own superiority. And if we consider the wants of his time, it will be acknowledged, perhaps, that this was the only way of preventing the new doctrines from failure in every sense, and being lost.

That he should appear to us, at the distance we are from him, with our opinions and our manners, to have fallen into grave errors, may be conceived. But to judge him properly, it is from his own point of view, and from that of his age, that we must observe him—not from our own.

We are constantly reminded of the execution of Michel Servet. If it be said that this was an act to be deeply deplored, the remark is just; but if Calvin is accused of contradicting his own maxims, it will only be proved that those who make the accusation have never studied them. The Protestants claimed the right of citizenship in Germany, in Switzerland, in France, in the name, in the sole name of the Divine truth of which they judged themselves to be the faithful interpreters, and never in the name of liberty of belief and of worship. To convince oneself of this, it is only necessary to read the detail of their trials. Not a single word could be found in the whole volume of *Crespin's Martyrs*, expressive of toleration understood in the sense of Bayle, Locke, and modern ideas. They justify themselves by texts from the Bible, and summon their adversaries to prove that their faith is not conformable to it, or able to absolve them. Their defence is here, and here only. If it had

been proposed to them to accord similar rights to those whom they themselves regarded as impious or heretics, they would have beheld herein a rebellion against the will of God. It is not, therefore, Calvin who set up the stake of Michel Servet: it is the whole sixteenth century.[17]

If Rome beholds in this act an excuse for her own intolerance, we do not deny it. But it is no excuse for her refinements of cruelty; it is none for her slaughters *en masse*, nor for her perpetual violations of plighted faith. Either no treaty of peace, no contract between the two worships ought to have been accepted, or, when they were accepted, they ought to have been kept.

We will further observe, that if the two communions were intolerant in the sixteenth century, the one was so by virtue of its principles, the other was so in spite of itself. The Reformation, by granting the right of private judgment, had indirectly established religious liberty. It did not perceive at once all the consequences of this principle, because the Reformers had carried over with them a part of the prejudices of their first education; but these consequences were to become apparent sooner or later, and it is therefore justly regarded as the mother of all modern liberty.

Calvin had a share in only one execution. His heart was not cruel, and he was horrified at all the sanguinary acts unauthorized by a regular judicial sentence. He more than once restrained the hands of those who would have shed the blood of François de Guise, the cut-throat of Vassy. “I can protest,” he wrote to the duchess of Ferrara, “that it alone depended upon me that men of resolve and action, before the war, who were only restrained by my

exhortation, did not devote themselves to exterminate him from the world."

Calvin was sometimes impatient and irascible, and he has accused himself of being so. But the soft and affectionate sentiments that one would scarcely expect to find in the austere soul of the Reformer, were not strangers to him. Read his correspondence with his intimate friends Farel and Viret: how one hears the voice of the man, who reposed in the bosom of friendship from the grievous duties of his charge! and with what emotion the minister Des Gallards, who had spent sixteen years near him, speaks of his goodness!

He died poor. His disinterestedness was so great that the sceptic Bayle, on relating that he had left only three hundred crowns, inclusive of his library, could not repress a cry of admiration. "It is one of the rarest victories," says he, "that virtue and grandeur of soul can obtain over nature in those who exercise the apostolic mission."

The prodigious labours of Calvin oppress our imagination. "I do not believe," Theodore de Bèze states, "that his equal can be found. Beside preaching every day from week to week, most frequently and whenever he could, he preached twice every Sunday. He lectured three times a week on theology. He made the remonstrances at the consistory, and gave an entire lecture every Friday in the conference of the Scripture, which we call Congregation; and he so persisted in this course to his death, that he never missed once, except when extremely ill. For the rest, who can recount his other works, ordinary and extraordinary? I do not think any man of our time has had more to hear, to answer, to write, or things of greater importance to deal with. The multiplicity

and quality of his writings are alone sufficient to astound every man who looks at them, and still more those who read them. And what makes his labours more astonishing is, that his frame was naturally so weak, so attenuated by watching and too great abstinence, and what is more, subject to so many disorders, that any man who saw him could not have thought but that he had a very short while to live; and yet, notwithstanding all this, he never ceased to labour night and day in the Lord's work. Many a time we urged him to take more care of himself; but his constant answer was that he did next to nothing, and that we ought to let him be, so that God might find him watching and working his best, until his last breath."[18]

Calvin died on the 27th of May, 1564, aged fifty-five years all but one month. He was of the middle height, and had a pale face, brown complexion, and serene, brilliant eyes. He was neat and plain in his dress; and he ate so little, that for many years he took but one meal a day.

A few weeks before his death he dictated his will, in which he takes God to witness as to the sincerity of his faith, and offers his thanksgivings that he should have been employed in the service of Jesus Christ and the truth.

VI.

The persecutions we have seen until now, appear moderate beside those of which the Vaudois of Provence were the victims. To find a parallel for so fearful a butchery, we must go back to the extermination of the Albigeois.

On the 18th of November, 1540, the parliament of Aix passed a decree to the following effect: Seventeen inhabitants of Mérindol shall be burned alive. Their wives, children, parents, and servants, shall be arrested and brought to trial, and if they cannot be taken, they shall be banished the kingdom for ever. The houses of Mérindol shall be burned and razed to the ground, the woods cut down, the fruit-trees uprooted, and the place rendered uninhabitable, and no one shall be allowed to build there. “As exorbitant, cruel, and inhuman a decree,” says a contemporary, “as any parliament ever made, and like in every respect to the edict of the king Ahasuerus against the people of God.”

A cry of horror arose throughout Provence. It is sad to relate that the priests were the most unrelenting in urging the execution of the sentence. And when the chief president Chassanée represented to them that the king might be displeased at so great a destruction of his subjects, a bishop said to him: “If the king should think ill of it at first, we will soon cause him to approve it: we have the cardinals with us, and particularly Cardinal Tournon, to whom nothing could be more pleasing.”

The Vaudois presented a petition to Francis I., who being then desirous of keeping on good terms with the Protestant princes of the empire, commissioned

Guillaume de Langey, the same who had been his ambassador to Germany, to cause an inquiry to be made respecting this devastation.

These Vaudois formed a population of about eighteen thousand souls. They had come from Piedmont and Dauphiny into Provence, and had dwelt there for three hundred years. When they first settled in the country, it was uncultivated, and overrun with brigands; but, under the tillage of their hands, it was covered with plentiful harvests. A domain which before their establishment would not have let for four crowns, fetched from three to four hundred. They had built Mérindol, Cabrières, and twenty other towns or villages.

They were a peaceable, well-ordered people, loved by their neighbours, faithful to their promise, just in the payment of their debts, careful of their poor, and charitable to strangers. Never could they be drawn into any kind of swearing or blasphemy: they never used an oath, but when required to do so in the administration of the law. They were also distinguished for this, that if they chanced to be in any company where improper conversation was heard, they immediately withdrew, in order to signify their displeasure.

There was nothing to reproach them with, unless it was that when they frequented the towns and the markets, they seldom visited the conventual churches, and if they did, they offered their prayers without reference to the saints. They passed by the crosses and images on the roadside without showing any reverence. They said no Mass, nor *Libera me*, nor *De profundis*; they took no holy water, and if it were offered them in any house, they set no store by it. They undertook no pilgrimage for the sake of

pardons. When it thundered, they never made the sign of the cross, and they presented no offerings either for the living or the dead.

For a long time unknown, the Vaudois excited neither the cupidity of the priests nor the hatred of the great, and the gentry, whose incomes they augmented, gave them their protection. They chose among themselves their pastors, or *Barbes*, as they termed them, to instruct them in the knowledge and the practice of the Scriptures.

As he was passing through Dauphiny in 1501, these heretics were denounced to King Louis XII., who caused an inquiry to be instituted; but after having read it, he ordered that the processes already begun should be thrown into the Rhone, saying: "These people are much better Christians than myself."

When they heard, about the year 1530, of the preaching of Luther and Zwinglius, they sent some of their pastors to Switzerland and Germany, who recognised in the Reformation a sister of their own communion. Encouraged by these new friends, they caused the first edition of the Bible, translated into French by Robert Olivétan, to be printed at Neufchâtel, in 1535. It is said that they expended upon it many hundred gold crowns.

The ire of the Romish clergy was excited against this heresy, and the more so as many of the gentry, advocates, counsellors of justice, and even theologians, showed a leaning towards it. A decree was pronounced, in 1535, against the Vaudois. A second decree—that which we have cited—was delivered in 1540. Francis I., adopting the advice of Guillaume de Langey, granted them letters of pardon, but upon condition that they should return

to the church of Rome before the expiration of three months. This was to withdraw with one hand, what he had given with the other.

This courageous people, however, did not lose courage. They sent to the parliament of Aix, and to Francis, their confession of faith, in which they took care to establish all their doctrines, article by article, on texts from the Scriptures. When this confession was read to him by his order, the king, *quite amazed*, says Crespin, asked where fault could be found; and no one had the hardihood to offer a contradiction.

The bishops of Provence, finding themselves unsupported in their system of persecution, commissioned three doctors of theology to convert the Vaudois; but, marvel of marvels! all three were themselves converted to the proscribed religion: “I am compelled to confess,” said one of these doctors, after his interrogatories to some catechumens, “that I have often been to the Sorbonne to hearken to the disputations of the theologians, and that I have not learned there so much as I have done from listening to these little children.”

The rage of the priests was now at its height; and the chief president Chassanée being dead, they persuaded his successor, Jean Meynier, baron d’Oppède, to prosecute the heretics without mercy. Memorials were sent at the same time to the king, in which the Vaudois were accused of an intention to seize upon Marseilles, to form a sort of republican canton, in imitation of the Swiss. Francis did not become a dupe to this ridiculous fable; he knew very well that a few thousand poor peasants could not convert Provence into a republic. But he had just concluded a treaty with Charles V., through the mediation of Paul III., by which the two monarchs

engaged themselves to exterminate heresy. This prince lay, moreover, dangerously ill, and the Cardinal de Tournon, seconded by several bishops, beseeched him, in the name of his eternal salvation, to revoke his letters of pardon. He thereupon wrote to the Parliament of Aix, on the 1st of January, 1545, to execute the decree pronounced against the Vaudois.

The Baron d'Oppède, who appears to have imported into this horrible enterprise motives of jealousy and personal vengeance, collected bands of mercenaries, who had been accustomed in the Italian wars to the most frightful brigandage. He placed over them some officers of Provence, and took the field on the 2nd of April. Then began a horrible carnage. "They were no longer," says an historian, "either gentlemen or soldiers: they were butchers."

The Vaudois were surprised and massacred, like the deer in a hunt; their houses were burned, their cornfields laid waste, trees uprooted, wells choked, bridges destroyed. All were put to the fire and the sword; and the peasants of the surrounding country, joining the executioners, completed the pillage of the miserable remnants of the devastation.

Those of the Vaudois who could fly, wandered about the woods and mountains; but the weaker, the old men and children and women, were forced to stay, and were slain by the soldiery, after having satiated their brutal passions. At Mérindol there only remained one poor idiot, who had promised two crowns to a soldier for his ransom. D'Oppède purchased from his purse the fate of the unhappy wretch, and causing him to be tied to a tree, had him shot. Scarce a gentleman present could restrain his tears.

On the 19th of April, in obedience to the summons of the vice-legate, this army of executioners entered the county of Venasque, belonging to the pope, and fresh bodies of banditti hastened thither under the guidance of priests. The town of Cabrières was besieged. Sixty men, who alone had remained there, held out for twenty-four hours. On the promise of their lives, they came forth unarmed, and were immediately hacked to pieces. Their women, shut up in a barn, were burned alive. A soldier, moved to pity, tried to open them a passage, but they were driven back into the flames with the halbert. The church of Cabrières was profaned with infamous debauches; and the steps of the altar were inundated with blood. The clergy of Avignon blessed the murderers: they had pronounced a sentence decreeing no quarter. The day was to come when the *glacière* of Avignon should count other victims. There is justice upon earth for the privileged classes, who abuse their power: it is sometimes tardy, but it is sure.

The Vaudois perished in numbers in their wild retreats. The vice-legate and the Parliament of Aix had forbidden, under pain of death, that any shelter or food should be given them, “which,” says Bouche, the historian of Provence, “was the means of killing a very great many.” Numbers of the unhappy people supplicated D’Oppède to accord them permission to depart, even with nothing but their shirts. “I know what I have to do with this people of Mérindol and their like,” answered he: “I will send them to dwell in hell, them and their children.”

Two hundred and fifty prisoners were put to death, after a mock trial; a more atrocious act than the massacre, since it was committed in cold blood.

Others, the youngest and more robust, were sent to the galleys. A few succeeded in gaining the frontiers of Switzerland.

The name of the Vaudois disappeared almost entirely from Provence, and their country relapsed into as desolate a wilderness as it was three centuries before.

History has preserved the pious words uttered by the Vaudois, who had taken refuge with their pastors in the mountain gorges. Prepared for death, and beholding in the distance the blazing ruins of their dwellings, the old and young thus exhorted each other: “The least of our cares should be for our property and our lives; the greatest and chiefest fear that ought to fill us with emotion, is lest we fail in the confession of our Lord Jesus Christ and his holy Gospel. Let us call on God, and he will have pity upon us.”

The massacre of the Vaudois raised the indignation of all France; the souls of the people were not yet merciless, as they became during the religious wars. The king complained that his orders had been exceeded; but, sick and almost dying, he gave way to the representations of the Cardinal de Tournon, and had not the courage to punish the assassins. But, in his last moments, he adjured his son to take vengeance upon them, adding that if he failed therein, his memory would be execrated throughout the world.

In effect, the matter was brought before the Parliament of Paris in 1550, where it occupied fifty audiences. The advocate of the Vaudois, or rather of the Lady du Cental, who complained that she had been ruined, spoke for seven days consecutively, with a force which was said to have shown the

things, instead of relating them. The Baron d'Oppède defended himself, and had the audacity to commence his pleading with these words of the Psalmist: "Judge me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation." He was acquitted. The advocate-general Guérin only was condemned to death, and care was taken to specify in the sentence that he had been guilty of misappropriating the king's money; as if a whole people murdered was not a sufficient crime in the eyes of these judges.

VII.

Towards the end of the reign of Francis I., and under that of his son Henry II., the Reformation made such rapid progress, that it becomes impossible to follow it in all its details. Men of letters, of the law, of the sword, of the Church itself, hastened to its banner. Several great provinces,—Languedoc, Dauphiny, the Lyonnese, Guienne, Saintonge, Poitou, the Orleanese, Normandy, Picardy, Flanders; the most considerable towns of the kingdom,—Bourges, Orleans, Rouen, Lyons, Bordeaux, Toulouse, Montpellier, La Rochelle, were peopled with Reformers. It is calculated that they comprised in a few years nearly a sixth of the population, of whom they were the *élite*. They might have repeated the saying of Tertullian: "We date only from yesterday, and are, yet, everywhere."

If the persecution kept some aloof, it brought the accession of a greater number, through that instinct, which impels the human conscience to rise against injustice, and incline to the side of the victim. Moreover, the faith, the constancy, and the serenity of the martyrs soared above the ferocity of the executioner.

The impulse once given to the movement, everything was shaken. There was in the understanding, in the heart, and, so to say, in the air one breathed, an immense want of religious reforms. People began to reflect that religion is not to be transmitted, like a name or an estate which one inherits, but that, before accepting it, one is bound to examine it by and for oneself. People also began to consider more minutely the enormous abuses of the Romish church, and crowds separated themselves

from that degenerated communion.

The ecclesiastical benefices were distributed, particularly after the Concordat, which had abolished the electoral forms, among court favourites, soldiers, intriguers, and even children; all incapable of fulfilling the duties of their offices. There were supernumerary prelates, who were derisively called flying, or portative bishops. The cardinals set the example of disorder. The prelates lived a scandalous life at Paris. The members of the lower clergy were, in general, immoral and greedy, the monks ignorant and shameless. This conduct was compared with that of the preachers of the Reformation, men of simple habits, for the most part poor and grave; and the contrast was so striking, that honest hearts could not resist it. Without some great lords on one side, and the lowest of the people on the other, the church of Rome was lost in France.

The provincial nobility, which had not been depraved in the atmosphere of the royal household, were all inclined to the new ideas. They entertained against the privileges of the priests, and against their territorial encroachments, an old, though suppressed hostility, that only waited an occasion to burst forth. They had, beside, considerable leisure in their castles, since the severe interdiction of wars of lord against lord; and reading at eve, around the feudal hearth, the Holy Scriptures, they were drawn, almost without being aware of it, to the teachings of Luther and Calvin.

The people of the third estate, who had received a lettered education,—advocates, legists, professors, notable burghers,—were already won beforehand, by their very studies, to these opinions. “Above all,” says with great simplicity an historian devoted to

Catholicism, “painters, watchmakers, sculptors, goldsmiths, booksellers, printers, and others, who, from their callings, have some nobility of mind, were among the first easily surprised.”[19]

Traders, who voyaged in foreign countries, brought back impressions favourable to the Reformation. They recognised that this religion, by correcting the manners of the people, developed at the same moment their commerce, and contributed to the advance of their industry.

Many secular and regular ecclesiastics in the provinces were also shaken. Having taken orders without having learned any other thing than the barbarous theology of the schools, they had taught their dogmas in good faith. But placed face to face with the new dogma, they saw the stamp of truth upon it. They then betook themselves to some business for a livelihood, and, working at their handicraft, preached in secret the doctrines of the Reformation. They were encouraged by the thought that Rome would sooner or later come to an understanding with the Reformers in a general council. Hence those contradictions among some of them, which have not been sufficiently comprehended by our older historians.

The hawkers of Bibles and religious tracts aided powerfully in these conquests of the new faith. They were called bale-bearers, basket or library-carriers. They belonged to different classes of society: many were students in theology, or even ministers of the Gospel.

The printing-presses of Geneva, Lausanne, Neufchâtel, specially established to inundate France with religious writings, furnished them with books.

And then, staff in hand, basket on back, through heat and cold, by lonely ways, through mountain-ravines and dreary morasses, they went from door to door, often ill received, always at the hazard of their lives, and knowing not in the morning where to lay their head at night. It was chiefly through them that the Bible penetrated into the manor of the noble, and beneath the hut of the villager.

Exposed, like the old Vaudois of Piedmont, to cruel pursuit, the new pedlars imitated their ingenuity, by placing at the top of their packs pieces of stuff or other unsuspicious objects, while they concealed beneath, the prohibited wares. “To gain easier access in the towns, in the country, in the houses of the nobility,” says again Florimond de Rémond, “some of them went as hawkers of little trinkets for the ladies, hiding in the depth of their bales the little books, which they presented to girls; but this was done furtively, as if they were things of great rarity, to make them better relished.”[20] From the many victims they furnished to the scaffold and the stake, we must suppose these humble packmen to have been very numerous. We cannot dwell upon this subject; but history owes it to their heroic devotedness, that we should recount the martyrdom of one among them at least.

A Dauphinese, named Pierre Chapot, after a short sojourn at Geneva, found employment as a compositor at Paris, and in his hours of leisure sold religious books. A spy of the Sorbonne surprised him in 1546, and Chapot was cited before the *Chambre ardente* of the Parliament. His mild air, modest behaviour, his appeals to the justice of the counsellors, the Bible that he invoked with such assurance, softened the judges, and he obtained

permission to enter upon a disputation with three doctors of theology. These last acceded with reluctance, saying that to discuss with heretics was a thing of evil consequence.

Chapot relied upon scriptural texts, and the others answered him with councils and traditions. Then, turning to the counsellors, the prisoner begged them not to allow a reference to anything but the declarations of the Gospel. Cut to the quick, the Sorbonnists said to the judges: “Why do you permit yourselves to be dictated to by a wicked and wily heretic? Why have you brought us hither to discuss articles already censured and condemned by the theological faculty? We will carry our complaint before those whom it concerns.” And they all departed deeply angered.

After they had left, the hawker said, with a calm voice: “You see, gentlemen, that these people proffer no other reasons than shouts and menaces; I want nothing more than to persuade you of the justice of my cause.” And falling upon his knees, with clasped hands, he implored God to inspire all the company with a right judgment, for the honour and glory of His name. Some of the judges, touched with compassion, would have acquitted him. But the contrary opinion prevailed, and the only favour he obtained, was not to have his tongue cut out before being burned alive.

He was taken to the Place Maubert, supported in a cart by two men, for the torture had broken his limbs. From the height of this new pulpit, he cried: “Christian people, although you see me here carried to die like a malefactor, and although I feel guilty of all my sins, I pray each of you to understand, that I am now about to depart from life like a true

Christian, and not for any heresy, or because I am without God. I believe in God the Father Almighty, and in Jesus Christ, who, by His death, has delivered us from everlasting death. I believe that he was conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary...."

He was interrupted by the doctor Maillard, one of those with whom he had disputed before the Parliament: "Master Pierre," he said to him, "it is here that you ought to implore pardon of the Virgin Mary, whom you have so grievously offended." "Sir, I pray you," replied the sufferer, "let me speak; I will say nothing that is unfitting a good Christian. As for the Virgin Mary, I have offended her in nothing, nor would I wish to have done it." "Then say but one *Ave Maria*." "No, I will not say it." And he repeated without ceasing: "Jesus, son of David, have mercy upon me." At this moment the doctor ordered the executioner to tighten the cord, and the martyr gave up his soul to God.

After the execution, the theologians of the Sorbonne complained loudly to the *Chambre ardente*, and declared that if heretics were permitted to speak, everything would be lost. The Parliament therefore resolved that all the condemned should have, without exception, their tongues cut out.

The disciples of the new religion had among them signs of recognition; and when they were too numerous to form one assembly, they divided themselves into *small bands*. The most resolute, or the best informed, undertook to explain the Bible. They were sometimes poor artisans, who made their exhortations by turn. The meetings took place in the evening, or at night, or in the morning, in order to escape the eye of the enemy. Anything served for

these assemblies: a barn, a cellar, a garret, the bosom of a wood, an opening of a rock in the mountain-side.

The object of assembling was in some places concealed by means, which reveal at the same time the simplicity and the rigour of the period. “For the purpose of these meetings,” says Florimond de Rémond, speaking of those of Paris, “they chose some house with secret doors, so as to be able on necessity to fly, and also to enter by different ways. And he who was to preach, brought with him dice and cards, that he might throw them upon the carpet instead of the Bible, and conceal their deed by gaming.... The minister of Mantes was better advised, when secretly preaching in Paris, at the Croix-Verte, near the Louvre, he had counters and tale-books put upon the table, in order to deceive those who might suddenly come upon them, if they did not belong to his flock.”[21]

When a pastor visited, in passing, these meetings, the rejoicing was very great. He was listened to for hours; the symbols of the Holy Supper were received from his hands; the persecutions they had mutually suffered told of those which yet awaited them; and in separating, the adieus spoken were for the scaffold and for heaven.

So long as a regular form of church government was not established, and in the absence of a minister of the Gospel, the administration of the sacrament was abstained from. Calvin and the pastors of the Reformation would not authorize each little assembly to receive the communion at the hands of a man without a recognised call. “We by no means approve that you should begin in this way, or even that you should be hasty to have the Holy Supper,

until you have an established order among you," wrote Calvin, in 1553, to the faithful dispersed in Saintonge.

But if the sacraments were wanting at the beginning, they preserved a great rigidity of manners and discipline. Sinners were reproved, the erring admonished, and the authors of scandals excluded from the communion. "They declared themselves," says the historian, whom I am never weary of citing, because he seems to have well understood the disciples of the Reformation,—"they declared themselves enemies of luxury, of public debauches, and of the frivolities of the world, too much in vogue among the Catholics. In their feasts and assemblies, instead of dancing and hautboys, they had readings from the Bibles, that were placed upon the table, and spiritual songs, especially the Psalms put into verse. The women, by their decent carriage and modest dress, appeared in public like mourning Eves or repentant Magdalens, as says Tertullian of those of his time. The men, all subdued, seemed stricken with the Holy Ghost."[22]

The popular opinion was not ill-founded, and Catherine de Medicis affirmed it one day in her trifling way: "I shall turn to the new religion, that I may pass for a pious prude."

This was the most flourishing and purest period of the French Reformation. There were, no doubt, among the faithful, some unquiet, restless minds, who only joined it out of an empty passion for novelty; there were among them also many differences, which compromised the general cause, and many lukewarm, that were called temporisers, middle-course men, or Nicodemites. But the rivalries of the great houses of the kingdom, and political

quarrels, had not yet mixed themselves up with religion. The Reformers suffered, and took no vengeance; they received death without a desire to retaliate, and displayed more severity against themselves than their enemies.

VIII.

In a more enlightened age, the great progress of the Reformation would soon have brought about a crisis. Unfortunately, the minds of the people were not yet ripe, and no one comprehended that there might be two religions at once in the same state.

Francis I., besieged by women and priests, had died in 1547, little regretted by the Catholics, who reproached him for not having done enough for the Church, and still less regretted by the Protestants, who accused him of having cruelly persecuted them. His son, Henry II., who succeeded him, was nineteen years of age. His nature was mild, his countenance open, his speech easy and ready, his manners graceful; but he was deficient in all the high qualities of a king. Ill instructed in business, and incapable of constant application to it, he chiefly passed his time in diversion with his courtiers. The government fell into the hands of favourites of both sexes,—Anne de Montmorency, the duke François de Guise, the Marshal de Saint André, Diane de Poitiers, duchess of Valentinois; and it is under his reign that the great factions, which covered France with ruins and blood, commenced.

Henry II., in concert with his Italian wife, Catherine de Medicis, opened the court to the arts of magic and sorcery, whence arose acts of the most shameful credulity amongst some, and of cold impiety among others. “Two great sins,” says an old historian, “crept into France in the reign of this prince; namely, atheism and magic.”[23]

At the *fêtes* of the coronation of the queen, in 1549, Henry II. displayed great magnificence; and as

voluptuousness and cruelty have much natural affinity, he determined upon combining with the pomp of the tournaments the spectacle of the execution of four Lutherans.

One of them was a poor tailor, or *sempster*, who had been thrown into prison for having worked on forbidden days, and spoken ill words against the Church of Rome. The king having expressed a desire to question, by way of pastime, some one of the heretics, the Cardinal de Lorraine had this sempster brought before him, supposing that he could not utter a sensible word. He was deceived. The sempster held his ground against the king and the priests with great presence of mind. "The favourite, Diane de Poitiers," according to the narrative of Crespin, "would also interpose her raillery; but the sempster soon cut her cloth in a different fashion to that she expected. For he, not being able to endure such inordinate arrogance in her whom he knew to be the cause of such cruel persecutions, said to her: 'Rest contented, Madam, that you have infected all France, without mixing your venom and filth in so sacred and holy a thing as the religion and truth of our Lord Jesus Christ.'"[24]

Henry II. was so angered with this boldness, that he resolved to see him burned alive. He placed himself, for the purpose, at a window fronting the stake. The poor sempster, having recognised him, turned upon him a look so firm, so fixed, impressed with so much calm and courage, that the king could not sustain this mute, but terrible accusation. He withdrew, frightened, his whole soul disturbed, and for many nights he imagined his couch was haunted by the sinister image of the victim. He swore never to be present again at these fearful executions, and

he kept his word. A more truly Christian prince would have abolished them.

The persecution, far from ceasing, raged more strongly. In 1551 appeared the famous Edict of Châteaubriant, which empowered both the secular and the ecclesiastical judges separately to take cognizance of the crime of heresy, so that by a complete reversal of all justice, the accused absolved before one tribunal, might be condemned before another. All intercession on their behalf was forbidden, and the sentences were to be executed in spite of appeal. The third of the goods of the convicts was to go to the informers. The king confiscated to himself the property of all those, who took refuge out of France. It was prohibited to send money or letters to the fugitives. And, lastly, the obligation of presenting a certificate of Catholic orthodoxy, was imposed upon all suspected persons. This atrocious legislation was imitated by the men of the Reign of Terror, but with modifications.

The most infamous baseness ensued. Such and such a favourite, such and such a courtesan, obtained as the price of the most disgraceful services, the spoils of a family, or even of an entire canton. The property of the victims was fought for and disputed in open day, before the whole country. Heretics were denounced, and in default were invented, that there might be more goods to confiscate; and many abbeys and noble families by this means enlarged their domains, as they did later on the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. They have since lost their ill-gotten acquisitions. The judgments of God have their day of execution!

The Edict of Châteaubriant was not enough. Pope Paul IV., the Cardinal de Lorraine, the Sorbonne, a

multitude of priests, demanded that France should become a land of inquisition. A bull to this effect was despatched in 1557, and the king confirmed it by an edict. But in vain did he attempt to force it upon the Parliament in session: the lay magistrates temporized, adjourned, and in the midst of so many disgraces, France was spared this one at least.

Exasperated by these delays, the impetuous Paul IV., whose head, it is said, was deranged with old age, fulminated a bull, in which he declared that all who lapsed into heresy, prelates, princes, even kings and emperors, should be shorn of their benefices, dignities, states, and empires, which he would bestow upon the first Catholic occupant, without even retaining to the Holy See the power of restitution. Paul IV. mistook the age: under the pontificate of Gregory VII. or of Innocent III., such a bull would have set all Europe on fire; under his, it was only an act of folly.

But in default of the Inquisition, the Sorbonne and the clergy, who had constituted hatred of heretics the first, and the most sacred of duties, neglected nothing to inflame every mind with implacable fanaticism. Its effects may be seen in the affair of the Rue Saint Jacques, which happened in the beginning of the month of September, 1557.

The battle of Saint Quentin had just been lost. Arms had been distributed among the people with orders to be ready for any event. Every one fancied the Spaniard at the gates of Paris, and general terror ascribed the disaster to the mildness with which the heretics had been treated. “We have not sufficiently avenged the honour of God, and God takes vengeance upon us,” cried with the same voice both the populace and churchmen. So, when Rome was

attacked by the barbarians, the Pagans accused themselves of having been too considerate towards the Christians. So, when Paris was menaced in 1792, after the taking of Verdun, the self-accusation was that the aristocracy and clergy had been too much spared, and the result was the days of September. The raging of the passions is always the same.

Three or four hundred of the faithful had met together one evening to celebrate the Supper, in a house of the Rue Saint Jacques, behind the Sorbonne. Among them were many gentlemen and men of the law. The ladies belonged, with the exception of four or five, to noble families; many of them were of the court.

Some bachelors or doctors of theology, lodging at the Sorbonne, had watched and given the signal of alarm. Fearing lest the assembly might separate before they were sufficiently strong in numbers, they had heaped up a great quantity of stones to overwhelm those who should come out. About midnight, the service being over, the faithful opened the door; but, at the threshold, they were assailed with a shower of missiles accompanied by frightful vociferations, and were compelled to retreat within.

The whole quarter was awakened by the tumult. The cry “to arms” was raised. Sinister rumours agitated the crowd. “Have the Spaniards surprised the town?” “No, not yet;” some replied, “but there are wretches who have sold the kingdom.” “Not so,” answered others, “they are Lutherans, damnable heretics, who rejoice in the misfortunes of France. Death, death to the heretics!” The street was filled with men armed with halberts, pikes, javelins, arquebuses, with everything that came to hand.

The faithful, momentarily expecting to be

massacred, fell upon their knees and supplicated God to come to their aid. Then they deliberated upon what they should do. To barricade themselves until the arrival of the serjeants, would be to devote themselves to almost certain death. To cut a passage through that furious multitude was scarcely less perilous. Upon this, however, the most daring decided, persuaded that the only way to daunt their adversaries was to front them boldly. The gentlemen drew their swords and marched foremost: the others followed. They traversed the crowd in the midst of a shower of stones, and through the pikes of their assailants. Favoured by the night, they escaped with their lives, though sorely wounded. One alone fell; he was trodden underfoot, and so mutilated as to have lost all likeness to the human form.

But what was the fate of those who had not the courage to leave the building? They were nearly all women and children. They sought to fly by the garden, but all the issues were watched. At break of day they tried to gain the street, but were beaten and driven back. The women, counting upon the pity their helplessness commanded, presented themselves at the windows and with clasped hands implored the compassion of the wretches who had begun to force the doors; but they might as successfully have supplicated rocks as these pitiless miscreants. Already, offering back their life to God, they were preparing to die, when in the morning, the civil-lieutenant arrived with a troop of serjeants.

He inquired into the cause of the disturbance, and learning that the meeting had been held for reading the Bible, to celebrate the Supper, to pray for the king and the prosperity of the kingdom, he was moved to tears. Yet he must acquit himself of his

duty. He had the men brought forth first bound two and two: they were insulted and beaten, those above all who, by their beards or their long dresses, seemed to be preachers. He would have kept the women in the house; but the populace threatened to fire it. They came out in their turn, to be overwhelmed with cowardly outrages, their clothes rent to shreds, their hair torn from their heads, to reach the prison of the Châtelet, covered with dirt and gore, to the number of about a hundred and forty victims.

The most execrable aspersions were hawked about against the new believers, in the pulpits, in the confessionals, in the colleges, in the market-places, at the court itself. Invention had not been much taxed: it was word for word the old calumnies of the Pagans against the meetings of the early Christians. The heretics were accused of not believing in God, of immolating little children, of extinguishing the lights.... I desist from saying more: let the history of the primitive church be read!

And as it seems necessary that in human affairs the ridiculous should always place itself beside the tragic, a certain bishop of Avranches distributed a tract throughout all Paris, in which, comparing the sound of the bells of the Catholic service to that of the arquebuses which had interrupted the Lutheran worship, he detailed a tissue of antitheses: “The bells ring, and the arquebuses thunder; those have a soft sound, and these a sound of fear; those open heaven, these open hell....” And thence this prelatical buffoon inferred that (Roman) Catholicism has all the signs of the true church.

The Reformers published apologies, which they secretly scattered abroad, even in the king’s chamber. But they sought in vain for a serious

inquiry. Their enemies did not by any means desire this; they judged it better to applaud the bands of wretches, who, crowding each day to the places appointed for capital punishments, shouted with bloodthirsty cries, “Death to the heretics!”

Before the end of September, three prisoners were brought to the scaffold: an old man, a young one, and a woman, Madame de Graveron, of the family of Luns, in Périgord. She was only twenty-three years of age, and had been a widow but a few months. On quitting the prison for the scene of execution, she exchanged her mourning weeds, says Crespin, for the velvet hood and other festal garments, as if to receive a happy triumph.

After these three victims, four others were sacrificed. But by this time, Protestant Europe had been stirred up by the voice of Calvin and of Farel. The Swiss cantons, the County Palatine, the elector of Saxony, the duke of Wurtemburg, the marquis of Brandenburg, interceded for the prisoners. Henry II. wanted the support of the Protestants, and granted their request. Everything in this affair was therefore to overflow with disgrace, even down to the act of amnesty wrenched from a king of France by the intervention of the foreigner.

IX.

Beaten without by the most violent storms, the French Reformation did not neglect anything by which it might strengthen itself within. Its organization was necessarily long defective and incomplete. At first, as we have seen, there were simple gatherings, without fixed pastors or regular administration of the sacraments. No churches then existed, in the dogmatic sense of the word, but only the seeds and scattered elements of churches. This lasted about thirty years.

Then the flocks had a consistory, ministers, a stable authority, a recognised discipline. The example had been set by the faithful of Paris, in 1555. A gentleman who received them at his house, M. de la Ferrière, proposed that they should appoint a pastor. Many objections were urged; but his representations prevailed, and the meeting nominated a minister, elders, and deacons. The same organization was adopted at Poitiers, Angers, Bourges, and other places. And thus was constituted the local church or ecclesiastical community.

A great step remained to be taken. The churches were isolated and independent of each other. They were to be confederated and united into one general church, whether for the maintenance of unity of belief and discipline, or to oppose a stronger barrier against the attacks of the enemy.

Such was the subject of the discussion, held with his colleagues, by the pastor Antoine de Chandieu, who had come to Poitiers from Paris about the end of the year 1558. All resolved upon convoking a general synod as soon as possible at Paris, with the consent

of the consistory, “not to attribute any pre-eminence or dignity to that church,” as Theodore de Bèze expressly observes, “but because it was then the most convenient town for collecting secretly a great number of ministers and elders.”[25]

In face of the gibbets erected on the public places, and of the sanguinary laws that crushed the Reformers, the difficulties of executing their project were immense. The result was, that only thirteen churches sent their deputies to this synod: Paris, Saint Lô, Dieppe, Angers, Orleans, Tours, Poitiers, Saintes, Marennes, Châtellerault, Saint Jean d’Angély. These delegates assembled under the presidency of the pastor François Morel, lord of Collonges, the 25th of May, 1559.

There was in the deliberations of this assembly a simplicity and moral grandeur that fill us with respect. Nothing of declamation or violence, but a calm dignity, a tranquil and serene force prevailed, as if the members of the synod debated in a profound peace, under the guardianship of the laws. And yet the historian De Thou says that they braved an almost certain death! Much admiration has been bestowed upon the constituent assembly for its resumption of the discussion upon a judiciary law, after the flight of Louis XVI.; here the spectacle is much more grand, for it required far more energy and self-denial.

The foundations of the French Reformation were then laid. Ensuing synods have only changed a few terms of the confession of faith, and developed points of discipline. The essential was established at the first stroke. The dogmatic and ecclesiastical code were the expression of what has been called Calvinism. Our task must be here only that of the

narrator.

The confession of faith was composed of forty articles, embracing all the dogmas, considered fundamental in the sixteenth century. God and His word; the Trinity; the fall of man and his state of condemnation; the decree of the Lord towards the elect; gratuitous redemption through Jesus Christ, very God and very man; participation in this grace through the faith given by the Holy Ghost; the characters of the true church; the number and signification of the Sacraments. The Bible was taken as the sole and absolute rule of all truth.

The discipline also contained forty articles. It has been since extended in the synodal assemblies; and it has ended by a division into fourteen chapters or sections, comprising two hundred and twenty articles; but all the chief ideas were in the primitive draft.

We will give a short glance at this ecclesiastical constitution. Wherever there were a sufficient number of the faithful, they were to constitute themselves into a church; that is to say, to name a consistory, appoint a minister, establish the regular celebration of the sacraments and the practice of discipline. Everything was to be begun with this first step.

The consistory was elected at first by the common voice of the people; it was completed afterwards by the suffrages of its own members; but the new selections were always to be submitted for the approval of the flock, and if there were any opposition, the debate was to be settled either at the colloquy or at the provincial synod. To be eligible for the consistory imposed no condition of fortune, or of

any other kind.

The election of the pastors was notified to the people in the same way, after having been made by the provincial synod or the colloquy. The newly elected minister preached during three consecutive Sundays. The silence of the people was held to signify their consent. If there were any reclamations, these were carried before the bodies charged with the choice of pastors. There was no further appeal against the voice of the majority.

A certain number of churches formed the conscription of a colloquy. The colloquies assembled twice a year at least. Each church was represented by a pastor and an elder. The office of these companies was to arrange any difficulties that might arise, and generally to provide for whatever was conformable to the welfare of their flocks.

Beyond the colloquies were the provincial synods, also composed of a pastor and an elder of each church. They assembled once in each year at least. They decided upon whatever had not been settled in the colloquies, and upon all the important matters of their province. The number of these synods has varied. Sixteen has been the general number, since the union of Béarn to France.

Lastly, at the summit of the hierarchy was placed the national synod. It was, whenever it was possible, to be convoked year by year; which, however, scarcely ever took place, owing to the misfortunes of the times.

Composed of two pastors, and of two elders of each particular synod, the national synod was the supreme court for all great ecclesiastical matters, and every one was bound to render it obedience. The

deliberations commenced by reading the confession of faith and of discipline. The members of the assembly must adhere to the first, but might propose amendments of the other. The presidency belonged of right to a pastor. The duration of the sessions was indeterminate. Before the closing of each session, the province in which the following synod would be holden, was designated.

This constitution had been dictated by Calvin. It attests the power and extent of his genius for organization. Throughout the whole the elective principle was the guarantee of liberty; throughout the whole power supported authority; and thence, order arose from the combination of these two elements. Moreover, an equilibrium between the pastors and the laity was preserved; the periodical and frequent renewal of provincial and national synods was settled; and churches were strongly united without the least trace of primacy. It was a Presbyterian government in its essential features. In these times it would, doubtless, be required that the part of the people should not be limited to a simple right of veto, and that the number of the laity should prevail over that of the pastors in the different degrees of jurisdiction. But if we recur to the ideas which were current in the sixteenth century, it will be seen that this ecclesiastical charter immensely surpassed the civil institutions. The principle of the equality of believers, pastors or laymen, great or little, was at its base, and out of this naturally arose the equality of the citizens; for the State and the Church ever tend to be, in their respective attributes, the counterpart of each other.

We must add, that all these elective bodies, from the consistories to the national synod, formed a sort

of jury, which had authority to take cognisance of private errors, and to inflict spiritual penalties. These penalties were individual admonition, remonstrance in consistory, suspension from the Lord's Supper, and lastly, for great scandals, excommunication and excision from the Church. The heads of the highest must bend like the most humble, under this religious penalty, and, in certain cases, make public confession of their offences. Henry IV., already king of Navarre, submitted to it on more than one occasion.

We are astonished in our times at this interference with private actions; but in those days few people thought of complaining. The ecclesiastical power penetrated without obstacle and without effort into fireside life. It was believed that the religious law ought to inquire into the faults which the civil law could not reach, and for the Reformers it was still more requisite that they should have recourse to this kind of penalty, as they were accused of having left the Romish church only the more unrestrictedly to satisfy their passions.

On the 29th of May, 1559, when the deputies of the first general synod, before separating, mingled their souls in prayer, that they might bless God for the work he had permitted them to accomplish, the French Reformation was constituted.

X.

The Parliament of Paris began to exhibit signs of hesitation before the growing host of the Calvinists. It had split into three parties: the ultra-Catholics, headed by the chief president, Gilles Lemaître, who were bent upon persisting in the old system of persecution; the men of middle course, already styled Politicians, among whom figured Christophe de Harlay, Seguier, and De Thou, the father of the historian, who sought to approximate the two religions by mutual concessions; lastly, the secret Reformers, whose chiefs were Anne Dubourg and Louis Dubourg, who from day to day declared themselves more openly. These divisions produced between the two chambers a diversity of jurisprudence, the great chamber continuing to pursue the heretics with severity, and the Tournelle seeking means to acquit them.

These symptoms of indulgence alarmed the clergy. “If the secular arm fails in its duty,” said the Cardinal de Lorraine to the king, “all the malcontents will throw themselves into this detestable sect; they will destroy the ecclesiastical power, and afterwards it will be the turn of the regal power.”

Henry II. listened to him with greater readiness, because he had just concluded with the king of Spain the shameful peace of Cateau-Cambrésis, when the two monarchs engaged by a secret article, to exterminate heresy; and as a pledge of this treaty, his daughter Elizabeth was to espouse Philip II. It was therefore arranged that the king should go in person to the Parliament, in order to put an end at once to the divisions by an act of authority. It was also, as the cardinal further observed, the most agreeable

exhibition to offer to the Spanish ambassadors, who had arrived in Paris to fetch away the betrothed princess, to burn before the people half a dozen Lutheran counsellors. “We must,” to use his expression, “give this junket to these grandees of Spain.”

Henry II. proceeded to hold a bed of justice, on the 10th of August, 1559, and invited the counsellors to give him frankly their advice upon the means of appeasing the religious differences. The chief president, Gilles Lemaître, lauded the zeal of Philip Augustus, who had in one day caused six hundred of the Albigenses to be burned. The men of middle course confined themselves to vague generalities. The secret Calvinists, Anne Dubourg in particular, demanded religious reforms by means of a national council. “Every day,” said he, “we see committed crimes that go unpunished, while new torments are invented against men who have committed no crime. It is not a matter of little importance to condemn those who, in the midst of the flames, invoke the name of Jesus Christ.”

The irritated prince ordered him to be arrested in full Parliament, by the captain of his guards, and said aloud, that he would see him burned with his own eyes. But wounded, by the splinter of a lance, in a tournament, he died a month afterwards; and we are assured that in his last moments he remembered Anne Dubourg with grief, and the other counsellors confined in the Bastille. “They are innocent,” he cried, “and God punishes me for having persecuted them.” The Cardinal de Lorraine hastened to quiet his conscience, by saying that this was a suggestion of the devil.

Anne Dubourg was born, in 1521, at Riom, in

Auvergne, and belonged to a family of consideration. His uncle had been chancellor of France. After having studied theology, received orders, and entered the law at Orleans, he occupied, since the year 1557, a seat in the Parliament of Paris. He was a man of great learning, integrity, and devotion to his duties; and the only accusation that could be brought against him was, that he had sided with the new religion.

The death of the king did not suspend his trial. The bishop of Paris had him degraded from his orders, and, contrary to custom, the matter was brought, not before the assembled chambers, but commissioners. Some magistrates would have persuaded him to make a confession of faith in ambiguous terms, so that, without wounding his own conscience, he might satisfy that of the judges. Dubourg refused: he even disavowed his advocate Marillac, who had defended him with equivocal phrases, and he was condemned to be burned alive.

He heard his sentence read without a change of countenance, and prayed God to pardon his judges. “Happen what will,” said he, “I am a Christian; yes, I am a Christian; and I will shout still louder, dying for the glory of my Lord Jesus Christ.”

As the Reformers had tried to provide him with the means of escape, he was inclosed in an iron cage, an old implement of Louis XI.’s fetched from the Bastille. Dubourg’s resignation was not disturbed: he sang the praises of God in this narrow prison.

It was the usage to reserve for grand occasions the execution of criminals of the deepest dye, and that of Anne Dubourg was fixed for the 23rd of December, 1559, the day before Christmas-eve. Six hundred men were put under arms. The crossways of the

streets were even inclosed with strong posts and barriers, in order that the place of execution might not be ascertained until the last hour. Dubourg wished to divest himself of his clothes: “My friends,” said he to the people, “I am not here to die like a thief, or a murderer, but for the Gospel.” He was offered a crucifix, but he rejected it, and when suspended on the gibbet he cried: “My God, my God, forsake me not, that I may not forsake Thee.”

Thus died, at the age of thirty-eight, this pious and illustrious magistrate. “His execution,” says Mézeray, “inspired many persons with the conviction that the belief professed by so good and so enlightened a man, could not be evil;”[26] and Florimond de Rémond, then a student, avows that every one in the colleges was moved to tears, that they pleaded his cause after his death, and that this execution did more harm than a hundred ministers could have done with all their preaching.

The year following, the Chancellor Olivétan pronounced the name of Anne Dubourg with despair upon his death-bed; and on the approach of the Cardinal de Lorraine, he said to him: “Ah! Cardinal, thou hast caused the damnation of us all.”

In the midst of these persecutions, the affairs of the nation were daily becoming more critical. The new king, Francis II., was hardly six years old. Feeble in body and mind, his person, according to the energetic expression of an old historian, was exposed to the first occupant. Catherine de Medicis, the Guises, Châtillons, Bourbons, the Constable Anne de Montmorency, all worked to their own advantage this impotent fiction of the royalty of a child, and mingled with the religious discussions, the quarrels of their political ambition. We shall only speak of

that which is immediately connected with our subject.

Catherine de Medicis, who had now been in France six-and-twenty years, had brought from the country of Machiavelli the art of dissimulation, for which she had found such ample opportunity of exercise during the long humiliations, to which she had been subjected under the reign of the female favourites of Henry II. Artful and vindictive, licentious without having even the excuse of passion, ambitious of power, as much from the love of intrigue as from the pride of command, she had, nevertheless, abilities of a high order, which, directed to the pursuit of a good object, might have accomplished great designs; but having no longer either faith or moral feeling, and constantly engaged in ruining the authority of others in order to consolidate her own, she by turns embraced and deserted all parties alike. No wife and mother of our kings, Isabeau de Bavière excepted, has done so much injury to France as this Italian.[27]

The Guises, even more than Catherine de Medicis, were during forty years the real leaders of the (Roman) Catholic party in France, and without them, as Mézeray remarks, the new religion would perhaps have become dominant. This family, which was a younger branch of that of the dukes of Lorraine, had only established itself in France since the reign of Louis XII. Claude de Lorraine came hither in 1513, to seek his fortune, *with a valet and a walking-stick*. He had by Antoinette de Bourbon six sons and four daughters, who all succeeded in raising themselves to offices of consideration.

Francis I. distrusted them in the latter days of his life, and counselled his son to keep the Lorraines at a distance; but Henry II. had too little haughtiness of

mind and force of character to follow this wise counsel. He allowed these foreigners, who had interests quite distinct from those of his race and kingdom, to get into their hands the public business; and after the accession of Francis II., who espoused their niece Mary Stuart, two years older than himself, the Guises became all-powerful.

The Cardinal Charles de Lorraine, archbishop of Rheims, and the possessor, in ecclesiastical benefices, of a revenue of three hundred thousand crowns (many millions of our present money), had some learning, affable manners, great facility of speech, and much dexterity in the management of men and affairs, a deep policy, and a vast ambition. He aspired to nothing less than the crown of France for his brother, and to the tiara for himself. So, Pius V., somewhat anxious concerning the part he was playing in the Church, habitually called him the pope on the other side of the mountains. For the rest, he was a priest without settled convictions, and half preached the Confession of Augsburg, *to please my good masters the Germans*, as says Brantôme; he was decried for his evil habits, which he did not even care to hide, and raised the hooting of the populace on quitting the dwelling of a courtesan; lastly, he was as pusillanimous in the face of danger, as he was arrogant in prosperity.

His brother, the Duke François de Guise, less informed, and less eloquent, had higher qualities. A great warrior, intrepid and liberal, he had served France nobly at the defence of Metz, the capture of Calais and Thionville, and the victory of Renty. His character was naturally elevated and generous, but irascible, even cruel, when he encountered an obstacle; and as he comprehended nothing of

religious controversies or of political diplomacy, he placed his valiant sword at the service of the cardinal.

The two brothers were in a favourable position for reciprocally assisting, without interfering with each other. The one could not hope for the crown of France, nor could the other expect the tiara. The priest gained for their house the support of the churchmen, and the soldier, that of the military. Abroad they were aided by Philip II. and the Holy See, and these foreigners contracted alliances with foreigners, not as subjects, but as sovereigns.

Under Francis II. the cardinal got himself named Superintendent of the Exchequer. The Duke de Guise obtained, notwithstanding the protestations of the Constable, the command-in-chief of the army; and being at the same time grand chamberlain, master of the hounds, grand master, generalissimo, uncle of a king of sixteen, and brother of the cardinal, he wielded an authority at least as great as that of the ancient mayors of the palace.

On the other side were the Bourbons, princes of the blood, but in a distant degree, of narrow fortune, and suspected by the Crown since the treason of the ancient Constable, who had taken arms against his king.

Antoine de Bourbon, the head of his race, had espoused Jeanne d'Albret, who had conferred upon him the title of king of Navarre, without giving him the kingdom. He was an irresolute, indolent prince; and, timid by character, though occasionally courageous, he floated between the two doctrines, sometimes causing the Reformed faith to be preached in Béarn, Saintonge, and Poitou, and going to sing psalms at the Pré-aux-Clercs, in 1558, in spite

of the shouts of the Sorbonne; sometimes returning towards the (Roman) Catholic religion and persecuting the faithful. The first and last passion of his life was to recover the kingdom of Navarre, or equivalent domains. He died without succeeding, and this long dream only begat for him the mockery and desertion of every one.

His brother, the prince Louis de Condé, had a more penetrating genius and a more masculine character. Witty, merry, sometimes trifling, but intrepid above all, and loved by the soldiery, he valiantly defended the cause of the Reformers, without ever inspiring them with full confidence. Instructed in the new opinions by his wife and his stepmother, he showed more ambition than religion, and the looseness of his manners has always left a doubt upon the sincerity of his faith.

It may be asked whether the Bourbons, Henry IV. included, did not damage more than profit the French Reformation. They launched it into politics, drove it into the battle-field, dragged it into their particular quarrels; and then, when it had gained them the crown, they denied it.

Another family, less high in rank, but more eminent for its virtues,—that of the Châtillons, served the cause with more fidelity. It consisted of three brothers: Odet de Châtillon, François d'Andelot, and Gaspard de Coligny. Their mother, Louise de Montmorency, sister of the Constable, leaned to the Reformation. She was virtuous, in those times of license, a rare example of chastity. In her dying moments she refused the presence of a priest, saying that God had given her the grace of fearing and loving Him.

François d'Andelot, the youngest of the three

brothers, was the first to declare himself frankly for the new religion. Made prisoner in the wars of Italy, and detained in the castle of Milan, he had received some pious books from the hands of Rénée de France. Sent afterwards to Scotland, he had the opportunity of studying more closely the doctrine and practices of the Reformation. He was a brave and loyal knight, without fear or reproach, the worthy successor of Bayard.

Going to Brittany, where the property of his house was situated, he took with him a pastor who preached from town to town, with open doors: an unheard-of thing in 1558. Henry II. reproached him sharply for it. “Sire,” answered D’Andelot, “you must not think it strange that, after doing my duty in your service, I employ the rest of my time for the safety of my soul. Wherefore I supplicate you to leave my conscience safe, and to keep for your service my body and my goods, which are entirely yours.” “But I did not give you that order,” said the king, pointing to the collar about his neck, “to use it thus. You have promised and sworn to go to mass and to follow your religion.” “I did not then know,” replied the knight in his integrity, “what it was to be a Christian, and I would not have accepted it on that condition, had God touched my heart as He has since.”

The king, who could contain himself no longer, threw across the table his plate, which struck the dauphin, and he would have pierced D’Andelot with his sword. He had him imprisoned, and took away from him his commission of colonel-general of the infantry, which was given to Blaise de Montluc.

This matter made a great noise. Calvin wrote to the prisoner to felicitate him on his courage, and Pope Paul IV. was indignant that the offender had

not been led straight to execution. The ambassador of France represented to him in vain that it was out of the question to treat a Châtillon in this way, the nephew of the Constable, the brother of the Admiral. The intractable pontiff exclaimed, “A heretic never repents; it is an evil for which there is no remedy but the fire.”

Relations and friends intervened; D’Andelot consented to allow a mass to be said in the chamber of his prison, but without taking any part in it, and he was set at liberty.

Gaspard de Coligny, the greatest layman of the French Reformation, will detain us longer. We shall endeavour above all to describe the religious side of his character, and the details of private life neglected by other historians.

Born at Châtillon-sur-Loing in 1516, Coligny received his education from Nicolas Bérault, a renowned professor of the age, and he exhibited such taste for his studies, that he was compelled to interrupt them, lest he should be turned from the career of arms. At twenty-five he was made colonel-general of the French infantry, and through his regulations he introduced a severe discipline among these bands of mercenaries, who before his time were more like brigands than soldiers. “These ordinances,” says Brantôme, “were the most elegant and the wisest that were ever made in France, and I believe that since they were made, the lives of a million of persons have been preserved, and as much of their goods and faculties; for before there was nothing but pillage, theft, brigandage, ransomings, murders, quarrels, and disorder among these bands. This, then, is the obligation the world owes to this eminent person.”[28]

At what time Coligny made the first step towards the new doctrine is not known. From the year 1555, we find him seconding the enterprise of the Chevalier de Villegagnon, for founding a colony of French Reformers in Brazil. The Admiral, who perceived in the proposal the twofold advantage of opening a place of retreat for the persecuted people, and of enriching his country with a colonial establishment, gave Villegagnon two ships with a sum of ten thousand livres: the expedition, however, did not succeed.

Taken prisoner by the Spaniards after the disastrous battle of Saint Quentin, he asked for a Bible and other religious books. He gave himself wholly up to this study, and it was then that he seems to have acquired firm and deep convictions upon the principles of the Reformation.

When he had paid his ransom, he retired to his manor of Châtillon-sur-Loing; and wishing to apply himself to religious matters, he resigned to his brother D'Andelot, with the king's permission, the appointment of colonel-general of the infantry. He also gave up in favour of his cousin, the Marshal de Montmorency, son of the Constable, the government of Paris and the Isle of France, and besought Henry II. in the most earnest manner, to designate a successor for his government of Picardy. "All which from that time," says the author of the *Mémoires de Coligny*, "led many to suspect that he had changed his religion: it being true that he made it evident his mind was altogether drawn off from all coveting of honour and power."[29]

Yet this is the man, whom several historians have accused of taking up arms and fomenting rebellions from a spirit of ambition! History thus written is one

of the darkest shames of humanity.

Coligny was encouraged in his pious resolutions by Charlotte de Laval, his wife, who never ceased to invite him to declare himself openly. “Wherefore the Admiral, seeing himself pressed by her so often and with so much affection, resolved to tell her once for all, how it really was with him, representing in the fullest manner that, for many years, he had neither seen nor heard say of any one, whether in Germany or in France, who had made open profession of the religion, that they had not been overwhelmed with evils and calamities; that by the edicts of Francis I. and of Henry II., rigorously observed by the Parliament, those who were convicted were to be burned alive by a slow fire in public, and their property confiscated to the king; that notwithstanding, if she were bent so confidently upon not refusing the condition common to those of the (Reformed) religion, he on his part would not be found wanting in his duty.”[30]

Charlotte de Laval having answered that this had been the lot of true Christians in all ages, Coligny hesitated no longer. He professed his creed before those who came to visit him, exhorted his servants to follow his example, gave them the Scriptures to read, engaged men of piety to govern his children, and entirely reformed the habits of his house. He also began to frequent the meetings, but he did not participate yet in the Supper, having doubts upon this matter. He had discussed the point with learned ministers, asking for explanations upon the real presence and other similar subjects, without having seen his way clear in this doctrine.

One day, therefore, being at a meeting at Vatteville, he rose, when the Supper was about to be

celebrated; and after having beseeched the congregation not to take offence at his infirmity, he invited the minister to explain himself a little more at length upon the matter. “The Admiral, instructed by his discourse, first returned thanks to God, and from that time resolved to participate in this sacred and holy mystery on the first day of its celebration. The news of this having been spread throughout France, it is impossible to describe the joy and consolation all the churches thence received.”[31]

He persevered during his whole life in his pious habits, and practised them more freely, as the liberty of the believers gradually enlarged. “As soon as he left his bed, early in the morning, having taken his dressing-gown and knelt with all his household, he himself repeated prayers in the customary form of the churches of France; after which, pending the interval before the hour of preachment, which took place every second day with psalm-singing, he gave audiences to the deputies from the churches who had been sent to him, or occupied himself on public matters, of which he continued still to treat awhile after the sermon, until dinner-hour.

“Standing at the table, with his wife by his side, a psalm was sung, if there had been no preaching, and then followed the ordinary benediction: of which an infinity, not only of Frenchmen, but of German captains and colonels, can bear testimony of his having kept this observance, without a single intermission, not only in his house and at his ease, but also when with the army. The cloth having been removed, he, rising with all present, then returned thanks himself, or had them returned by his minister.”

The same thing was practised at supper; and

perceiving that all his household could not without inconvenience be present in the evening at bedtime, he ordered that every one should come at the conclusion of supper, and that when the psalms had been sung, prayers should be said. And it would not be easy to say how many of the French nobility began to establish in their families this devout rule of the Admiral, who often exhorted them to the true practice of piety, saying that it was not enough that the father of a family lived holily and religiously, if he did not by his example induce others to follow the same rule.

"When it was near the time of supper, he summoned all his people, representing to them that he would not have to render to God an account of his own life only, but also of their conduct, and he reconciled them together, if there had happened to be any dissension among them."

"He was of the middle height, his limbs were well-proportioned, his countenance calm and serene, his voice soft and pleasing, but rather slow and hesitating, his complexion clear, his carriage and demeanour grave, yet full of grace and kindness. Of wine, he drank very little; he ate sparingly, and slept, at the most, but seven hours."[32]

The character that Gaspard de Coligny displayed in public affairs, is familiar to all. Endowed with qualities the most diverse, and of the highest order, severe toward himself indulgent to others, never inflated by prosperity nor cast down by misfortune, a lover of his country, devoted to his king in whatever did not contravene his conscience, the most illustrious statesmen, as well as the most able captains, have esteemed it an honour to be compared with him. Perhaps he had defects in these qualities.

He appeared to be sometimes wanting in resolution, because he was too loyal to pursue to the utmost his advantages against royalty, and to be sometimes wanting in foresight, because he suspected with difficulty in others that perfidy which he found not in his own heart.

If we search in times near our own, and in a different system of things, for a parallel character with his, we shall, doubtless, pronounce the name of General Lafayette. The man of the sixteenth century and he of the eighteenth had a full belief in the justice of their cause. Each made the most generous sacrifices to it, and to the end adhered to it with the most unshaken constancy. Both had in their hands, on many occasions, the greatest interests of the state. Both were held to be the most honourable persons of their age. But Lafayette had the popular masses with him; Coligny had against him three-fourths of France; and also, with a higher political and military genius, he had less success.

The third brother, Odet de Châtillon, was the eldest of the family. Made by Clement VII. a cardinal at seventeen, he demanded reforms without completely adopting the Reformation. He ended by marrying a lady of a noble house, Isabelle de Hauteville, who was styled *Madame la Cardinal*, or *Madame la Comtesse de Beauvais*, when she took her seat in the apartments of the court in the quality of wife of a peer of France: a curious singularity, even in that time! Odet de Châtillon died in England some years after, being poisoned by one of his servants. Brantôme and De Thou speak in high terms of his judgment and integrity.

XI.

Catherine de Medicis had expressed in her days of disappointment some sentiments favourable to the Reformation, and those of the (new) religion supposed at first that she would lend them her support with her son Francis II. Coligny and other Calvinist lords wrote to her that they hoped to find in her a second Esther. But her favourable disposition was only apparent. “I comprehend nothing of this doctrine,” she would say; “what enlisted my sympathy for them, was rather my woman’s pity and compassion than a desire to be informed if their doctrine were true or false.”

In concert with the queen-mother and the court of Madrid, the Guises held the Bourbons in the background, and sent forth new edicts for exterminating heretics. In each Parliament *chambres ardentes* were instituted, so called because they condemned to the fire without pity, all those who were accused of the crime of heresy. There was a vast system of terror, where even the shadow of justice no longer appeared. Delations, confiscations, pillages, sentences of death, atrocious executions—the same scenes affrighted in the beginning of 1560, the principal towns of France,—Toulouse, Bordeaux, Lyons, Grenoble, Poitiers, and their dependent provinces.

At Paris, the commissaries of the quarters made daily visits to the suspected houses. One Démochères, or Mouchy, who has given the French language the term of *mouchard* (spy), took the field with a band of wretches, whose object was to surprise the heretics eating meat on the prohibited days, or assembling in meetings. They kept particular

watch on the Faubourg Saint Germain, which at that time received the name of Little Geneva.

Many persons were seized and maltreated. Those, who were able to fly, quitted the place, leaving furniture, money, provisions, all their goods, at the mercy of the bandits, who were intrusted with the office of serjeants; and houses were pillaged and sacked, according to the relation of Theodore de Bèze, as in a town taken by assault; the rabble gleaned and devastated what the first plunderers had omitted to take. “But what was most to be deplored,” adds this historian, “was to see the poor little children, who had no dwelling but the flagstones, crying, ahungered, in the most piteous manner, and begging about the streets, without any one daring to relieve or shelter them, for fear of falling into the like danger; so that they were less cared for than dogs.”[33]

Abominable contrivances had been put to work to fan the fury of the people of Paris. There may be still seen, in old collections, engravings which represent the heretics slaying priests with the arquebuse, casting monks into the water, slaughtering children, strangling women and old men, and persons were posted about the public squares to comment upon these infamies.

The people answered these dastard provocations by erecting images of the Virgin at the corners of the streets. They scrutinized the countenances of the passengers, and woe to him who did not lift his hat! woe to him who refused to put a piece of money into the trunks, or *épargne-mailles*, which were held out to him in order to provide for the payment of the tapers! The shout of “A heretic!” was raised; he was dragged to the Châtelet, and the prisons were so

crowded that it was necessary to hurry the executions, that new victims might be accommodated.

One trait will depict the state of feeling. Two miserable apprentices, who had been won over, declared that turpitudes were committed in the secret meetings of the Calvinists. The Cardinal de Lorraine went straight to relate this to the queen-mother, aggravating his recital with all the abominations with which in former times the Gnostics, the Mersalians, the Borborites, and the Manichæans, had been reproached, so that the Reformers might seem to have combined, as in a common sewer, the vices of every age.

Among the persons mentioned, were the wife and two daughters of a celebrated advocate of Paris. They voluntarily gave themselves up to justice, preferring death to dishonour. They were confronted with the two apprentices, who coloured, stammered, and so contradicted themselves in their statements, that it became evident they had invented an execrable lie. Some indignant magistrates were for imprisoning them instead of the outraged women. Just the contrary happened: the calumniators were absolved, and the females were sent back to their dungeons.

At the same time the Guises created other malcontents, who made an approach to the Calvinists, whence resulted the enterprise known by the name of the Conspiracy of Amboise.

Many gentlemen had come to the court to claim compensation for their blood spilled in the king's service, or for their properties, which had been despoiled in these times of confusion and anarchy. The Cardinal de Lorraine, dreading the presence of

so many soldiers, caused a proclamation to be published, which commanded all the petitioners, of whatever rank, to quit the place within twenty-four hours, under pain of death. A gibbet was even erected at the gates of the castle, to confirm the menace. The gentlemen departed, deeply angered at an affront, which no king of France had ever passed upon his brave nobility.

The war began by pamphlets, in which the Lorraines were accused of having usurped the rights of princes of the blood, of keeping the crown in pupilage, although they were foreigners, and of treading underfoot all the ancient laws of the kingdom. “France can abide it no longer,” is the language of one of these pamphlets, “and demands the convocation of the States-General to reduce these affairs to order.”

The malcontents soon passed from words to acts. Those of the religion felt scruples. Could they have recourse to force to obtain redress for their grievances? They consulted the divines of Switzerland and Germany, who replied that it was lawful to oppose the government usurped by the Lorraines, provided one of the legitimate chiefs, namely, a prince of the blood, were at their head, and the support of the States-General were secured.

Notwithstanding this, the greater number of the Reformed refused to participate in this enterprise, in which, says Brantôme, “*there was not less discontent than Huguenotism*.” Coligny was not initiated into it, and those who were concerned, had expressly reserved the person and authority of the king. They proposed nothing more than to expel the Lorraines, and to replace the government of France in the hands of French princes. Louis de Condé was the invisible

or *mute* chief of the conspiracy; La Renaudie, who represented the political malcontents, rather than the religious malcontents, was its visible chief.

Informed of the plot, through the treachery of the advocate Des Avenelles, the Guises hastened from the town of Blois, and shut themselves up with Francis II. in the Château d'Amboise. The poor young king said to them, weeping: "What have I done to my people that they thus pursue me? I will hear their complaints, and redress them. I should wish that, for a time, you would absent yourselves, that I might see whether it is you or me against whom they rage." The Lorraines took good care not to accede to this advice; for, once out of the court, they would have seen the whole nobility of France rise to prevent their return.

In the first moments of his fear, the Cardinal de Lorraine had sent to the Parliament an ordinance of amnesty, from which the preachers, and those who had conspired under pretext of religion, alone were excepted. But when he was certain of triumph, he made his revenge an even balance against his terror, and it was terrible. Twelve hundred of the conspirators perished at Amboise. The public place was covered with gallows; blood flowed in streams through the streets. No inquiry, no form of trial, was permitted; and as there were not executioners enough, the prisoners were thrown by hundreds, tied hand and foot, into the waves of the Loire. This same river was destined to engulf other victims: across the abyss of centuries, the Cardinal Charles de Lorraine and Carrier de Nantes may shake hands.

There was worse than this done in 1560. The Cardinal reserved the chiefs for after dinner, as Regnier de la Planche tells us, that he might afford a

pastime to the ladies, whom he perceived to be weary of their long stay in this fortress. The queen-mother and the courtiers placed themselves at the windows, *as if they were about to witness some mummery, or jugglers show*. "And the Cardinal pointed out to them the sufferers, with all the signs of a man greatly pleased, that he might so much the more animate the prince against his subjects."[34]

Many of the condemned displayed wonderful firmness. A gentleman named Villemongis, having dipped his hands in the blood of his companions, raised them to heaven, crying: "Lord, this is the blood of Thy children unrighteously spilled: Thou wilt avenge it."

The Baron de Castelnau, who, having been taken by the Spaniards in the Flemish wars, had spent, like the Admiral Coligny, the long days of his captivity in reading the Bible, was examined in the prison of Amboise by the Guises and the Chancellor Olivier. The latter inquired of him, mockingly, what it was that could have made, of a soldier, so learned a divine. "When I came to see you on my return from Flanders," said Castelnau, "I told you how I had passed my time. You approved of it then, and we were good friends. Why are we not so now? It is that, being then disgraced and out of favour, you spoke with sincerity. To-day, in order to please a man whom you despise, you are a traitor to your God and your conscience." The Cardinal wished to come to the aid of the Chancellor, saying that it was he who had fortified him in the faith, and he set himself to expound a controversial thesis. Castelnau appealed to the duke François de Guise, who answered that he understood nothing about it. "Would to Heaven it were otherwise!" cried the prisoner; "for I esteem

you well enough to think that if you were as enlightened as your brother, you would follow better things."

Having been condemned to death for treason: "I ought, then," said he, with bitterness, "to have said the Guises were kings of France." And bending his head to the axe, he appealed from the injustice of man to the justice of his Maker.

These barbarous executions inflamed the hatred of the parties, and opened the door to civil war. The conspiracy of Amboise became popular among the Reformers. Brantôme relates, that many said, "Yesterday, we belonged not to the conspiracy, and we would not have been of it for all the gold in the universe; to-day, we would be so for the smallest coin, and we say that the enterprise was good and holy."

The Lorraines, however, endeavoured to turn the affairs of Amboise to the profit of their ambition. On the 17th of March, the Duke de Guise had himself named lieutenant-general of the kingdom. Francis II. promised to comply with everything that his uncle might do, order, and execute. This was to abdicate the throne; or, to speak more correctly, to replace fiction by reality.

The Cardinal de Lorraine even ventured upon re-attempting his favourite project of establishing the Inquisition in France, as in Spain. He had already obtained the adhesion of the privy council, and drawn the reluctant consent of the queen-mother. But the blow was warded off by the Chancellor Michel de l'Hospital, who procured, in the month of May, 1560, the adoption of the edict of Romorantin, by which he restored to the bishops the cognizance of the crime of heresy. This edict was prodigal of the

most cruel penalties; but, at least, the foot of the inquisitor did not contaminate the soil of France.

XII.

This same year, 1560, so full of violence and blood, witnessed a new step of the French Reformation—the establishment of public worship. This was in the nature of things. When towns, and nearly entire provinces, had embraced the faith of the Reformers, secret meetings became impossible. A whole people does not shut itself up in forests and caverns to invoke its God. From whom, moreover, should it hide itself? From itself? The idea is absurd.

Not only did necessity compel this step on the part of the Reformers; they were also driven to it by the calumnies, with which their secret meetings were attacked. What better means had they of convicting their enemies of untruth, than by assembling in the light of day, and by saying: “Come and see?”

Thus the primitive Christians had come out of the Catacombs, in spite of the edicts of the emperors, as soon as they had become numerous. The same causes produce ever the same effects.

Calvin, and other prudent men, without absolutely disapproving of these manifestations, foresaw more clearly the results, and gave the counsel of caution. But the popular impulse was too strong. Nîmes, Montpellier, Aigues-Mortes, set the example, and the public worship soon spread far and near through Languedoc, Dauphiny, Provence, Béarn, Guienne, Saintonge, Poitou, and Normandy.

Being informed of this decision by the Count de Villars, the Marshal de Termes, and the other governors of the provinces, the Guises replied that the preachers should be hanged without trial, that criminal instructions should be taken against the

Huguenots, who attended the preachings, and that "*the country must be swept clean of this multitude of rabble, who lived like the Genevese.*" These orders were not strictly executed, nor could they be so. The Lorraines did not recognise the difference of the times: what was possible against a few thousand obscure sectarians without credit, was no longer possible before millions of proselytes, among whom were numbered more than half the great families of the kingdom.

In some places in Dauphiny, at Valence, at Montélimart, at Romans, those of the religion appropriated the (Roman) Catholic churches to their use; another imitation of the ancient Christians, who had invaded the temples of Paganism. This was also inevitable, in the places where the population had wholly changed their doctrine. The stones of the sanctuary belong to a religion only so long as it is believed in; if the people give it credence no longer, those stones become its property again, and the people reconsecrates them to its new worship.

The Duke de Guise felt so much the more disappointed at the state of affairs in Dauphiny, because he was the governor of that province. The enterprises of the heretics were in his eyes so many personal affronts, and he despatched one Maugiron, who surprised the towns of Valence and Romans, gave them up to pillage, hanged the principal inhabitants, and decapitated two ministers, with this inscription suspended from their necks: "*These are the chiefs of the rebels.*" These atrocities provoked reprisals. Two gentlemen of the religion, Montbrun and Mourans, made incursions into Dauphiny and Provence, at the head of armed bands, sacked the churches, maltreated the priests, who had urged the

slaughter of the Reformers, and celebrated their worship sword in hand.

Such a state of things could not long exist. It was neither peace nor war, neither the freedom of (the two) religions, nor the absolute domination of one alone. A remedy must be found, or the whole kingdom would be given up to complete anarchy, and the king's council therefore resolved to convoke the assembly of Notables at Fontainebleau. The Guises consented to this measure with reluctance; but, alarmed themselves at the dangers of a situation they could no longer direct, they yielded to the influence of the politicians, or *tiers-parti*, which had begun to be formed under the direction of the Chancellor L'Hospital.

The 21st of August, 1560, had been fixed for the opening of the assembly. The young king took his seat on the throne, in the great hall of the palace of Fontainebleau, having near him his wife, Mary of Scotland, the queen-mother, and his brothers. Cardinals, bishops, members of the privy council, knights of the order, masters of the requests, the dukes of Guise and Aumale, the Constable, the Admiral, the Chancellor, all were there, except the Bourbon princes, who, fearing a snare, had refused to be present.

The Duke de Guise gave an account of the administration of the army, the Cardinal de Lorraine of that of the finances. But, notwithstanding the importance of these matters, the Notables bestowed little attention upon them: they felt that the sole great affair of the moment was the religious question.

Coligny had promised the Reformers to give the signal. On a sudden, he rose, approached the throne,

made a respectful obeisance, and presented two petitions, one to the king, the other to the queen-mother bearing this inscription: "*The supplication of those, who, in divers provinces, invoke the name of God according to the rule of piety.*" All present were astonished at such boldness; for the penalty of death hung always over the head of the heretics. But the king, François II., who could not have been taught his lesson beforehand, on this emergency graciously received the petitions, and handed them to be read, to his secretary.

The faithful attested that their faith was that of the creed of the Apostles, that they had always acted as loyal subjects of the king, and that they had been most shamefully calumniated by the accusation of being fautors of disturbance and sedition. "The Gospel, which we profess, teaches us just the contrary," said they; "and we even do not hesitate to confess, that we never understood so well our duty towards your majesty as we have understood it by means of the holy doctrine that is preached to us." In conclusion, they asked permission to meet in open day, and submitted to be treated as rebels, if they should thenceforth be found meeting by night, or unlawfully.

It was remarked, that these documents were unsigned. "It is true," answered the Admiral; "but give us leave to assemble, and, in one day, I will bring fifty thousand signatures from the province of Normandy alone." "And I," interrupted the Duke de Guise, in an arrogant tone, "will find a hundred thousand who will sign the reverse with their blood."

The debates were resumed on the 23rd of August.

Two prelates—it is a pleasure to state it—Jean de Montluc, bishop of Valence, and Charles de Marillac,

archbishop of Vienne, proposed means of conciliation. Both had filled embassies in Italy, and visited the Protestant countries. It is a memorable fact, that the bishops of France, who had compared Rome and the Reformation, should have generally inclined to the new ideas!

Jean de Montluc depicted with energy the disorders which filled the Church. He compared the Calvinist ministers,—lettered, diligent men, having always the name of Jesus Christ on their lips, fearing not to die to confirm their doctrine,—to the (Roman) Catholic priests; and at this point he pronounced words, which deserve to find a place in history.

"The bishops (I speak of the greater number) have been idlers, having no fear of giving account to God of the flock intrusted to their charge, and their chief care has been to preserve their revenue, and to abuse it in foolish and scandalous expenses; so true is this, that we have seen forty residing in Paris, while the fire was blazing in their dioceses; and at the same time we see bishoprics given over to children and ignorant persons, who have neither the will, nor the knowledge, to uphold their condition. The ministers of this sect have not failed to show this to those, who were willing to listen to them.

"The curates are ignorant, greedy, busy with everything but their duties, and, for the most part, have procured their benefices by illicit means. And at a time which should call to our assistance men of learning, virtue, and strong zeal, as many double crowns as the bankers have sent to Rome, so many curates have they sent to us.

"The cardinals and the bishops have made no difficulty of conferring benefices upon their major-domos, and, what is more, upon their valets, cooks,

barbers, and lackeys. The common priests have by their avarice, ignorance, and dissolute life, rendered themselves odious and despised by all the world. Such are the charming remedies that have been used to procure peace for the Church!"

Montluc suggested two means of resolving the existing difficulties: one was to preach every day before the king, the queen, and the lords of the court, and to replace the "*foolish songs*" of the maids of honour by the Psalms of David; the other, to convoke, without delay, a universal free council, and, if the pope refused, a national council.

The Archbishop Marillac uttered the same complaints, supported the advice of Montluc, and proposed to decide, moreover, that nothing should be done in the Church for money, seeing that it is not lawful to make merchandise of spiritual things.

The next day, August 24th, it was the turn of the Admiral Coligny to speak. He required, like the two bishops, the convocation of a free council, either general or national, and added that permission should be given in the meanwhile to those of the religion to meet for the worship of God. "Give them churches, or other edifices in each place" said he, "and send thither people to see that nothing is done against the authority of the king and the public tranquillity. If you were to act in this way, the kingdom would be peaceable directly, and the subjects content."

But the Cardinal de Lorraine rejected this request without consideration. "Is it reasonable," he asked, "that we should be of the opinion of these people rather than of that of the king? And as to concede to them churches or places of assembly, this would be to approve of their heresy, which the king could not

do without being everlastingly damned." The Cardinal saw no greater necessity for convoking a council, since all that was required was to reform the manners of the churchmen, which could be done by general or private admonitions.

Nevertheless the Guises, being unsupported in the meeting at Fontainebleau, both by the Chancellor and by the Constable, consented to the convocation of the States-General for the following December, and announced that preparatory steps would be taken for holding a national council.

Pope Pius IV. was exceedingly disturbed by the mere idea of this council, being apprehensive of seeing either a schism result from it, or at least the re-establishment of the Pragmatic Sanction. He wrote to the king of France to tell him that his crown would be in danger, and to the king of Spain to beg him to intervene. But meeting with no satisfactory answer, he resolved to reopen the sessions of the Council of Trent, which had been for a long time suspended. The pontiff of Rome preferred an assembly, the majority of which was Italian, and under his control, to a national Council of France, which could deliberate without him, and perhaps against him.

It will be remarked that the most enlightened men of both communions,—Montluc, Marillac, L'Hospital, Coligny,—were of the same opinion about convoking a national council. We must not deceive ourselves as to what was really at the bottom of this project. It was not religious liberty, as we understand it in our day; it was simply the hope that by mutual concessions, (Roman) Catholicism and the Reformation might unite upon a common ground. The principle that two religions might not exist in

one state, still held sway over the best minds.

XIII.

In joining hands with the convocation of the States-General, the Lorraines entertained more than one secret thought. They flattered themselves that they should come to a conclusion with the Bourbons, envelop the Huguenots in the ruin of their chiefs, and win the majority in the States by seduction or intimidation.

Antoine de Bourbon and the Prince de Condé were invited to take their seats as princes of the blood royal. They were aware that great dangers awaited them, but a refusal would have been represented as an open rupture with the regal authority. The opposite characters of the two princes also concurred in inducing them to accept the invitation. The king of Navarre was too weak to brave the crown in so evident a manner; Louis de Condé was of too bold a nature to expose himself to the imputation of fear. The one started on the journey because he was not daring enough, the other, because his daring was too great.

Hardly had Condé entered Orleans, before he was arrested on a charge of high treason, and commissioners were appointed to try him. He refused to answer, on the plea that a prince of the blood royal could be tried only by the king and his peers, with all the assembled houses of Parliament. The Lorraines showed him an ordinance, by which he was declared guilty of lese-majesty, if he, persisted in his refusal. “We must not tolerate,” said the Duke de Guise, “the bravadoes of this young gallant, prince though he be; we must crush the head of heresy and rebellion at one blow.”

The chief of the house of Bourbon humbled himself before the duke and the cardinal, to solicit the pardon of his brother. They received him with lofty coldness, and had a strict watch kept over him. All historians relate that they conceived the project of assassinating him. As they dared not bring him to trial, it was resolved to summon him before Francis II., and so to induce a quarrel, by which the king should be led to draw his sword upon him. At this signal the courtiers were to throw themselves upon Antoine de Bourbon, and poniard him.

When informed of the plan, the extent of the danger inspired him with a degree, of courage, and he said to the Captain Rente: “I am going to a place where my death has been sworn. If I perish, take the shirt I now wear; carry it to my wife, since my son is not yet old enough to take vengeance for my death; and let her send it to the Christian princes, who will avenge me.” He then entered the king’s chamber, and the Cardinal de Lorraine shut the door behind him. The king made some insulting observations to him; but either from the timidity of youth, or from pity, he was afraid to give the signal. “The coward! the poltroon!” murmured Francis de Guise, who was hidden behind the door. A king of seventeen commissioned to assassinate his uncle! What manners! What a reign! What a court![35]

The Cardinal de Lorraine had also conceived a plan for the extermination of heretics, resembling those executed against the Albigeois of Languedoc, or the Moors of Spain. Would that for the honour of the human race, it were possible to deny such detestable designs; but they are attested by (Roman) Catholic writers, and even by the Jesuit Maimbourg.

The Cardinal had therefore resolved to make all

Frenchmen sign a formula of faith drawn up by the Sorbonne in 1542; a formula which, says Jean de Serres, "*no man of the religion would for a thousand livres have approved or signed.*"

The king was to present this document on Christmas-day to all the princes, officers, and chevaliers of the court; the queen was to present it to all the ladies of the palace; the Chancellor to the deputies of the States-General and to the *maîtres des requêtes*; the chiefs of the Parliaments and of the bailiwicks to their subordinates; the governors of the provinces to the gentry; the curates to all the inhabitants of their parishes; the heads of houses to their servants. Whosoever should refuse to sign, or who should even request time, was to be put to death on the following day; or, according to the milder version of Maimbourg, to be despoiled of all his goods and banished from the kingdom. Four marshals were to scour the provinces with their troops, to assist by force of arms in carrying out this law of extermination. The Cardinal adding burlesque to atrocity, called this formula of faith the rat-trap of the Huguenots.

Never before had those of the reformed faith in France been reduced to such a terrible extremity: when suddenly Francis II. was taken dangerously ill. The Cardinal de Lorraine had public processions made in Paris for his recovery. The young prince called upon the Virgin and the saints, saying, with the imbecile fanaticism in which he had been tutored, that if it pleased God to restore him to health, he would spare neither wife, nor mother, nor sisters, nor brothers, if they were ever so little suspected of heresy. These vows were fruitless. Francis II. died in his seventeenth year, after a reign

of seventeen months, on the 5th December, 1560.

No one cared for his burial, so much were the queen-mother, the Bourbons, the Guises, the cardinals, and the courtiers engrossed by their own affairs. Francis II. was escorted to Saint Denis by an old blind bishop and two ancient servitors of his house.

Before he had given up his last breath, the Lorraines had barricaded themselves in their dwelling; and there they remained for thirty-six hours, until they were reassured as to the intentions of the queen-mother and of the king of Navarre. Their governments and dignities were preserved to them, but they were no longer masters of the state. Charles IX, ten years and a half old, was proclaimed king, Catherine de Medicis regent, and Anthony de Bourbon lieutenant-general of the kingdom. He might, as first prince of the blood, have claimed the regency; but he lost his opportunity for want of vigour. The prince of Condé came out of prison; the Constable Anne of Montmorency resumed his office of grand master near the new king; and Admiral Coligny, asking nothing for himself, endeavoured to secure the free exercise of religion. The whole aspect of affairs was changed. The faithful (once more) breathed.

The States-General opened at Orleans on the 13th December. The Chancellor Michel de l'Hospital, the first to speak in the name of the infant king and the regent, declared that the disorder of the Church had given birth to heresy, and that a good reformation alone could extinguish it. He advised the (Roman) Catholics to *adorn themselves with virtues and a good life*, and to attack their adversaries with the arms of charity, of prayer, and of persuasion. "The knife" he

said, “avails but little against the mind; gentleness will do more than severity. Give up those fiendish names—the symbols of parties, factions, and seditions—Lutherans, Huguenots, Papists. Let us not change the name of Christian.” He ended by proposing the reunion of a national council for the settlement of all religious differences.

The orator of the Third Estate, Jean Lange, advocate of the Parliament of Bordeaux, keenly attacked three vices of the (Roman) Catholic clergy—ignorance, avarice, and luxury—intimating that troubles would cease when these abuses should be corrected.

Jacques de Silly, lord of Rochefort, spoke for the nobility, and did not spare the priests any more than did the orator of the Third Estate. He complained of their meddling in the administration of justice, of their enormous possessions, of the non-residence of the bishops, of their want of zeal for the instruction of their flocks, and finished by asking for churches for the gentlemen of the reformed religion.

Some months later, at the meeting of the States at Saint Germain, another orator of the Third Estate, the first magistrate of Autun, went so far as to propose the alienation of the goods of the Church, which he estimated at one hundred and twenty millions of livres; that the king should sell these possessions, and reserve forty-eight millions, which at an interest of one in twelve, would yield a yearly revenue of four millions, sufficient for the support of the priests; that then seventy-two millions would remain, of which forty-two millions might be employed in paying off the debts of the crown, and the remainder might be spent in the encouragement of agriculture and commerce. As to religious

differences, the same orator proposed to discuss them in a national council, legalized and free, to and from which, safe access and return should be guaranteed.

We are astonished at finding, in 1560, thoughts which were not fulfilled till 1789. It was the great voice of the people which was (then) heard. Civil wars had not yet fanaticised their minds and rendered their hearts inaccessible to pity. It was one of those short moments when the Reformation might have obtained the ascendant in France. Three-fourths of the nobility was gained over; the *bourgeoisie* was prepared; the magistracy was waiting; and would not the lower orders, already favourable to the new ideas in one part of the kingdom, have communicated an impulse to the other? What then was it that arrested this vast movement, whence a new France, a new Europe, might have sprung? First let us look to the Almighty, whose ways are wrapt in mystery. But in looking to men, what do we find? Among many, no doubt, sincere convictions, the weight of ancient traditions, respect for old recollections and customs. Let us not attribute to selfish motives the great events of mankind; but we must not omit to point out the tortuous policy of Catherine de Medicis, the ambition of the Guises, the intrigues of the king of Spain, the designs and the cupidity of the clergy.

The position of the priests at the States-General of Orleans was a difficult one, and the more they felt their weakness, the greater was the violence they displayed. The orator they had chosen, Jean Quintin, professor of Canon Law, began by regretting that the nobility and the Third Estate had thought proper to speak on their own behalf, when the States-General formed a body, of which the king was the head, and

of which *the Church was the mouth*. He accused the heretics of having no other Gospel than that of destroying altars, of evading ecclesiastical obedience, and of overthrowing the civil laws. Upon the strength of this, he invited his majesty to persecute them to the uttermost, as the sword was in his hand for no other purpose. He added, that since they were excommunicated, it was unlawful to dwell with them, to converse with them, to deal with them; but it was lawful to beat them, and to put them to death, for fear of sharing in their sin.

"Sire," said he, in conclusion, "all the clergy of your kingdom, on their bended knees, body and heart, humbly prostrate before your majesty, beseech you to be their protector and defender. They pray that if any excavator of dead and buried heresies should take upon him to revive a sect already condemned, and should to this end present a request, and demand churches and leave to inhabit the kingdom (here all eyes were turned upon Coligny, who sat opposite to the orator), we supplicate that he be held and declared a heretic, and proceeded against with all the rigour of the law, canon and civil, in order that the wicked wretch be driven from amongst us."

Although not unaccustomed to the declamations and invectives of the priests, this harangue, prompted by a savage fanaticism, astonished the States-General. The admiral demanded satisfaction from the queen-mother for the insult to himself, and Jean Quintin was compelled to offer him an apology. "A few days after," says Jean de Serres, "he died of mortification, on finding himself exposed by several published replies to his harangue, in which his calumnies and falsehoods were clearly refuted."[36]

XIV.

The States-General had served the cause of the Reformation. The Cardinal de Lorraine, annoyed at having played only a secondary part, withdrew to his archbishopric at Rheims. The Duke de Guise retired from the court; and the queen-mother, seeing that the two orders of the laity disapproved of religious persecutions, manifested, in concert with the Chancellor L'Hospital, a favourable disposition towards the Calvinists.

Coligny caused the reformed faith to be preached in his apartments, and Catherine de Medicis opened the pulpit of the palace of Fontainebleau to the bishop Montluc, the same who had so forcibly exclaimed against the abuses of the Roman church in the assembly of Notables. The courtiers, ever ready to range themselves on the side of fortune and power, flocked around the new preachers, and left a Jacobin monk to preach the Lent sermon to himself.

"It seems to me," said the Jesuit Maimbourg bitterly of the queen-mother, "that, on the most favourable construction, it may be fearlessly said, that if all she did upon this occasion was but a pretence, she did ill to feign so well as to give ground to believe that she belonged to the new sect. For she not only allowed the ministers to preach in the apartments of the prince, where all the world crowded to hear him, whilst a poor Jacobin, who preached the Lent sermon at Fontainebleau, was deserted; but she went so far as to take part herself with all her ladies at the sermons of the bishop of Valence, who preached openly, in one of the rooms of the château, the new dogmas he had drawn from the heresies of Luther and Calvin. So sudden and so

strange a change took place at court, that one would have said she was quite a Calvinist. Although it was Lent, meat was publicly sold, and spread upon every table. They talked no more of attending Mass, and the young king, who was still taken there to keep up appearances, went almost alone. They scoffed at the authority of the Popes, at the worship of the saints and of images, at indulgences, and at the ceremonies of the Church, which they treated as superstitions."[37]

If the Jesuit was right in saying that the queen-mother's going to the sermon was only a feint, he might have added, that it was also a feint on her part when she went to Mass. Sceptical, as for the most part were the upper classes of Italy in her time, Catherine de Medicis still perhaps believed in magic and sorcery, although not in Christian truth. Instead of serving God, she turned God to her service.

At any rate, the impulse spread to the provinces. How was it possible to interdict the public gatherings of the religious, when they could point to the example of the court? The timid grew bold, temporizers made up their minds. The enthusiasm was general. Controversial writings inundated the land. We possess an ample collection, under the titles of "Apologetic Complaint of the Churches," "Christian Exhortation to the King of France," "Remonstrances to the Queen and to the King of Navarre," and many others of a similar kind.

In these days of fervour and of hope, the faithful believed that the triumph of the Reformation was completely in the hands of the leaders of the state. "It rests with you alone," they wrote to Catherine de Medicis and Antoine de Bourbon, "that Jesus Christ be known and worshipped throughout the kingdom,

in all truth, righteousness, and holiness. For if you ordain that all superstitions and idolatries be extirpated, it will be done without let or hindrance. A single word from your lips will banish all those, who have been guilty of malversation in the Church. This single word will deprive them of strength, virtue, and power."

There were now not pastors enough. Switzerland was written to for more. Geneva, the Pays de Vaud, the canton of Neufchâtel, supplied as many as they could. They even deprived themselves of those, whose services were most useful to them, in order to satisfy wants more pressing than their own. Many young men, instructed under the eye of Calvin, and others of mature age, of different professions, were consecrated to the ministry of the Gospel. All saw, in the ardour of their faith, a great nation to be conquered.

On their side, the priests, it may easily be believed, were not asleep; and as they found no support at court, they turned their attention to the people. Disturbances arose at several towns,—at Pontoise, at Amiens, and particularly at Beauvais. The Cardinal Odet de Châtillon, who was accused of having celebrated the communion of the Lord's Supper, on Easter-day, 1561, after the fashion of Geneva, was assailed by the populace, and Marshal de Montmorency had to come from Paris, with a numerous escort, to quell the sedition.

L'Hospital sent to the bailiffs and seneschals letters patent commanding them to liberate all prisoners on account of religion, and not again to visit the interiors of houses under the pretext of illicit meetings. But the Parliament of Paris, angry that the letters had been despatched before they had been

registered, and ill disposed to the Reformation, since, by a stroke of authority, Anne Dubourg and six or seven other counsellors had been removed, demanded that the preexisting statutes should be rigidly observed.

But this opposition would have been impotent, had not another arisen out of it, under the name of the triumvirate. This was composed of the Duke de Guise, of the Constable de Montmorency, and of the Marshal de Saint André. Behind this association was the Cardinal de Lorraine with the mass of the clergy; above them, the pope and Philip II.; beneath them the people, especially those of the north and west. The triumvirate, which succeeded in winning over even the king of Navarre, was the most serious obstacle to the progress of the Reformation in France: it is essential, therefore, to explain its origin and character.

The Duke de Guise, kept at a distance by Catherine de Medicis, and hated by the princes of the blood, could not by himself recover the authority, of which the death of Francis II. had deprived him. He, therefore, sought assistance abroad, and formed a close alliance with the Spanish ambassador, who had received from Philip II. instructions to keep up troubles in the kingdom, in order to weaken it, and hand it over to his mercy. This ambassador, as is correctly observed by the Abbé d'Anquetil, acted the part of a French minister of state; he gave his advice in all matters of business, praised, blamed, and corrected; whilst the Guises in all things were with him.

The support of Spain, however, would not have sufficed for the Lorraines. An abandoned woman, the former favourite of Henry II., Diana of Poitiers, who

feared lest the spoils of the Huguenots should be demanded back from her, undertook to reconcile the old constable with the Duke de Guise.

Anne de Montmorency was at that time sixty-four years old. This companion in arms of Francis I., who had made him constable in 1538, was a brave cavalier, a loyal servant of the crown, and able to bear disgrace with courage; but of a narrow mind, rough in character, mistaking obstinacy for strength, and rudeness for dignity. In religion he only knew that he was the first Christian baron, and that the kings, his masters, were (Roman) Catholics. He concluded that he was bound to give no quarter to heresy.

Brantôme tells us what was the singular piety of Anne de Montmorency. He fasted with punctilious regularity on Friday, and failed not to repeat his *pater-noster* morning and evening; but sometimes he broke off, saying, “Go and hang me such a one; hang up this one to a tree; set fire to everything for a mile round.” And then he would continue his devotions, as if nothing were the matter.

His hands were not quite clean in his conduct of the financial affairs under Henry II., and when he learned that the States-General were going to call upon him for his accounts, he conceived that it was an intrigue of the Bourbons, who had a design against his honour, as well as his purse. From that moment he kept aloof from them.

In vain did his eldest son, the Marshal de Montmorency, esteemed, says Mézeray, as *one of the wisest nobles of the kingdom*, represent to him that he could not, and ought not to separate himself from the princes of the blood, and from his nephews the Châtillons, to become the tool of the house of

Lorraine; the obstinate constable always replied: “I am a good servant of the king and of my little masters (so he called the young brothers of Charles IX.), and for the honour of his majesty, I will not suffer the actions of the dead king to be impeached.”

The wife of the constable, Madeline of Savoy, who *was usually surrounded by priests and monks*, according to the history of Jean de Serres, *inflamed him by her outcries*. She pandered to his vanity as first Christian baron. “As the first officer of the crown,” she said to him, “and descended not only from the first baron, but from the first Christian of France, you are bound not to suffer the diminution of the Roman church: the ancient device of the house of De Montmorency is, ‘*Dieu aide au premier Chrétien!*’”

Diana of Poitiers, Madeline of Savoy, the Lorraines, the priests, and the ambassador of Philip II., managed so well, that the Duke de Guise and Anne de Montmorency took counsel together on Easter-day. The skilful contrivers of the affair took care to forget the conscience of the old man.

The third member of the triumvirate was Jacques d’Albon, Marshal de Saint André. Notwithstanding his great military command, he had no strength by himself, and sought for allies to acquire a position. He was an epicurean, who had wasted the goods confiscated from the Huguenots. Brantôme, so indulgent towards the vices of courtiers, says of him: “He was always given to consult his ease, to pleasures, and to excessive luxuries of the table. He was the first to introduce them at court, and truly they surpassed all bounds. He was a very Lucullus in ostentation and magnificence.”[38]

These were the authors of the triumvirate, and the pretended friends of the (Roman) Catholic religion.

Worldly motives united them; religion was only their pretext.

The Guises had gathered confidence and courage. This clearly appeared in the language held by the Cardinal de Lorraine after the consecration of Charles IX., in the month of May, 1561. He uttered grave complaints of the meetings of the Huguenots, which went on growing, and he demanded that a new edict should be discussed and drawn up in full Parliament, before the princes, the lords, and all the members of the privy council.

The sittings lasted twenty days. An order resulted, which, while giving an amnesty for the faults committed on either side, and inviting the priests no longer to excite the people, forbade the public meetings of the religion until the reunion of a national council, under pain of confiscation and banishment. This order, which was only adopted by a majority of three voices, bore the name of the Edict of July.

The (Roman) Catholic party congratulated itself upon having obtained a great victory, and the Duke de Guise said, on coming out of the court of the Parliament: “To maintain this edict, my sword shall never be sheathed.” But was it not madness to hope that men, who for forty years had braved the scaffold and the stake, would hesitate before the pain of banishment? What followed will show; France had yet to go through many terrible catastrophes before the two parties were disposed to make peace on more equitable conditions.

BOOK II.

FROM THE OPENING OF THE CONFERENCE OF POISSY TO THE EDICT OF NANTES. (1561-1598.)

I.

All the recent statutes upon matters of religion were only provisional. They announced the approaching reunion of a council, which was to close the controversies definitively; and this was soon a general cry throughout France.

The idea was not new. From the moment of the Reformation, Germany had demanded the convocation of an Œcumenical and altogether free council. The popes had long refused; they remembered the great gatherings of Constance and Bâle, and feared to find themselves face to face with these States-General of the Church. Overcome at last by the urgent demands of the princes and people, they had chosen an Italian town for the place of meeting; they had filled the council with their creatures; and had suspended or reopened the sessions, now at one point, now at another, according to the calculations of their policy. Protestants could not recognise this vain semblance of an universal council, and they kept away. The enlightened (Roman) Catholics of France were themselves offended, and it was determined to have a national council.

Most of the French cardinals and bishops were opposed to this. “To what purpose is it, to dispute with such obstinate people,” said the old Cardinal de Tournon; “if they wish to show their means of defence, let them go to the council of Trent; they will have safe conduct, and they may justify themselves if they can.” However, the Cardinal de Lorraine, who was better acquainted with the temper of the court, and counted a good deal upon his eloquence to overthrow the Huguenots, as the writers on their side

reproach him, was of a different opinion. He proposed to authorize, not a council, but a simple theological conference, and he obtained the consent of the chiefs of the clergy by the help of this compromise.

The whole affair, however, was full of equivocations and misunderstandings, and that is enough to make us understand the character and issue of the conference of Poissy.

The Reformed pastors, remembering what had happened at Zurich, at Geneva, and other places of Switzerland and Germany, wished to treat with the priests as equals, taking the Bible as the supreme arbiter of the controversy, and giving to the chiefs of the state the right to decide finally between the two parties.

The cardinals and bishops meant quite otherwise. [They would admit] no equality. They held themselves to be the only true representatives of the Church, and looked upon the doctors of the Reformation as men who had gone astray, and whom they listened to out of pure condescension. They did not accept the Bible as the sole arbiter of the debate. In fact, they reserved to themselves the right of being judges in their own cause, and of themselves deciding what should be admitted or condemned.

The (Roman) Catholic clergy, in one sense, were in the right, because it does not belong to the civil power to resolve religious questions; but in another sense, they were altogether wrong, for in consenting to discuss these matters before the depositaries of political authority, they appeared to give up that, which in reality they would not concede. The conference of Poissy then could only be a simple theological passage of arms, or rather, as it

afterwards turned out, an empty mockery. The priests were sure, whatever happened, to win their cause, since they reserved to themselves the right of bringing it to a close.

The pastors, convoked to the number of twelve, came accompanied by twenty-two lay deputies. The most eminent amongst them was Theodore de Bèze; he came to fill the place of Calvin, for whom the magistrates of Geneva had in vain demanded hostages of high rank.

Theodore de Bèze was born, in 1519, at Vézelay, a little town of Burgundy, of a noble family. He had been confided to the care of the celebrated professor Melchior Wolmar, who made him read the Scriptures, and by his example, as much as by his lessons, planted in his heart the first seeds of piety. Thirty years later, Bèze testified his gratitude to his instructor, and greeted him as his father, when he sent him his confession of faith.

These pious instructions at first appeared to have been stifled beneath the passions of youth. Surrounded in Paris by all that could lead him astray, amiable, rich, and witty, he lived as a man of the world, published a volume of light poetry under the name of *Juvenilia*, and contracted a secret marriage. He kept it secret, because one of his uncles, who was in orders, had made over to him the revenues of some ecclesiastical benefices.

A serious illness awakened his conscience. “As soon as I had strength to raise myself,” he writes to Wolmar, “I broke all my chains, packed up my travelling effects, and left my country, my parents, my friends, to follow Christ. I went into voluntary exile, and retired to Geneva with my wife.” He caused his marriage to be sanctioned by the Church,

and condemned all the errors of his youth. This was in the month of November, 1548; he was then twenty-nine years and four months old.

The Jesuits Garasse and Maimbourg, and, which more astonishes us, the Cardinal de Richelieu, have seized upon the poems of a student of twenty, to attack the austere Memoirs of the Reformer. Could they not understand the sacred duties of repentance?

Become poor, since he had given up all to his convictions, Theodore de Bèze, the man who had been the ornament of the saloons of Paris, determined to make himself a printer, joining with him Jean Crispin, the author of the *History of the Martyrs*. But if he had humility enough to accept this position, he had too much merit to remain in it. He was made professor of theology, rector of the Academy, and pastor at Geneva.

Then he contracted intimate relations with Calvin. Both lived in the same faith, and in the same hope; both brought the same zeal to the propagation of the doctrines of the Reformation in France. Calvin was gifted with a broader and more masculine genius, a severer logic, a more penetrating vision, a science more profound, and a stronger will. He was the genius and the master of Theodore de Bèze. But Bèze had an easier and more flowing eloquence, and more amiable manners, which were better suited to the relations of social life. The one was more fitted to stir up and govern men, the other to negotiate with them. It has been said that Bèze was the Melancthon of the new Luther. There is truth in the comparison. But the Reformer of Germany seems to have needed Melancthon more than the Reformer of Geneva required Theodore de Bèze. Melancthon was the counsellor, the support of Luther, and finished his

work; Bèze was but the most illustrious of the disciples of Calvin.

It is pleasant to see with what modesty he placed himself beneath Calvin, listening with deference, and seeking no other glory, if indeed he sought any, than that of reproducing the image of his master. “He attached himself so strongly to Calvin,” says his biographer, Antoine de la Faye, “that he scarcely ever left him. The conversation of this great man was of such advantage to him, that he made incredible progress, both in the doctrine and in the knowledge of ecclesiastical discipline.”[39]

He composed many works, of which the greater part have a polemical character. His most considerable works are Commentaries upon the New Testament, collections of sermons, the translation into French verse of a part of the Psalms, and the History of the Reformed Churches of France up to the year 1562.

Bèze went to preach at Nérac and Béarn in 1560, on the invitation of the king of Navarre. He had scarcely returned to Geneva, before he was summoned to the conference of Poissy, being esteemed, next to Calvin, as the most capable of upholding the cause of the Reformation in that assembly. “He was,” says his biographer, “of ordinary height, he had a handsome face, an agreeable bearing.... God had given him an understanding above the vulgar, an exquisite judgment, a marvellous memory, a rare eloquence, and an affability so engaging that he won the hearts of all who saw him.”

From the moment of his arrival at Poissy, he preached publicly at the court, before an attentive and select assembly. This was on the 24th of August,

1561. Eleven years later, to the very day, Charles IX. and Catherine de Medicis caused the tocsin of the [massacre of] Saint Bartholomew to knell. The inconstancy of human things! O profound mysteries of the future!

The same evening, meeting the Cardinal de Lorraine in the apartments of the king of Navarre, they held a conversation upon the articles of doctrine, and especially upon the Communion. The cardinal appeared to hold little to the dogma of transubstantiation, provided that the real presence could be in someway maintained, and after having listened to Bèze to the end, said to him: “I am glad to have seen and heard you, and I beseech you, in God’s name, to confer with me, that I may hear your reasons, and you mine, and you will find that I am not so black as I am represented.”

Thereupon Madame de Crussol, who was *free-spoken*, cried: “You are a good man to-day, but what will you be to-morrow? Bring ink and paper, and make the cardinal sign what he has said and confessed; for he will soon say the reverse.” She had guessed right. The rumour went, the day after, that at the very first blow the cardinal had closed the mouth of the professor of Geneva. The constable expressed his joy to the queen at dinner. “I was there,” coldly replied Catherine de Medicis, “and I can assure you that you are not rightly informed.”

The pastors presented requests, in which they demanded that the bishops should not be their judges, since they were hostile parties; that the conference should be presided over by the king and the great persons of the state; that all the differences should be decided solely by the Word of God, and that secretaries, equal in number on either side,

should draw up minutes of the proceedings, which should not be held to be authentic until they were approved and signed. This was putting the finger upon the knot of the question; but the bishops would have broken up twenty conferences rather than consent to such arrangements. The queen-mother knew this well; she gave an indefinite answer, or she invited the pastors to content themselves with her simple word, that the prelates should not be the judges of the discussion; but she refused to promise anything in writing.

On the eve of the conference, twelve doctors of the Sorbonne arrived at Saint Germain, with a sorrowful air, and entreated Catherine not to let the heretics speak, or at least only to grant them this favour with closed doors. “The (conference) will bring no edification,” they said; “and the king is so young, that he may be infected by this doctrine.” “I have engaged myself for good reasons,” answered the queen, “and cannot go back; but be quiet, all will go well!”

II.

The conference of Poissy opened on the 9th of September, 1561. This was the great spectacle of the moment for Christianity. The pope trembled lest he should lose the finest of his provinces, and had sent in haste the cardinal of Ferrara with the general of the Jesuits, to hinder its taking place. The king of Spain, partly from policy, partly from fanaticism, feared the reconciliation of the two religions in France. The (Roman) Catholic and the Protestant states awaited with equal impatience the issue of the debate.

On the appointed day, they met in the refectory of the nuns of Poissy. The king Charles IX., a child of eleven years, seated himself on his throne, having on his right and left the princes and princesses of his family, the chevaliers of the order, and the officers and ladies of the court. On the two lateral sides of the oblong apartment, were the cardinals de Tournon, de Lorraine, de Châtillon, de Bourbon, de Guise, and d'Armagnac; below them a crowd of bishops and doctors. The deputies of the Reformed Churches had not yet been introduced. This [was the] first mark of inequality.

The young king rose, and recited a discourse, in which he exhorted those present to divest themselves of all passion, and to discuss only for the honour of God, the discharge of their own conscience, and the re-establishment of the peace of the kingdom. The Chancellor Michel de l'Hospital, was the next to speak. "You are assembled," he said, "to proceed to the reformation of manners and doctrine. It is not expedient to wait for a general council, because several princes decline to send representatives,

others will have none of it, and it will be composed chiefly of strangers, who are ignorant of our affairs. As to what is said, that we ought not to hold two councils at the same time, this is not the first time that such has been the case. The best way to arrive at an understanding, is to proceed with humility, laying aside subtle and curious disputes. There is no occasion for many books, but to thoroughly understand the Word of God, and to conform to that as closely as possible. Do not esteem them enemies, who are said to be of the new religion, who are Christians, and baptized like yourselves, and do not condemn them through prejudice. Receive them as a father receives his children."

The prelates were out of temper at this discourse. The idea of a reformation in *doctrine*, and the advice to take the Word of God for their standard, seemed to be to yield to the demands of the Reformed. The Cardinal de Tournon called for a copy of the chancellor's speech, in order to deliberate with his colleagues, because it contained, he said, several matters of great consequence, which had not been mentioned in the letters of convocation. The conference was threatened to be broken up before the proceedings had been commenced, but L'Hospital refused, and they went on.

At last Theodore de Bèze was introduced by the Duke de Guise, with ten other pastors (Pierre Martyr had not yet arrived), and twenty-two lay deputies. Their sober and simple costume formed a strange contrast to the insignia of the prelates and of the people of the court. Nevertheless, they presented themselves with confidence; for they knew that they had God above them, and behind them a great part of the nation.

They offered to pass the balustrade, and to seat themselves by the side of the (Roman) Catholic doctors. They were stopped—a fresh mark of inequality. It pleased the priests that the disciples of the Reformation should be detained at the bar, like persons accused. With uncovered heads they bowed respectfully, and Theodore de Bèze, kneeling with the pastors, made a solemn confession of the sins of the people, and implored the benediction of Heaven upon the assembly. He was listened do with emotion and astonishment.

Having thanked the king for the favour which he had accorded to the Reformed, of being enabled to justify themselves before him, Bèze addressed himself to the prelates, and supplicated them, in the name of the great God, who would be Judge of all, to unite with him, not in giving way to sterile discussions, but to discover truth. He would not attack what he knew to be eternal,—the true Church of the Lord. He promised to correct himself, and his brethren, if any error should be found in them. “And would to God,” cried he, “that without going further, instead of opposing arguments, we might all sing a canticle with one voice, and hold out our hands to one another.”

Then Bèze unfolded the leading doctrines of the Reformation; and upon points of discipline, declared, among other things, that the Reformed professed to obey their kings and superiors, with this only reservation, that their first obedience was due to God, the King of kings, and Lord of lords. Having finished his discourse, he again knelt down with his brethren, and presented to Charles IX. the confession of faith of the French churches.

A deep silence had reigned throughout the

assembly up to the passage when he said, in speaking of the sacrament of the communion, “If any one asks us if we hold Jesus Christ to be absent from the Holy Supper, we answer, no. But if we look to the distance between places, as we must do, when the question of His corporal presence and his manhood is distinctly considered, we say that His body is as far removed from the bread and the wine, as the high heaven is distant from the earth....”

At these words, deep murmurs broke out in the ranks of the bishops. Some exclaimed: “*He has blasphemed!*” Others rose, and would have left. The Cardinal de Tournon however, interrupted the speaker, and prayed the king to impose silence upon him, or to permit them to retire. But the king, the queen, the princes, remained quietly in their places, and Bèze was enabled to explain his thoughts, which amounted to this: that on the one hand, the body of Jesus Christ is in heaven, and not elsewhere; that on the other hand, the faithful are made the recipients of His body and of His blood by faith, after a spiritual manner.

He had hardly done speaking, when the Cardinal de Tournon, trembling and stammering with rage, said to the king: “We thought rightly that these new evangelists might utter things unfit for the ear of a most Christian king. But we beseech you to give no heed, and to withhold your judgment until an answer has been made. We hope that you will be brought back....” (but immediately correcting himself), “not brought back, but preserved in the true path.”

It is well to consult the discussion, which arose, more than a century later, upon this singular incident, between Bossuet, Basnage, and Bayle. That the Cardinal de Tournon, the dean of the French

cardinals, an old man of seventy-two, should be carried away, may be excused from his great age. But how explain the clamours of the other chiefs of the clergy? Bèze had only reproduced, in measured terms, the doctrine of the Reformed upon the Eucharist. The prelates must have known it; they must also have foreseen that Bèze would maintain it. What, then, was the meaning of this sudden anger? Either it was feigned, or it was insane. Did they only seek a pretext to break up the conference? Admitting, even, that the bishops saw in their adversaries only accused men, still an accused man has, at least, the right to set forth his convictions, and to interrupt him by the cry of blasphemy, was the most flagrant of contradictions.

After the sitting, the prelates held council with their theologians, to determine what they should do. “Would to God,” the Cardinal de Lorraine said to them, “he had been dumb, or we deaf!” Their embarrassment was extreme; but it was necessary to answer, not again by supplications, but by reasons. They agreed to confine themselves to the justification of the two points of the Church and of the Supper; and Claude d’Espence, the most learned of their doctors, was instructed to prepare the materials of the discourse, which the Cardinal de Lorraine was to deliver.

In the meanwhile, the bishops resolved to draw up a confession of faith, which all should sign, and which they should afterwards present for the signature of the pastors. If they should refuse, an anathema was to be instantly fulminated against them, and the discussion to be closed. It was thus that the Roman clergy pretended to confer with their adversaries! It is but right to say that some (Roman)

Catholic theologians had the candour to oppose the resolutions of the majority.

The deputies of the churches, informed of this, complained to the king, saying that it was contrary to every law, human and divine, if even the bishops were to be their judges, to condemn them unheard. “We declare,” added they, “that if, in consequence of having heard us, disturbances cannot be allayed, or that greater should, to our regret, arise, we are guiltless of them, because we have sought and followed every means of concord.” The chancellor promised them justice, and compelled the bishops to desist.

On the 16th of September, in the same refectory of Poissy, and before the same assembly, the Cardinal de Lorraine delivered his discourse upon the two articles agreed upon. He declared that the Church could not err, and that if a part should fall into error, they ought to have recourse to the throne of Rome, admitted from ancient times to be the first of Christendom. As to the Holy Supper, he insisted upon the real presence, and deplored that what had been given us as a means of union, should have become a subject of discord. Finally, he addressed a pathetic appeal to the king, beseeching him to remain in the religion his ancestors had handed down to him from the time of Clovis.

Theodore de Bèze asked leave to reply upon the spot; but the prelates had already risen in confusion, and the Cardinal de Tournon said to the king: “If those, who have separated, are willing to subscribe to what has been said by Monsieur de Lorraine, they shall be heard at greater length upon the other points. If not, let all hearing be denied them; let your majesty send them back, and purge your kingdom of

them! This is what the assembly of prelates humbly asks of you, in order that in this most Christian kingdom there may be but one faith, one law, and one king."

The doctors of the Reformation then understood what a wretched mockery was meant by the prelates in this conference of Poissy. No free debate, not even the show of deliberation, not even the patience of a tribunal, which hears the accused to the end, [was to be permitted to them]. An unconditional, absolute adhesion upon the two points of the Church and the Supper, which logically included all the other points, [must be given]; if not, anathema and exile [were to be their lot].

They again made bitter, but useless complaints. To say the truth, from this moment there was no longer a conference; and the cardinal of Ferrara, who arrived at this juncture, confirmed the clergy in their resolutions, by saying that the pope had learned with extreme displeasure of the holding of this kind of national council. Nothing further took place than some private discussions, in the presence of persons carefully selected; and the lay deputies could not even obtain permission to attend.

On the 24th of September, in the little priory-chamber of Poissy, Theodore de Bèze discussed the two contested articles with the Cardinal de Lorraine, the doctor Claude d'Espence, and a certain Claude de Saintes, a *little white monk*, half-theologian, half-clown, who treated his adversary as an Anabaptist for having said he had received the Holy Ghost.

The Cardinal de Lorraine had prepared a surprise, from which he expected great results—to make the Lutheran doctors dispute against the Calvinists. From the commencement of the conference, he had written

to the governor of Metz to send him some theologians of the Confession of Augsburg, learned, and above all, very obstinate, in their opinions. The theologians came; but one of them having died of the plague on arriving at Paris, they were afraid to summon the others immediately to the court.

But the cardinal was unwilling to lose all the fruit of his ingenious contrivance; so drawing from his breast a paper, which he had received from the Counts Palatine, he called upon the ministers to declare, yes or no, if they would sign the three or four principal articles. They asked time to reflect.

On the 26th of September they went before the queen, who had near her the chiefs of the clergy, and said they desired to know if the Cardinal de Lorraine and the other prelates, renouncing the dogma of transubstantiation, would themselves attach their signature to the extract of the Confession of Augsburg. “If it is wished that we should sign something,” continued Theodore de Bèze, “it is reasonable that the Cardinal de Lorraine should also sign what he presents to us in the name of his party.”

The cardinal was excessively nettled at this proposition. “We are not equal, and far from being so,” he said. “For my part, I am not called upon to sign on the word of any master; I subscribe neither to those, who made this confession, nor to you.” “Since you will not,” answered Bèze, “sign yourselves, it is not just to call upon us to do so.” Bossuet pretends that Theodore de Bèze only escaped by a subtlety. It may be so; but his antagonist had set him the example.

Jacques Lainez, the general of the Jesuits, who had just arrived with the legate, assisted at this conference. He delivered so ridiculous and insolent a

discourse in Italian, that it astonished even the most impetuous (Roman) Catholics. After comparing the heretics to foxes and wolves, he said they ought not to discuss with them, but to send them before the Council of Trent, and that it did not belong to laymen or to women to judge of these matters. This last arrow hit Catherine de Medicis, who showed how deeply it offended her.

Passing to the question of the Supper, the general of the Jesuits wished to explain it by saying that Jesus Christ is present in the Sacrament, as a king who played his own part in the feasts celebrated to his honour. He dwelt at length upon this comparison, heaving deep sighs, and at the end of his discourse he wept. Bèze scornfully replied that "he had made a farce of the Supper, in which Jesus Christ was the harlequin, a remark foolish and unworthy to be spoken, or heard." Then quitting the Jesuit, he entered upon a more serious debate with Claude d'Espence.

Such was the first appearance of the Jesuits in France: but it scarcely indicated the important part they were to play in after-times. It was the prelates, assembled at Poissy, who authorized them to establish themselves in France; so that, according to the judicious remark of an historian, the assembly from which an equitable arrangement was expected between the religions, only served to introduce those into the kingdom, who stopped at nothing to prevent it.

The conference was reduced to still narrower limits. The queen-mother charged certain theologians on either side to draw up a common formulary upon the doctrine of the Supper. The five (Roman) Catholic delegates, who had been chosen from

amongst the more moderate, succeeded in agreeing with the Reformed by the assistance of those vague expressions, which every one can interpret as he pleases. The news having spread at court, many rejoiced, and Catherine de Medicis sent for Theodore de Bèze to express to him her satisfaction. The Cardinal de Lorraine, after reading the formula, seemed contented. But the assembly of the clergy and the doctors of the Sorbonne protested that this document was insufficient, captious, erroneous, and heretical; and, to put it aside, they presented to the queen a confession drawn up in the most strictly (Roman) Catholic sense, demanding that the ministers, if they refused to sign it, should be pronounced obstinate, separated from the Church, and driven out of the most Christian kingdom.

After this there was nothing more to be discussed, and the conference terminated on the 9th of October. One thing alone was made clear:—that the hope of bringing the two communions together by mutual concessions was illusory, and that nothing remained but either to let one exterminate the other, or to allow them to live side by side. This last idea, so little understood at that time, began to dawn upon a few superior intellects, and especially in that of the Chancellor l'Hospital, as we shall presently see.

III.

Notwithstanding the unhappy issue of the conference of Poissy, the courage of the Reformed party rose greatly, because they had had the advantage of setting forth their faith before the chiefs of the kingdom and the princes of the Roman (Catholic) Church. It was no longer possible to accuse them of infamous crimes, or to give them up without form of law to the sword of the executioner. The timid and the undecided flew to the standard of the Reformation, and a movement, like those we have already described on other occasions, was once more seen.

Some important towns, Milhau, Sainte Foy, Lacaune, and hundreds of villages cut themselves off at one stroke from (Roman) Catholicism. One pastor named Beaulieu announced to Farel that three hundred parishes of L'Agenois had *put down the mass*. "I have heard persons worthy of belief say," he wrote, "that if there could be found on this very day four thousand, or even six thousand ministers of the Lord, they would all be employed." Admitting that there is some exaggeration in this, the progress would still have been considerable.

The aged Farel returned for some time to his native country, and passing by Grenoble, exhorted the faithful to hold their meetings in the open air. Another preacher of great reputation at Geneva, Pierre Viret, came to Nismes in the month of October, 1561, and the day after his arrival, eight thousand auditors crowded round the foot of his pulpit.

He was suffering from the effects of two attempts

at assassination. A female domestic, gained by some monks, had tried to poison him at Geneva; and a priest of the Pays de Vaud, having attacked him on the highway, had so beaten him that he had been left for dead upon the spot. “To look at me,” he wrote at a later period, referring to his first sermon at Nismes, “I appeared like a dry anatomy covered with skin, who had taken my bones there to be buried; so much so, that even those who were not of our religion, but strongly opposed to it, pitied me and said: ‘What is this poor man come to do in our country? Has he come here to die?’ And I have even heard that, when I ascended the pulpit for the first time, many seeing me feared that I should faint before I could finish my sermon.”

He however rendered important services to the Reformation at Nismes, Lyons, Montpellier, and Orthez. He preached, according to the testimony of his contemporaries, with a sweetness and a charm which were peculiarly his own. It was not the vehemence of Farel, nor the depth of Calvin, but something unctuous and penetrating, which never wearied his hearers. Pierre Viret presided in 1563 at the national synod of Lyons. He has left some controversial writings in a lively and ingenious style, copies of which appear to have been well thumbed by the hands of the people.

In this great religious movement, new Catholic churches were invaded; for in several places there no longer remained either priests to celebrate the old worship, or believers to attend. And as crucifixes, images of saints, relics, and other objects, which the Reformation regarded as monuments of idolatry, were found in these churches, they were broken or cast into the fire. These devastations are to be

deplored; Pierre Viret and all wise men opposed them. But how could it be otherwise? The Reformers but imitated the early Christians without knowing it, and from the mere force of circumstances. “On every side,” says M. de Châteaubriand in his narrative of the fourth century, “temples were demolished, a loss ever to be lamented for the arts; but the material monument fell, *as it always will*, beneath the intellectual force of an idea, which has made its way into the conviction of the human race.”[40]

Meetings of eight thousand, fifteen thousand, some historians say forty thousand, were held at Paris. To avoid tumults, they were held outside the town. The people went out and came back by several gates. One of the usual preachers was Theodore de Bèze, whom the queen-mother had invited to stay in France, since his presence might be required. He blessed a court marriage between M. de Rohan and Mademoiselle de Barbançon, in the presence of the queen of Navarre and of the prince of Condé, which inspired greater confidence in the faithful of Paris. The Reformation was decidedly taking a hold in public and official acts.

The meetings were divided into two great sections. The one celebrated its worship outside the gate of Saint Antoine, at Popincourt; the other in the faubourg Saint Marceau, in a place called *Le Patriarche*. Several ministers preached at the same time before multitudes of hearers. The women placed themselves in the centre, then came the men on foot, next some men on horseback, and lastly, soldiers or bowmen, who protected the unarmed crowd.

It is difficult, on account of the contradictory testimony of contemporaries, to calculate exactly the respective forces of the two communions. Theodore

de Bèze says, that if the Reformed had determined either at Paris or in the provinces to employ all their means of action, they could have maintained the contest with a prospect of success. The Cardinal de Sainte Croix, a sort of titled spy entertained by Rome in France from 1561 to 1565, reports in his letters that even the members of the council were uncertain as to the numerical force of the parties, and concluded his last letter by saying that the kingdom was half Huguenot.

Admiral Coligny, on the invitation of the queen-mother, presented her with a list of more than two thousand five hundred churches, which demanded liberty of religion, and placed the persons and the wealth of the Reformed at the disposal of the king. He referred to flocks united in congregations, and administered to by regular pastors. To arrive at an exact estimate, it would be necessary to add the great mass of new believers, who had not yet been able to organize themselves according to the rules of discipline.

A letter which, it is said, was written by the Chancellor l'Hospital, some days before the conference of Poissy, and sent to the pope Pius IV. from the king, contained the following curious indications: "The fourth part of this kingdom is separated from the communion of the Church; and this fourth part is composed of gentlemen, of the principal citizens, and of those of the lower classes, who have seen the world, and are accustomed to bear arms, so that the separated lack not for strength. Neither are they deficient in counsel, for they have with them more than three-fourths of the men of letters. They have no want of money to carry on their affairs, having on their side a great

proportion of the large and good houses, both of the nobility and of the Third Estate."

In raising the number of the Reformed, in this document, to a fourth of the population, it is probable that the discontented and undecided were included, in order to render the pontiff more tractable as to projects of accommodation. But those historians, who pretend that the Calvinists formed at this time but a tenth of the population, must fall into a far more serious error, if we reflect that this minority sustained long and bloody wars against the (Roman) Catholics in every part of the kingdom, and always compelled them to consent to peace. The tenth part of the kingdom could not have held out so long against the other nine.

At Paris, the markets, the brotherhoods, the workmen, all the smaller classes, in a word, preserved their attachment to the old worship. The better order of citizens were divided; but the majority continued to profess (Roman) Catholicism. The greater number of the gentry, on the contrary, had adopted the Reformed faith, or were inclined to favour it. After the Guises and the court, it was Paris that saved the Romish church in France.

The position of the Reformed had become false and insupportable in every way, under the control of the Edict of July. This edict, which tolerated domestic gatherings and forbade public meetings, could not be carried into effect. The new believers, wherever they were numerous, necessarily overturned the barrier of the law; and on the other hand the (Roman) Catholic populace, excited by the priests, or carried away by their own fanaticism, were committing the greatest atrocities. They bathed in blood at Tours, Sens, and Cahors. Even at Paris, a

conflict—known as the mutiny of Saint Médard—broke out. Order, rule, and authority were at an end.

Measures of restraint became necessary. The cardinals and bishops, true to their spirit of persecution, counselled the expulsion of all the preachers from the kingdom, and the extermination of those who should resist; but Catherine de Medicis and L'Hospital answered that such a course would instantly lead to civil war. Only one thing appeared feasible to the chancellor—namely, to give a legal sanction to the public meetings of the Calvinists, under certain conditions.

Hence the Edict of January, 1562, was deliberated and adopted in a solemn assembly of the Notables. L'Hospital then, for the first time, developed the idea of the co-existence of the two communions. He declared that if the king should side entirely with one party, he must at once raise an army to crush the other, and that it would be difficult to make the soldiers fight against their fathers, brothers, sons, or dearest friends. "The question is not," he said, "about settling religion, but the common weal; for many may be citizens, who are not Christians. Even an excommunicated person does not cease to be a citizen, and we may live at peace with those who are of different opinions, as we see in the same family, where those who are (Roman) Catholics do not the less live in peace with, and love those, who are of the new religion."

These were the principal provisions of the Edict of January. Those of the Reformed, who had seized churches and ecclesiastical property, were ordered to restore them without delay. It was forbidden to destroy the images, to break the crosses, or to commit any other act, which might give occasion for

scandal. It was also forbidden to meet in the interior of towns by night or by day, but authority was given to assemble outside the gates, and to preach, pray, and perform other religious exercises. No one was allowed to go armed to the assemblies, gentlemen excepted, whilst officers of the government were to be admitted whenever they chose to be present.

One clause, which marks the spirit of the epoch, was to the effect, that the ministers were ordered to swear before the civil magistrates, that they would preach in conformity to the Word of God and the Nicene Creed, "*in order*" said the edict, "*not to fill our subjects with new heresies*." The pastors did not complain of this; for they saw a barrier in this obligation against the invasion of doctrines opposed to their own confession of faith.

The Edict of January answered better to the wants of Paris and of the northern or central provinces, than to those of the south. How could whole cities go and worship outside their walls? and to what purpose was it to restore churches, which, for want of (Roman) Catholics, must remain closed? However, Theodore de Bèze and his colleagues, while confessing that more might have been expected, invited the faithful, in the name of God, to observe the edict, and their advice was generally listened to. The religious edifices were given up; the tithes were paid to the priests; and the Reformed now busied themselves only in peacefully organizing their flocks under the protection of the laws.

Not so was it, however, in the opposite camp. The Guises had refused to assist at the assembly of the Notables; and Anne de Montmorency only went to protest against the new decree. The Parliaments of Bordeaux, of Toulouse, Rouen, and Grenoble,

registered the edict without difficulty. The Parliament of Dijon, on the contrary, under the influence of the Duke d'Aumale, brother of the Cardinal de Lorraine, met it with a formidable refusal. The Parliament of Paris gave way only after several letters of command had been issued, and added this clause: "In consideration of the urgent necessity, without approving the new religion, and until it be otherwise ordered!" This was in effect, while accepting a law of toleration, to announce the return of persecution.

Notwithstanding this resistance, matters had become more endurable, and the public peace might have been gradually restored, but that the defection of Anthony de Bourbon, lieutenant-general of the kingdom, opened the gate to civil war and the most frightful disasters.

IV.

The intrigue was not intended to bring over the Prince de Condé, and still less Coligny: it was well known that their hearts were too noble, and their will too strong for this to take effect. But the king of Navarre offered an easier prey to seduction, and the legate of the pope, the cardinals, the Lorraines, the ambassador of Spain, concerted together for this purpose. The details which follow, are attested even by the defenders of the Church of Rome: it is necessary to remember this, in order that they may be believed.

In the first place, they played upon the jealousy of the king of Navarre, by telling him that, in spite of his title of lieutenant-general, he was only the second, or even the third, person of the Calvinist party. Abandoned women were placed in his way, because his passions were known to incline him towards ignoble pleasures. Above all, they flattered his dream of the restitution of the kingdom of Navarre, or of an equivalent. Philip II., without binding himself in writing, as we may readily believe, offered him, by his ambassador, sometimes a kingdom in Africa, at one time that of Tunis, and at another the island of Sardinia, of which he was to have the sovereignty on condition of paying a moderate tribute. The memoirs of the time record the fantastic and marvellous descriptions made to him of this country: it was represented to him as one of those fortunate isles that exist only in fables. The pope, taking part in this comedy, promised his good offices to secure such a magnificent kingdom for Anthony de Bourbon.

The historian Davila, favourable as he is to the

(Roman) Catholic party, cannot help sneering at the credulity of the king of Navarre: “The ambassador Mauriquez,” he says, “renewed his negotiations by his usual arts; the clauses and conditions were discussed as seriously as if a treaty were to be signed.”[41] The Cardinal de Sainte Croix, with the same frankness, lays open the secrets of this bargain. Anthony de Bourbon consented to separate himself from *the others* (the Calvinists); but he wished first of all to re-enter into possession of his property, or to obtain a fair equivalent. Thus we may perceive his conscience truckled for a kingdom in the clouds.

The Guises laid another trap. They insinuated to the king of Navarre that he might marry their niece, Mary Stuart, when the pope had annulled his marriage with Jeanne d’Albret, on account of heresy; and thus they held the crown of Scotland before his eyes!

Anthony de Bourbon, dazzled, seduced, won, profited by a conference between the theologians of the two communions, to declare that the Calvinist ministers, after all their boasting, had not been able to withstand the (Roman) Catholic doctors; and full of violence, like a man who has just sold himself, he treated them as charlatans and impostors, with whom he would have nothing more to do. On learning this, the Cardinal de Lorraine cried out, with an air of triumph, “See what truth has gained by those conferences, for which I have been so much reproached!”

Theodore de Bèze, who had been called to France by the king of Navarre, went to him several times to beseech him not to abandon the cause of (the Reformed) religion. He was coldly received: and in a letter to Calvin, dated the 26th of February, 1562, he

said, “Never was there witnessed such an example of treachery and wickedness. In an audience which he gave me, he was not ashamed to treat me as if I were ignorant of things, of which even children were cognizant.”

Calvin wrote pressing letters to the king, but in vain. Jeanne d’Albret herself employed both tears and prayers without success. “She excited pity in all who beheld her,” says Bèze, “except in her husband, the king, so besotted was he!” Anthony de Bourbon was, in fact, so enraged against her, as positively to maltreat her; and Jeanne d’Albret, losing all hope, retired to Béarn.

She was born at Paris, in 1528, and was the only daughter of Margaret of Valois: she had all the brilliant qualities of her mother, combined with a firmer piety, and a more decided character. Her education was solid and well directed. She understood Greek, Latin, and Spanish, and wrote verses with facility in a poetical contest with Joachim du Bellay.

In 1548 she married Anthony de Bourbon, and in 1555, on the death of her father, she took the name of queen of Navarre. Jeanne d’Albret was slower than her husband in embracing the Reformed faith; she only decided in 1560; but she was unalterably constant to it; and when Catherine de Medicis advised her to fall in with the altered humour of the king of Navarre, she made this answer, which marks the fervour of the newly-converted: “Madame, rather than ever go to mass, if I had my kingdom and my son in my hand, I would cast them both into the depths of the sea.”

At the moment of her departure for Béarn, she

clasped her son Henry in her arms, bathed him with her tears, and beseeched him to preserve the faith, in which he had been educated. One day Henry IV. had to forget both the prayers and the farewell of his mother.

When she was once more in her kingdom, Jeanne d'Albret, taking up the work of Margaret of Valois, opened schools, colleges, and hospitals, and published a new code—a precious monument of good sense and wisdom—which bears the name of *Stil de la reine Jehanne*. Soon there was not a beggar in Béarn. The children of the poor, who showed any aptitude for sciences and literature, were educated at the expense of the treasury. Drunkenness, usury, and games of hazard were severely repressed. All the arts flourished with the new faith; and even now, at the end of three centuries, the people of Béarn pronounce the name of the *good queen*, who so greatly raised the prosperity of their country, with an affectionate veneration.

Jeanne d'Albret had many struggles to sustain, and many perils to encounter. The Cardinal d'Armagnac reproached her, in the name of the pope, with having introduced into her dominions a heresy which had committed so many excesses. "You make me blush for you," she answered him: "Take out the beam from your own eye, to see the mote in your neighbour's; cleanse the earth from that just blood which you and yours have shed."

In 1563, Pius IV. cited the queen of Navarre to appear before the tribunal of the Inquisition within six months, under pain of forfeiting her crown and her possessions. Jeanne d'Albert complained of this (insult) to all the sovereigns of Europe; and Charles IX., on the advice of the Chancellor l'Hospital, told

the pontiff that he was singularly offended at this attempt to withdraw a subject and vassal of the crown of France from her natural judges. Once again the pope gave way. The times of Gregory VII. no longer existed!

Escaped from this peril, Jeanne d'Albret encountered another. The historian De Thou relates that the project was conceived at the court of Madrid, of carrying her off with her children, in order to hand her over to the Spanish Inquisition. The wife of Philip II., Elizabeth, a daughter of France, informed her of this intention, and the plot failed.

If Jeanne d'Albret had been placed on a larger theatre, she might have been the greatest woman of her age. "She was," says the Abbé de Laboureur, in his notes on the Mémoires de Castelnau, "the wisest, most generous, most learned princess of her time; she had in her heart the source of every virtue, and of every great quality." Agrippa d'Aubigné says also: "Of woman she had nothing but the sex, her whole soul belonged to manly things, her powerful spirit to vast affairs, and her unconquerable heart to great adversities."

Whatever excellence Henry IV. possessed of a chivalrous character, or of love for his people, he inherited from his noble mother, and France must ever associate the name of Jeanne d'Albret with that of the most popular of her kings.

V.

The defection of the king of Navarre, lending weight to the triumvirate, bore the fruit which the (Roman) Catholic party expected. Coligny and his brothers, seeing that they were treated with mistrust, withdrew from court. The prince of Condé, who had hitherto been kept at a distance, went and fixed himself at Paris; and the Guises thus had full liberty to commit acts, which in more settled times would have been esteemed as high treason against the chief of the state. They concluded an alliance with the king of Spain and the duke of Savoy, and undertook to open to them the gates of the kingdom for the extermination of heretics. At the same time, they tore up the Edict of January at the sword's point, by the massacre of Vassy.

Vassy was a small, but strong town in the county of Champagne. It contained about three thousand inhabitants, the third of whom, without counting the surrounding villages, professed the Reformed faith. This change of religion irritated the Lorraines, who were established near the town, in their dominion of Joinville, and in particular a very aged lady, the dowager-duchess of Guise, who could not understand why the Huguenots had not already been put an end to. She pretended that the inhabitants of Vassy had no right, as vassals of her grand-daughter Mary Stuart, to choose a new religion without her permission. She therefore threatened them with a terrible vengeance, and as they gave no heed to her violence, she invited her son, the duke Francis of Guise, to make a striking example of such insolent rebels.

On the 28th of February, 1562, the duke, having

received from the king of Navarre an invitation to return to Paris to suppress the Huguenots, left the Château of Joinville with an escort of several gentlemen, and two hundred horsemen. Arriving the next morning at Brousseval, a village a quarter of a league distant from Vassy, he heard the sound of the bells. "What is that?" he asked of one of his attendants. "That is for the service of the Huguenots." "By the mort-Dieu!" exclaimed the duke, "we will Huguenot them presently after a different fashion."

On Sunday, the 1st of March, on entering Vassy, he was joined by sixty horsemen and bowmen. He dismounted in front of the hall, and sent for the prior and the provost—both bitter enemies of the new doctrine. During this time the Reformed had assembled, to the number of about twelve hundred, in a barn, and were celebrating their worship under the protection of the Edict of January. Not one of them was armed, with the exception of two strangers, probably gentlemen, who had their swords.

The soldiers of the duke, placed at the head of the escort, approaching the barn, commenced crying out: "*Huguenots, heretics, dogs, rebels against the king and God!*" The faithful hastened to close the doors, but the assailants leaped from their horses, crying: "*Kill, kill, mort-Dieu! kill these Huguenots!*" The first they met with was a poor hawker of wine. "In whom do you believe?" they demanded. "I believe in Jesus Christ," answered the man; and he was instantly speared upon the spot. Two others were killed near the door, and those who showed themselves at the openings of the barn were fired at from the outside. The Calvinists had collected stones to defend

themselves.

On hearing the tumult, Guise hastened to the spot, and threw himself into the conflict. He received a blow in the face from a stone; his blood flowed. His men became exasperated, and he was beside himself. No pity was shown for age or sex: a horrible butchery ensued. Some fell on their knees, their hands clasped, calling for mercy in the name of Jesus Christ. The answer was: “You call upon your Christ, where is He now?” Others lifted up the roof, and sought to escape over the walls of the town. “They were shot down,” says an old historian, “like pigeons on a roof.”

The pastor, Leonard Morel, was on his knees in his pulpit, calling upon the God of Mercies. He was fired at when he sought to fly; but when near the door he tripped over a corpse, and instantly received several sword-cuts on his right shoulder, and on his head. Thinking himself fatally wounded, he cried out: “Lord, into Thy hands I yield my spirit, for Thou hast redeemed me.”

Two gentlemen, who were near, exclaimed, “This is the minister; let us take him before M. de Guise.” They dragged him, for he was not able to walk, and the duke thus addressed him: “Minister, come here; are you the minister here? What makes you so bold as to seduce these people?” “I am no seducer,” answered Morel, “I have preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ.” “Mort-Dieu,” replied the duke, “does the Gospel preach sedition? Thou art the cause of the death of all people; thou shalt be hanged. Provost, up with a gibbet to hang him!” Happily, out of these hundreds of cut-throats, no one could be found to fill the office of executioner. Morel was kept under strict guard, and the delay saved him.

Sixty persons were left upon the floor after this butchery, and two hundred more were wounded, several fatally. The corpses were stripped, and some days after, the footmen of the duke sold their property in open market, “crying them aloud,” says Crespin, “as a bailiff would who had taken furniture in execution.”

During this carnage, the Bible of the Calvinists was brought to the duke. He gave it to his brother the Cardinal Louis de Guise, who had remained on the walls of the cemetery. “Here,” said he, “see the titles of the books of these Huguenots.” “There is no harm in this,” answered the cardinal; “it is the Holy Scriptures.” “How, sang-Dieu! the Holy Scriptures! It is fifteen hundred years and more since they were made, and these books have only been printed a year. By the mort-Dieu! it is good for nothing.” The cardinal could not help saying: “My brother is wrong.”

This circumstance is not unworthy of history: it exhibits, once more, how profound and degrading was the ignorance in religious matters of the principal defender of the Romish church.

The duke was walking up and down, biting his beard, a sign with him of furious anger. He summoned the judge of the district, and upbraided him for having suffered these conventicles. The judge pleaded the Edict of January. “The Edict of January!” said Guise, laying his hand upon his sword; “this steel shall speedily cut asunder this edict, however tightly bound.”

The following day, being at Eclairon, his people informed him that the Huguenots of Vassy had sent complaints to the king. “Let them go,” he said with scorn; “they will find neither their admiral, nor their

chancellor."

Reflection, however, made him understand that it was no trifling matter to have authorized this butchery in a time of perfect peace, and he therefore sent a lawyer to Vassy to commence a sort of inquiry. A tale that the Huguenots had been the aggressors was invented, as if it were likely that such an extravagant notion could be believed, that people unarmed, assembled at the foot of the pulpit with women and children, should be the first to attack the numerous escort of François de Guise!

In the following year, when upon his death-bed, the duke protested that he had neither premeditated, nor ordered the massacre of Vassy. We are willing to take him at his word, notwithstanding the overwhelming remarks of Bayle; it would grieve us to witness an ignoble leader of a band of assassins in this brave and valiant captain, the defender of Metz, the conqueror of Renty. But had he not a firm resolve to use at least some violence against the Huguenots of Vassy? What did he do to prevent the massacre? Was he the man to be disobeyed? Towards the end of the affair, he ordered, at the request of the duchess of Guise, that the women with child should be spared, but nothing more. Moreover did he prosecute, did he so much as disclaim any one of the murderers? Even the charge of premeditation he set aside; his consent to the massacre cannot be denied. The blood of Vassy is on his head: it has been visited upon him, his son, and his race. "All they who take the sword, shall perish by the sword."

The news of the massacre of Vassy created an extraordinary impression throughout the kingdom; it roused all the Reformed to indignation and horror. This was not the crime of a vile populace led on by

some contemptible priests, or abject monks. Here was one of the greatest lords of France, who had, in contempt of the law, shed the blood of the faithful in torrents. If this offence were to go unpunished, where would justice be henceforth, and who could be secure against assassination?

At Paris the agitation was so great that an immediate resort to arms was apprehended, and the Marshal de Montmorency, the governor of the town, invited the faithful to suspend their assemblies. But they answered that this would be to give up the cause to their enemies, and to acknowledge that there existed a power superior to that of the law in the kingdom. They, however, restricted themselves to demanding from the marshal the compulsory observance of the edict.

The prince of Condé and the principal members of the party addressed themselves to Catherine de Medicis. They represented to her the insolence of the triumvirate, the league of the Lorraine princes with the king of Spain, the growing audacity of their enterprises, the dangers which threatened the royal authority, and protested that they were ready to sacrifice their possessions and their lives for the cause of the throne, which was now linked with the Reformed faith. Catherine employed her usual dissimulation, gave evasive answers, and tried to penetrate the secrets of the Calvinists, in order to turn them to her own account, as occasion might serve, for or against them.

The consistory of Paris resolved to exhaust every legal means before opposing force to force, and sent Theodore de Bèze to the court to demand the exemplary punishment of the murderers. The king of Navarre, who was present at the audience, and who

wished to give some testimony of his zeal to his new allies, exclaimed: “They threw stones at my brother, the duke of Guise; he could not restrain the fury of his people; and mark me, whosoever shall touch but the end of his finger, shall touch my whole body.” “Sire,” Bèze answered, “it is indeed the part of the Church of God, in whose name I speak, to endure blows and not to give them; but you will also please to remember that it is an anvil, which has used up many hammers.”

Theodore de Bèze spoke the truth. Anthony of Bourbon and his have fallen; the persecutors rest in their sepulchre, but the French Reformation still lives.

VI.

We now come to the wars of religion. The history of the Reformed at this juncture becomes the general history of France, and as that is related in writings without number, which are in everybody's hands, we shall only give a rapid summary of the principal facts, directing our especial attention to whatever may serve to depict the private life of the oppressed party.

The duke of Guise made a triumphal entry into Paris. The priests urged on the multitude to crowd the path of the man of Vassy, whilst comparing him to Judas Maccabæus, and awarding to him the glorious name of *defender of the faith*. Catherine de Medicis was offended at this triumph both in her pride as queen-mother, and in her right as regent; but the duke left her no time to concert a league with the Calvinists. Encouraged by the support of the king of Navarre, of Anne of Montmorency, and of the Marshal de Saint André, he carried off Charles IX. and Catherine herself, and dragged them from Fontainebleau to Melun, from Melun to Vincennes, and from Vincennes to Paris. These were the days of the 5th and 6th October of the triumvirate.

Where legitimate authority now rested was unknown. The sovereignty was floating about at haphazard. The Reformed were in some sort placed beyond the law by the enterprises of the man, who had recently massacred their brethren; they found themselves thrown into an attitude of personal defence. So, from one end of France to the other, without preliminary concert, they flew to arms, just as one would do when he sees his house broken into at midnight by a band of robbers.

"It is ever to be remembered," says an historian of the sixteenth century, "that so long as the Reformed were put to death under any form of justice, however iniquitous and cruel, they held out their necks, and offered no resistance. But when public authority, in the person of the magistracy, wearied of burnings, flung the knife into the hands of the people, and the tumults and enormous massacres of France had torn away the venerable aspect of justice, and had made neighbour to slaughter neighbour at the sound of trumpet and drum, who could forbid the wretched to oppose arm to arm, steel to steel, and to catch from a fury without justice the contagion of a just fury?... Let foreign nations judge which of the two parties have their foreheads stained with the crime of war!"[42]

The queen-mother seemed to authorize the Huguenots' resort to arms, and even to solicit it in the name of Charles IX. "My cousin," she wrote to the prince of Condé, "you will take care to preserve the children and the mother, and the kingdom for him whom it concerns, by whom you may rest assured it will never be forgotten. If I die before I have an opportunity of showing my gratitude, as I wish to do, I will leave instructions to my children. I see so many things which grieve me, that were it not for the confidence I feel in you, that you will aid me in preserving this kingdom and the authority of the king, my son, in spite of those who would lose all, I should be yet more grieved." These letters, communicated to the gentry of the religion, strengthened them in their projects: for they believed they were upholding not only their own cause, but that of the crown.

Both sides invited foreign aid into the kingdom.

The (Roman) Catholics set the example; the Roman pontiff preached a crusade in Italy and Spain similar to that of Simon de Montfort against the Albigeois, and the Huguenots, in their turn, claimed the assistance of every Protestant nation. Under one or the other banner, Spaniards, Swiss, Germans, and Englishmen were speedily ranged. So will it ever be in the great wars of religious or political principles. Men then separate themselves, not people from people, but faith from faith, because something is at stake more powerful than nationality itself, and because country is only dear when it realizes the mighty convictions, which have taken possession of their souls. If a struggle were to break out in Europe to-morrow for the fundamental principles of politics, what occurred in the sixteenth century would be seen again; the only difference would be in the device of the colours and the watchword of the combatants.

Each party published long manifestoes, another inevitable occurrence in a war of principles. The Calvinists demanded the strict execution of the Edict of January, the restoration to liberty of the king and queen-mother,—who, they declared, were prisoners, —the punishment of the authors of the crime of Vassy, or at least, the withdrawal of the duke of Guise, and of the two other triumvirs, to their houses. The (Roman) Catholics answered, respecting the Edict of January, by equivocal phrases; as to the liberation of the king and queen, they asserted that they were perfectly free; as to the punishment of the authors of the affair of Vassy, that there was no one to punish; and with regard to the retreat of the members of the triumvirate, that their presence was essential to the public good.

The most remarkable document of these preliminary discussions is the act of association, which was concluded between the prince of Condé and the Calvinist lords, on the 11th of April, 1562, after the celebration of the communion. All avowed that they had only in this alliance the honour of God before their eyes, the liberation of the king and of the queen, the maintenance of the edicts, and the punishment of those who had violated them. They solemnly swore to prevent blasphemy, violence, pillage, all that is forbidden by the law of God, and to establish good and faithful ministers, who should teach them to do His will. They appointed the prince of Condé the chief and leader of their enterprise, as being of the blood royal and protector of the crown of France. Lastly, they promised, on their hope of Paradise, to fulfil their duty with unshrinking fidelity.

Their first deeds of arms were fortunate. Orleans, Tours, Bourges, Poitiers, Rouen, Le Hâvre, Lyons, Montauban, Nismes, and the greater number of the strong castles of Normandy, of Poitou, of Saintonge, of Guienne, of Languedoc, and of Dauphiné, fell into their hands almost without a blow, towards the end of April.

The triumvirate, on their side, acted with vigour. They dictated at their discretion the resolutions of the Council and the decrees of the Parliaments. They strove especially to bind the people of Paris, without reservation, to their fortunes. The (Roman) Catholic citizens were armed and formed into regiments. Fifty thousand men were counted upon at the first sound of the tocsin. The commune sat *en permanence*. Chains were placed at the corners of the streets, to barricade them, in case of attack. Certificates of

(Roman) Catholicism were required from all the procureurs, receivers, constables, and other public officers. The churches were the clubs of the time; they were still more so under the League.

The Huguenots received orders to quit Paris in twenty-four hours under pain of death. The infamous accusations of former years were again brought against them. Coarse prints were constantly circulated, representing the heretics tearing out the bowels of the monks, and casting their victims before swine. The fanaticism of the populace was raised by these provocations to the blindest pitch of frenzy, and it was enough to pass for a Huguenot in the streets to be instantly slaughtered. Theodore de Bèze cites many instances of these facts.

The triumvirs and the priests knew very well what they would gain by seizing upon the opinion of this powerful city. “Paris,” says the historian Davila, “alone gave more credit, and more weight, than one-half of the kingdom could have given.”[43]

Coligny felt this. He advised the prince of Condé to march direct upon Paris, urging that the triumvirs had as yet no army, and that a multitude without discipline might be easily overcome. Condé refused. Brother of the king of Navarre, and looking forward to be one day lieutenant-general of the kingdom, he was obliged to act with circumspection even towards his most violent adversaries. A prince of the blood is not the man to lead a party in those critical moments, when all must be hazarded to conquer all. Would the English Puritans have triumphed, if they had chosen a member of the royal family for their chief instead of Cromwell?

Catherine de Medicis proposed to open

conferences between the two parties. It was the only plan, by which she could still make any figure. In the struggles of warriors she could do nothing; in negotiations she relied upon her genius, and flattered herself that she could entangle the heads of the (Roman) Catholics, as well as of the Reformed, in her intrigues.

A first conference was held on the 2nd of June, at Thoury, in Beauce. It was agreed that each party should meet, with an equal escort of gentlemen, who should keep aloof, at a distance of eight hundred paces from each other. But whilst the chiefs debated, the gentlemen drew near together; in fact, they yearned towards each other. On a sudden, old friendships rekindled; party quarrels were forgotten; there were no longer Papists and Huguenots, but mingling embraces and tears; they only remembered that they had spent their childhood together, had drunk out of the same cup, and slept under the same roof. Sacred instinct of the heart! It inspired better emotions than the science of theologians, or the politics of statesmen!

The queen-mother had conceived, with the bishop Montluc, her private counsellor, a strange expedient. It was to engage the chiefs of the two parties to impose on themselves a voluntary exile. The triumvirs were to withdraw from the court; the prince of Condé, the admiral, and the principal Calvinists, were to leave the kingdom until the majority of Charles IX., that the religious differences might be peaceably arranged. Such an idea was but a court stratagem, which could settle nothing.

Much time had been lost. The Calvinist gentlemen, who had to maintain themselves at their own expense, were beginning to return home, and the

army of the triumvirs was increasing. This was perceived by the increase of persecution. The Parliament of Paris passed a decree, at the end of June, commanding heretics to be set upon, and to be killed, wherever they should be met, like madmen, who were enemies of God and man. Every Sunday the curates were to read this dreadful decree from the pulpit. The peasants, the workmen, armed themselves with whatever weapon came to hand, and began to scour the country, as if to rid it of wild beasts. The monks, in their hideous language, called this “letting slip the great greyhound.”

A new decree of the Parliament, passed on the 18th of August, declared all the gentlemen of the new religion, with the exception of the prince of Condé, traitors to God and the king, and summoned them to appear in three days, in default of which they were to be punished by the confiscation of their bodies and their goods.

It was then that the Calvinists determined to press D’Andelot to bring some lansquenets from Germany, and to conclude a treaty with Elizabeth, queen of England, by which she undertook to furnish a force of six thousand men. Three thousand were to land at Havre-de-Grâce, and three thousand were to serve for the defence of Dieppe and Rouen, which were in the hands of Condé. This treaty was signed on the 20th of September, 1562, and Queen Elizabeth published a manifesto, in which she affirmed before heaven and before the world, that she had no other object, but to defend the loyal subjects of King Charles IX., her brother, against the tyranny of their oppressors.

VII.

The duke of Guise and his confederates hastened to lay siege to the town of Rouen. The count of Montgomery, the same who had mortally wounded Henry II. in a tournay, took the command, and had with him a devoted population, and a strong garrison.

Between the besiegers and the besieged a contrast might be observed, which was to be reproduced eighty years later, between the Puritans of Cromwell and the royalist cavaliers. In the (Roman) Catholic army licentiousness reigned. Catherine de Medicis, who had turned to the strongest side, had brought with her her maids of honour. The trenches were opened to the sound of serenades, and the damsels of the court, constituting themselves the judges of the camp, awarded prizes to the cavaliers. In the interior of the town all was sober and severe. Here were no games or spectacles, but only sermons, prayers, and psalms; and after the religious service, the women went to the ramparts to fight by the side of their husbands.

After a siege of five weeks, Rouen was taken by assault, and given up for eight days to the fury of the soldiery. The Parliament, which had retired to Louviers, came to complete the work by judicial murders. Several of the principal inhabitants were condemned to death, among others Jean de Mandreville, president of the “cour des aides,” and the pastor Augustin Marlorat.

This last had figured at the conference of Poissy. He was versed in science, and possessed piety and moderation of character, and enjoyed the esteem of

the faithful. The constable wished to see Marlorat, and accused him of having seduced the people. “If I have seduced them,” answered the minister of Christ, “God first seduced me; for I have preached to them the simple Word of God.” While they were dragging him on a hurdle to the gibbet, he exhorted his fellow-sufferers to glorify God to their last breath.

Anthony de Bourbon was mortally wounded during this siege, and licentious passions, which he could not subdue, hastened his end. After having received the viaticum, on the entreaty of a court-bishop, he appeared in his last moments to return to the Reformed faith; for he requested his physician to read the Bible to him, and with his eyes full of tears he prayed to God for pardon, declaring that if he recovered, he would cause the Gospel to be preached throughout the kingdom. But it was too late. Anthony de Bourbon died at the age of forty-four, and the only funeral oration that can be made over him is that of Etienne Pasquier: “The king of Navarre is dead, from a gun-shot; he is regretted neither by one party, nor the other!”

On the 19th of December the battle of Dreux was fought. The Calvinist army consisted of four thousand cavalry and five thousand infantry; the (Roman) Catholic army of sixteen thousand foot and two thousand horse. These forces were but small for an encounter, which might produce most important results; but, even of these, the foreign mercenaries of the triumvirs amounted to two-thirds, and to one-half in those of the Huguenots. But the war was at that time carried on from one end of France to the other; every province, every town, and, in some sort, every hamlet, had its soldiers; so that the troops encamped near Dreux formed but the smallest

number of the combatants.

For more than two hours, the armies gazed at each other in sullen stillness. “Each one thought within himself,” as relates the honest Lanoue, “that he had relations, friends, and comrades before him.” At length the battle began, and was kept up for seven hours with excessive ferocity. Eight thousand dead bodies encumbered the plain at the end of day.

The Calvinists had at first the advantage, and some runaways having carried the news to Paris, Catherine de Medicis coolly replied: “Well, we must pray to God in French.”

But the duke of Guise, having charged with the reserve, changed the face of the combat. Coligny tried in vain to bring his men back to the attack; all he could effect, was to retreat in good order. The chiefs of the two armies, the prince of Condé and the Constable de Montmorency, were taken prisoners. The Marshal de Saint André, one of the triumvirate, fell upon the field. “Die, traitor,” said a Calvinist officer, in discharging a pistol at his head, “die by the hand of one whom thou hast despoiled.”

The winter did not suspend hostilities. Coligny again took the field in Upper and Lower Normandy. The duke of Guise went to besiege Orleans, the principal place, and the centre of the war-operations of the Calvinists. “Once take the burrow, when the foxes have retreated,” said he, “and we will chase them all over France.”

Already, in spite of the heroic defence of D’Andelot and the citizens, two suburbs had been taken, and the tower of the bridge had been carried, when the duke of Guise was wounded on the evening of the 18th of February, 1563, by Jean Poltrot de Méré,

who fired a pistol close to his breast. He died six days after, bitterly regretted by the (Roman) Catholic party. They gave him at Paris the funeral of a king, and Catherine de Medicis assumed great grief, which she did not feel.

Several historians,—Mézeray among others,—assure us, that in his last moments he advised the queen-mother to make peace as quickly as possible; adding, that whosoever prevented it would be an enemy to the king and to the state. This was to counsel toleration, since peace could not be firmly established, except on this condition. Did François de Guise better understand his duty at the hour of death, than he had done throughout his life? Perhaps he did. Ambition no longer led him astray, and the thought of the judgment of God might have inspired him with the words of truth.

The murderer of the Duke de Guise was a gentleman of Angoumois, at that time twenty-five or twenty-six years old. An ardent (Roman) Catholic in his youth, Poltrot had served in Spain, and had so far adopted the language and manners of that country, as to have been called by the nickname of *Espagnolet*. Having embraced the Reformed faith, he was compelled to fly to Geneva, and to follow the trade of an artisan for a livelihood. His temper was soured and his imagination excited. Returned to France, he heard on every side loud complaints against the duke of Guise, whom the Huguenots called the *butcher of Vassy*, and the destruction of the murderer of his brethren appeared to him an act of legitimate reprisal. Such were the deplorable effects of these wars of religion, which distorted all ideas of justice, and depraved the soul—abyss only leading to abyss!

The death of the duke of Guise changed the face of

affairs. Anne de Montmorency being a prisoner, there was no longer in the (Roman) Catholic army any chief of renown, and Catherine de Medicis resumed the negotiations, which she had never entirely abandoned. She tried to seduce Condé by the promise of the lieutenancy-general of the kingdom. This prince, who had fallen into the hands of the (Roman) Catholics at the battle of Dreux, had lived for three months apart from the austere men of the Calvinist party; "*he already breathed*," says Mézeray, "*the soft air of the court, and of the gaieties of the ladies*." Won over by the artifices of the queen, he asked leave to go and treat for peace at Orleans.

As soon as he arrived, he addressed these two questions to the pastors: Whether it were reasonable to exact that the Edict of January should be restored in all its articles? or, on the other hand, if that could not be obtained, whether it would not be desirable to enter into arrangements with the queen to quell the disorders of the kingdom? The pastors, to the number of seventy-two, seeing him hesitate, addressed a remonstrance to him in writing, asking for a fair and safe exercise of their religion, both in the places where it already existed, and in such places where the inhabitants might claim it.

The prince paid no heed to this remonstration, and despairing of overcoming the resistance of the ministers, turned to the gentlemen, who he knew were tired of war, and communicated to them certain clauses, which accorded to the nobility religious privileges. The pastoral body was neither heard nor received in this conference, and the majority of the gentlemen accepted the proposed articles.

The queen-mother vehemently urged on the conclusion; she feared to lose a single day, because

she foresaw that if the Admiral Coligny had time to come up, the entire edifice of her intrigues would fall at a blow. Therefore, as soon as the prince of Condé had returned, she signed the articles, and this treaty, drawn up under the form of an edict of pacification, was published at Amboise on the 19th of March, 1563.

It contained the following points: Free exercise of religion in those towns, which were in the power of the Calvinists at the date of the 7th of March, 1563; permission to the lords *haut-justiciers* to hold assemblies throughout the whole extent of their domains; permission to the nobles of the second rank to celebrate their worship in their own houses, but only for their households; finally, in each bailiwick pertaining directly to the Parliaments, the concession of a single place of worship. To all the other members of the Reformed faith, it accorded only private worship: “Every one,” said the treaty, “shall be permitted to live at liberty in his own house, without search or molestation, and without being forced or constrained for conscience’ sake.”

Truly, there was a wide difference between the articles of Amboise and the Edict of January. Instead of a general right, the mass of the Reformed had now but the toleration of their domestic hearths. The nobles alone, and the faithful who dwelt in the neighbourhood of a bailiwick-town, could hold assemblies. This was separating the disciples of the Reformation like persons sick with the plague in a lazaretto.

When the Admiral learned the contents of this treaty, he felt the most lively indignation. “This stroke of the pen,” said he, “ruins more churches than the enemy could have pulled down in ten

years."

He returned to Orleans by forced marches, and arrived on the 23rd of March, hoping still to find the means of obtaining better conditions. He presented himself before the council, and explained his dissatisfaction to the prince. He said that the affairs of religion were in a favourable state; that two of the principal authors of the war were dead, and the third a prisoner; that, in confining the assemblies to one town in a bailiwick and to the lords *haut-justiciers*, the poor, who had nevertheless set the example to the rich, were sacrificed; and lastly, that the gentlemen themselves who wished to do their duty, would soon feel what heavy chains they had accepted.

This discourse made so strong an impression, that many, who had taken the advice of Condé, would have wished that the whole matter were to be done over again. But the prince answered that he had received private promises, and that when he was lieutenant-general of the kingdom, all would go on well. Coligny had to give way. Orleans was restored to the king's troops, and the Huguenots aided them in retaking Hâvre from the English.

Such was the end of the first religious war, if such a word can be used to designate a simple suspension of arms, adopted on each side with mental reservations. No one was or could be satisfied. The ardent (Roman) Catholics complained no less than the Calvinists. Politicians could not understand those categories, which surrendered to a few what was refused to the masses. No principle had dictated the Edict of Pacification, and France, covered with blood, had not even time to apply the first dressing to her grievous wounds.

VIII.

Having set forth the course of general affairs, it is now necessary to cast a glance at what had been going on in the provinces. War was waged not only between party chiefs and regular armies; it also broke out in a thousand forms throughout the kingdom. It was a great and fearful struggle of province against province, town against town, house against house, and man against man. Never was it so clearly seen that the worst of all wars are civil wars, and of all civil wars the wars of religion.

The excesses of the revolution would convey but a faint idea [of the then state of things]. Fanaticism had converted France into a band of cannibals, and the gloomiest imagination may be defied to conceive all the kinds of refined, revolting, execrable, and obscene punishments which were then practised. But there is in this spectacle a great lesson to be learned: it is that the principle of religious liberty is one of the most precious possessions of humanity.

A detailed recital of these horrors is not here to be expected. They fill a volume of Theodore de Bèze. Jacques de Thou devotes to them several books of his history. Crespin, Jean de Serres, the memoirs of Montluc, of Tavanes, of Condé, of Lanoue, and of fifty others are full of them. Whoever wishes to investigate the details may seek for them there. Were we to attempt the task, the pen would again and again fall from our hand.

The Huguenots had observed a rigid discipline at the outset of the campaign. Having newly taken up the cross and risen at the call of their conscience, they wished to absolve their arms by the austerity of

their lives. There were no women in their camps; no cards or dice; no blasphemy; no profane discourse; no maurauding or pillage. The nobles paid in money for all that they took for themselves or for their followers. Those who committed violence were punished. A lord of Dammartin, who had outraged the daughter of a villager, narrowly escaped execution. Another was hanged at Orleans for adultery; and this, much more than any differences of doctrine had done, aroused the dissolute court of Catherine de Medicis.

At morning and evening, public prayers were said. The ministers, distributed by companies, maintained good order by their exhortations. A prayer has been preserved which was repeated in the army. The Calvinists addressed supplications to God for the king, the queen-mother, the princes of the royal blood, and the members of the council.

The same discipline prevailed at Orleans. “Besides the ordinary sermons and the prayers to the *corps de garde*,” says Theodore de Bèze, “extraordinary general prayers were said at six o’clock in the morning, after which, the ministers and the people without exception went to work at the fortifications with all their strength, each one returning at four o’clock in the evening to prayers; a place was also set apart for the wounded, who were most humanely tended by the most distinguished ladies of the town, who spared neither their money nor their labour.”[44]

Unfortunately this lasted only for a few months; Coligny had foreseen it. “This discipline is indeed a noble thing,” said he, “as long as it lasts; but I fear these people will throw down all their goodness at once. I have commanded infantry, and I know them;

they often fulfil the proverb which says: '*out of a young hermit grows an old devil.*'"

Religious passions, added to the want of money, drove the Huguenots to carry off the ornaments of the churches. They broke the sacred vessels, mutilated the statues of the saints, and dispersed the relics. These excesses excited in the hearts of the (Roman) Catholics a rage impossible to be described. "You knock down the images," they said; "you destroy the relics of the dead; well! we will knock down as many living images as fall into our hands."

The decrees of the Parliaments added fuel to the popular fury, by giving it a semblance of justice. The peasant left his plough, the artisan his trade. The [Roman Catholic bands] consisted of people of no calling, vagabonds, and beggars, and free companies armed with reaping-hooks, knives, and pikes. They chose a captain at hazard, some famous brigand, or else a monk, or curate; sometimes even a bishop; and these bands, drunk with fanaticism and revenge, respected neither law, modesty, nor pity. In Champagne they were called "*naked-feet*" (*pieds-nus*).

They fell upon the Calvinists by surprise, massacred the men, outraged the women, demolished the houses, tore down the vines, rooted up the trees, and desolated entire cantons. "There are too many people in France," cried out a leader of these ruffians, "I will kill a sufficient number to make provisions cheap."

The Huguenots, it may be believed, also resorted to reprisals; but being less numerous, and mostly belonging to the more cultivated classes, they did less harm than they suffered.

The excesses, serious everywhere, were especially

so to the south of the Loire, on account of the great number of the Reformed, and the ardent character of the population. At Cahors, five hundred Huguenots were attacked one Sunday while they were at service, and the bishop, Pierre Bertrandi, had them all butchered to the last man. At Montauban the inhabitants had quitted their town at the approach of the (Roman) Catholic bands; but having been massacred in crowds, the survivors returned within their walls, and sustained three sieges with heroic constancy.

The events which happened at Toulouse in May, 1562, will serve to characterize what was passing throughout the whole extent of the southern provinces.

This town contained from twenty-five to thirty thousand of the Reformed, for the most part, burghers, merchants, professors of the university, men of letters, students, and magistrates. They had chosen municipal officers of their own persuasion. “Toulouse,” says an old chronicle, “is governed by a mixture of magistrates of three kinds: Catholics, Huguenots, and Temporizers—people, however, of elevated minds, adorned with many graces, rich and opulent; and there is even a fourth kind, namely, that of the ancient heresy (probably that of the Albigeois), which had already taken root.”[45]

After the publication of the Edict of January, the Reformed had built a wooden church outside the gates of the town, which would hold from five to six thousand persons. They went there in open day, and the women were not less zealous than the men. “They had laid aside with their prayer-books and the beads which they had worn at their girdles,” says our chronicler, “their ample robes, and dissolute

garments, dances, and worldly songs, as if they had been guided by the Holy Ghost: all of which our preachers could not obtain from the Catholics with all their holy admonitions."[46]

The majority of the Parliament continued to protect the ancient worship; and the people, goaded by the imprecations of the monks, attacked the Calvinists on the least pretext and pillaged their houses. All was violence, disorder, anarchy!

Driven to extremes, and headed by some of their municipal magistrates, the Reformed took possession of the *Maison-de-Ville*, or Capitol, on the night of the 11th or 12th of May.

The councillors of the Parliament immediately passed a sentence of arrest against the magistrates who had taken part in this affair, and sent round to demand the armed assistance of all the captains and gentlemen of the surrounding country. Then they presented themselves to the people in red robes, commanding them to take arms and seize the heretics dead or alive. "Pillage, kill boldly, with the approval of the pope, of the king, and of the court," cried out five or six frenzied councillors, whilst traversing the streets.

The struggle became horrible. The Calvinists who had not been able to take refuge in the Hôtel de Ville were seized in their houses, thrown out of the windows, or dragged to the Garonne. Wretches, whom the constables were taking to prison, were massacred on their way, whilst no mercy was shown to well-dressed passengers! It was taken for granted that every one, who was not a labouring man, a member of the Parliament, a monk or a priest, must be a heretic.

Another characteristic circumstance of the struggle, was that the people, imagining all cultivation of the mind to be a commencement of heresy, crowded at once around the shops of the booksellers, and burned all the books they contained in the public places. These wretched men, who could not read, thought they were thus doing the work of good (Roman) Catholics.

The tocsin rang from all the churches, for five or six leagues round. Bands of peasantry poured into the town, attracted by the hope of plunder. The Reformed, besieged in the Capitol, had cannon, and defended themselves, from the Monday to the Saturday, with all the courage of despair.

Reduced at length to the last extremity, without food for their wives and children, or powder to load their arms, the people having also fired the whole quarter near the Capitol, they demanded a parley, crying: *Vive la Croix! Vive la Croix!* They were promised their lives, on condition of leaving their arms and effects in the *Maison-de-Ville*. Before, however, they departed, they celebrated the Holy Communion with many prayers and tears, and began, between eight and nine in the evening, to retreat by the gate of Villeneuve. But the labourers and peasants, whom the priests had taught that it was not binding on them to keep faith with heretics, fell on them, and it is reckoned that three thousand five hundred persons perished in these conflicts.

The Parliament next proceeded to judicial executions. They first mutilated their own body, by excluding twenty-two councillors, who, without being Huguenots, had allowed their wives, or other members of their families, to frequent the sermons. Up to the month of March, 1563, the provost of the

town and three hundred other heretics had been put to death, and four hundred persons were also condemned to the same penalty for contumacy. The clergy had published a monition enjoining, under pain of excommunication and eternal damnation, not only the denunciation of heretics, but even of those, who had given them counsel, help, or favour.

Acts of atrocious fanaticism were committed. It is related that a boy of twelve or thirteen years, who had come from Montauban to Toulouse, was called upon to recite the *Ave Maria*. He answered that it had not been taught him, and for that reason alone he was taken to the gallows.

In the midst of so many frightful crimes, Blaise de Montluc and the Baron des Adrets had still the frightful honour of distinguishing themselves by their cruelty. The first, a rude and ignorant soldier, was the most ferocious of all the (Roman) Catholic chiefs of the south. He seemed to enjoy a wild and insatiable delight in spectacles of blood, and he has himself related in his *Commentaries*, with the utmost coolness, all the executions he had ordered. He was constantly attended by two executioners armed with hatchets well sharpened, who were called his *laquais*. He ordered the Huguenots to be hanged or beheaded without interrogation; "*for they*," he said, "*have a golden tongue*." The roads, by which he passed, were known by the bodies hanging on the trees. Nor did he neglect to take care of his fortune; he knew how to pick up gold out of blood. "He who, heretofore, had but little mercy," says Brantôme, "found himself at the end of the war possessed of a hundred thousand crowns."[47] He was rewarded for his exploits by the bâton of a marshal of France.

But pitiless as he was, he once encountered men

who surpassed him. They were Spaniards, whom Philip II. had sent to the assistance of the (Roman) Catholic party. Having taken a little town in Agenois, Montluc put all those to the sword who had defended the castle, and sent back the women by a staircase hollowed out of the wall. The Spaniards, who were waiting for them in the court, butchered them all together, with the little children they carried in their arms. When Montluc reproached them for this, they answered with *sang-froid*, "We thought they were Lutherans in disguise (*todos Luteranos tapados*)."

The Baron des Adrets, who led some of the Huguenot bands, showed himself no less barbarous than Montluc. He had embraced the new religion on account of an action, which he accused the duke of Guise of having caused him to lose. He spread terror in the Lyonnais, Dauphiné, Provence, and the county of Avignon. But the chiefs of the Calvinist party were soon ashamed of, and shocked at his crimes, and sent Soubise to Lyons to restrain him. They even made him prisoner at Valence, and he was only set at liberty at the conclusion of the peace, which he resented so much, that he returned to the Romish communion and died a Papist.

IX.

Catherine de Medicis did not, as she had promised, make the prince of Condé lieutenant-general of the kingdom. She caused her son to be declared to have attained his majority, in a *lit de justice* held at the Parliament of Rouen, on the 17th of August, 1563. Charles IX. was then thirteen years and two months old. This prince was not deficient in natural intelligence; he was fond of literature, and, under better discipline, might have prepared himself to have worn the crown worthily. But his mother had early trained him to be treacherous, dissimulating, suspicious, and eager for bloody spectacles. She had given him for his preceptor a man from her town of Florence, Albert Gondi, afterwards named Marshal de Retz, who, according to Brantôme, was cunning, cautious, corrupt, lying, a great dissembler, swearing, and denying God like a porter.

The Edict of Pacification was not executed. Several Parliaments would only consent to register it after long resistance. The governors of the provinces relaxed or tightened the clauses of the edict at their pleasure; and the states of Burgundy, directed by the Duke d'Aumale, even dared to declare that they could no more endure two religions, than heaven could bear two suns.

In the districts where the (Roman) Catholics were the strongest, they represented themselves as defiled by the neighbourhood of heresy, and gave themselves up to shameful acts of violence against the faithful, who went to the assemblies. They violated even the sanctity of the domestic hearth, maltreating those who sung psalms, compelling the Huguenots to furnish bread for the parochial masses,

and to give money to the church societies. When the oppressed appealed to the laws, they were answered by blows, sometimes by assassinations. More than three thousand of them perished by a violent death after the signing of the peace.

Where, on the other hand, the Calvinists were in the majority, they did not obey the Edict of Amboise, nor could they have done so, had they wished; for this treaty had been made rather for the north, than for the south of France. Imagine fifty to a hundred thousand persons compelled to take a journey of several leagues to celebrate their worship in a privileged town!

(Roman) Catholics and the Reformed were not united in the same society: they were encamped face to face, erect, and with arms in their hands. The (Roman) Catholics began, from the year 1563, under the influence of the cardinals and bishops, to form themselves into leagues or private associations for the extirpation of heresy. They bound themselves to devote their persons and their goods, without reservation, [to their cause]. The Calvinists, on their side, had their battle-fields, their rallying-signs, watchwords, and plans of campaign. They were two great armies, who were engaged in constant skirmishes, while waiting for the hour and the place of battle.

In 1564, Catherine de Medicis made Charles IX. traverse the provinces of his kingdom, in order to rekindle the affection of the (Roman) Catholics, and to intimidate the Huguenots. When she arrived at Roussillon, a little town of Dauphiné, she published, on the 4th of August, an *interpretative* declaration of the Edict of Amboise. The lords *haut-justiciers* were no longer to admit any but the members of their

families, and their immediate vassals, to their assemblies. It was forbidden to the churches to hold synods, and to make collections of money. The pastors had no longer the right to leave their place of residence, or to open schools. The priests, monks, and nuns who had married, were commanded instantly to separate themselves from their consorts, or to quit the kingdom with the least possible delay. Thus was the iron circle which surrounded the Huguenots, tightened until they should be stifled by it.

The queen-mother held a conference at Bayonne, with the Duke d'Albe, in the month of June, 1565. This interview has been celebrated, because, according to the testimony of several historians, the plot of the Saint Bartholomew massacre was there laid down. The ferocious envoy of Philip II. told Catherine that a sovereign could do nothing more damaging to his interests, or more degrading to his subjects, than to give them liberty of conscience, and he counselled her to cut down the highest heads of the Huguenots, for then the rest might be easily managed. "Ten thousand frogs," he continued in his coarse language, "are not worth the head of a salmon."

We are assured that the plot was to have been carried out in 1566, during the session of the assembly of Notables at Moulins. But Coligny and the other chiefs came well attended, and the bloody deed was adjourned to a better opportunity.

The court having brought six thousand (Roman) Catholic soldiers from Switzerland, the Huguenots saw they had to fear the worst, and the prince of Condé held a council with the chiefs of his party. The Admiral was of opinion that they should still have

patience, and wait till things had come to the last extremity. “I see very well,” he said, “how we may light up the fire, but not where to find water to quench it.”

His brother D’Andelot thought differently. “If you wait,” he said, “until we are banished into foreign lands, bound in prison, pursued by the people, despised by the soldiers, what will our patience or our past humility have availed us? What will our innocence profit us? Who will so much as listen to us? Those have already declared war, who have thrust in amongst us six thousand foreign soldiers. If we also give them the advantage of striking the first blow, our misfortune will be without a remedy.”

The prince of Condé went once more with the admiral to the queen, to entreat her to be more just to the Reformed. They were badly received. Seeing that their complaints were useless, they resolved to follow the example given them five years before by the duke of Guise, and to seize the young king, who was then in the castle of Monceaux, in Brie (September, 1567).

The plot was discovered, and the court fled precipitately to Meaux. The Chancellor l’Hospital, always favourable to measures of justice and moderation, proposed to send the Swiss home, to carry out the Edict of Amboise faithfully, and promised that on these conditions the Huguenots should lay down their arms. “Eh! Monsieur le Chancelier,” said the queen, “will you answer that they have no other end than to serve the king?” “Yes, madame,” answered L’Hospital, “if I am assured that there is no intention to deceive them.” But the Cardinal de Lorraine and the Constable were of opinion that no concession should be made.

Nevertheless it was necessary to gain time; for the Swiss had not yet arrived. Catherine therefore cajoled the chiefs of the Calvinists by negotiations; she sent the Marshal de Montmorency to them, as a man of the Third Party. He was well received. The Reformed repeated to him the cry, which was uttered in all their complaints: “The free exercise of our religion!” While this was going on, the Swiss arrived; the conference was broken off, and the opportunity lost. A (Roman) Catholic historian of our own time expresses astonishment at “*the credulity of these country gentlemen who were ready to disperse upon the faith of a simple promise*.” It appears to us, that this remark does as much honour to the good faith of the Calvinist party, as it does little credit to that of the (Roman) Catholic court of Charles IX.

After this undertaking, nothing was left but to resort to the hazard of arms. Condé encamped in the environs of Paris, with one thousand infantry and fifteen hundred cavalry. The Constable offered him battle in the plain of Saint Denis, on the 10th of November, 1567. He had eighteen thousand infantry and three thousand cavalry, but they were for the most part recruits of Parisian volunteers.

A crowd of idlers, and ladies dressed as Amazons, wished to enjoy the spectacle of the fight. Monks distributed beads, and chanted litanies. The action commenced towards the end of the day. At the first shock, the Parisians, who were known by their embroidered dresses and brilliant armour, gave way. The Constable, with the Swiss and the cavalry, defended himself vigorously. At the end of two hours, the Huguenots retreated in good order, and their adversaries dared not pursue them further than a quarter of a league from the field of battle.

Anne de Montmorency, covered with wounds, had been summoned by a Scottish gentleman to surrender. “Dost thou know me?” the Constable asked. “It is because I know thee, that I bring thee this,” answered the other, and fired a pistol at him. Montmorency, the last of the triumvirate, died of his wound a few days after. He obtained from Catherine de Medicis nothing but feigned tears, from the bigoted (Roman) Catholics a cold indifference, and from the Reformed a well-deserved resentment. The accident of his birth had placed his fortune too high. In all his great employments he wanted one quality, for which nothing can compensate—a breadth of understanding.

A man of sense, the Marshal de Vielleville, spoke, indeed, truly [to the king] of the affair of Saint Denis. “It is not your majesty who has gained the battle, and still less the prince of Condé.” “And who then?” asked Charles IX. “Sire, it is the king of Spain.”

On the very day following, the Calvinist army presented itself before the faubourgs of Paris, but no one came out to encounter them. They then retired on the side of Lorraine, to meet the auxiliaries, which were led by Jean Casimir, the son of the Elector Palatine. The two armies united at Pont-à-Mous-son, on the 11th of January, 1568. Here an event, probably without example in military annals, happened. The German Protestants claimed a hundred thousand crowns as their arrears of pay, and Condé had not two thousand. What was to be done? To whom apply? It was then that one army, which had itself received nothing, mulcted itself to pay another.

The historian Jean de Serres relates this singular

incident in energetic terms: “The Prince and the Admiral influenced great and small by their example; the ministers in their sermons moved the men, and the captains prepared their people. Every one contributed, one from zeal, another from love; one from fear, another for shame of reproach; they collected in money, plate, chains and rings of gold, about eighty thousand francs, and by this voluntary liberality they subdued the first and pressing avidity of the mercenaries.”[48]

The war was rekindled all over France. Montluc recommenced his ravages in Guienne and Saintonge, and, after having failed before the walls of La Rochelle, put almost the whole of the Calvinist population of the island of Ré to the sword. An army of seven thousand Huguenots overran Gascony, Quercy, and Languedoc, and traversed the entire kingdom as far as Orleans. It was called *the army of the Viscounts*, because it had for leaders the viscounts Monclar, Bruniquel, Caumont, Rapin, and other gentlemen.

The towns of Montauban, Nismes, Castres, Montpellier, Uzès, remained or fell into the power of the Calvinists, who were then in a great majority. At Nismes, from the beginning of the war the Huguenot populace had committed, in spite of the exhortations of the pastors and notables, a frightful massacre of seventy-two prisoners. The following day forty-eight more (Roman) Catholics were slaughtered in the fields. This crime bore the name of *Michelade*, because it took place on the day of Saint Michel, 1567.

The prince of Condé commenced his march across Burgundy, Champagne, Beauce, and began the siege of Chartres, one of the granaries of Paris. The affairs

of the Huguenots now assumed a favourable turn. The queen-mother, who was accustomed to say she could do more with three sheets of paper and her tongue than the soldiers with their lances, recommenced negotiations. The chiefs of the Calvinists, who had learned to their cost the value of Catherine's word, wished for guarantees. But the queen had it published in the army that the Edict of Pacification should be re-established without interpretations or reservations, that a full amnesty should be given to all who had had recourse to arms, and that the chiefs alone refused this equitable arrangement from ambitious motives.

This trick succeeded. Whole companies of Calvinists, without the leave of their chiefs, took the road to their homes; and the prince of Condé, seeing his entire army thus melting away, signed, on the 20th of March, 1568, the peace of Longjumeau. It was named "*the lame and badly-seated peace*," because, of the two negotiators of the queen, one was the lord of *Malassise* and the other was lame. Frenchmen like to be merry upon everything; but truly there was little cause for merriment at that moment. "That peace," says Mézeray, "left the Huguenots at the mercy of their enemies, with no other surety than the word of an Italian woman."[49]

X.

The treaty of Longjumeau lasted but six months, or rather it never existed but on paper. Whilst the Calvinists were sending home their foreign troops, Catherine de Medicis kept hers. She took possession of the strong places, had the bridges and passes guarded, and took every measure to crush the Huguenots.

The (Roman) Catholic pulpits still thundered imprecations and anathemas against them. “They boldly advanced,” says the Abbé Anquetil, “those abominable maxims, that they ought not to keep faith with heretics, and that it is a just, pious, and useful act, leading to salvation, to massacre them. The fruits of these discourses were either public riots, or assassinations, for which no justice could be obtained.”[50]

There is a sort of frightful monotony in these scenes of murder, which stained peace no less than war with blood. Lyons, Bourges, Troyes, Auxerre, Issoudun, Rouen, Amiens, and other towns were strewed with the corpses of Huguenots. Nearly ten thousand perished in three months. At Orleans two hundred had been cast into prison. The mob set fire to the prison, and drove back those who tried to escape, into the flames: “A part of them were seen,” says Crespin, “joining hands in the fire, and were heard to call upon the Lord with a loud voice.”[51]

The Chancellor de l’Hospital made loud complaints of the impunity accorded to these butchers. He was not listened to; and seeing that he could no longer usefully serve the state, he withdrew to his property at Vignay. Catherine de Medicis gave the seals to

Jean de Morvilliers, a creature of the Cardinal de Lorraine. The Marshal de Montmorency, suspected of moderation and humanity, was also superseded from his office as governor of Paris.

Even those sacred rights, which savages would blush to infringe, were no longer respected. The Baron Philibert de Rapin, *maître d'hôtel* to the prince of Condé, having been sent to Languedoc to carry out the treaty of peace, was seized by order of the Parliament of Toulouse, and beheaded three days afterwards.

Condé, Coligny, and D'Andelot, threatened with ruin and death, fled to La Rochelle. They left the Château of Noyers in Burgundy with their wives and children at midnight, on the 25th August, 1568, and travelled a hundred leagues in twenty-four hours through bands of enemies.

The queen of Navarre, Jeanne d'Albret, went to join them with four thousand men. As many more came from Normandy, the Maine, and Anjou. The most famous captains of the party hastened thither with their companies, so that these fugitives of yesterday found themselves at the head of the strongest army they had yet commanded, and Coligny repeated the saying of Themistocles: "My friends, we had perished, if we had not been lost." Thus commenced the third religious war.

Catherine de Medicis put forth edicts which annulled that of January; she also forbade the exercise of the pretended Reformed religion under pain of death, and ordered all its ministers to depart from the kingdom in fifteen days. At the same time the duke of Anjou, the next brother of Charles IX., and the favourite son of Catherine, afterwards known as Henry III., was placed at the head of the (Roman)

Catholic army; but although he had twenty-four thousand infantry and four thousand cavalry under his command, he dared not offer battle. The very severe winter of 1568 was passed in marches and countermarches, without any decisive event taking place.

On the 16th of March following, the two armies met at Jarnac. It was less a battle than a surprise. The different bodies of the Calvinists fell into line successively, and were cut to pieces one after the other. The prince of Condé performed prodigies of valour; but, being thrown from his horse, and carrying his arm in a sling from the beginning of the affair, he surrendered to a (Roman) Catholic gentleman. At the same instant Montesquieu, one of the officers of the duke of Anjou, coming up behind him, fired a pistol at his head. “This action, which might have passed in the affray for a splendid feat of arms,” says Mézeray, “being done in cold blood, appeared to all good men as an execrable parricide.”[52] The duke of Anjou caused the corpse of Condé to be carried upon an ass, whilst he himself joined in the infamous jestings of the soldiers, and wanted to have a triumphal column raised on the spot where the prince had been assassinated. He acted as a worthy son of Catherine.

The news of the death of Condé and the victory of Jarnac, raised transports of joy amongst the (Roman) Catholics, and Charles IX. sent to the pope the standards that had been taken from the Huguenots.

Michel Ghisleri then occupied the pontifical throne under the name of Pius V. He had entered a convent of Dominicans when only fifteen years of age, and had afterwards been intrusted with the office of Inquisitor-General in the Milanais, whence he had

been expelled on account of his implacable severity. He only knew Luther under the name of "the ferocious beast" (*bellua*), and saw in heresy the summary of every crime. His letters were printed at Antwerp in 1640, and are a standing monument of infuriate madness against heretics. Pius V. wrote to Charles IX. to be deaf to every prayer, to stifle every tie of blood or affection, and to extirpate the roots of heresy to the very last fibres. He cited the example of Saul slaying the Amalekites, and represented every feeling of clemency as a snare of the devil. At such moral aberrations it is impossible to feel anger; we are rather moved by a feeling of deep and sad compassion.

Pius V. and Charles IX. had been too precipitate in regarding the position of the Huguenots as desperate. Coligny still remained to them. He was seconded by Jeanne d'Albret, who, holding in her hand her son, Henry of Béarn, then fifteen years of age, and her nephew Henry, son of the prince of Condé, came to Saintes to "*offer to the cause*,"—an expression in vogue among the Calvinists—and prayed to God never to suffer them to swerve from their duty. The young Béarnais was proclaimed *generalissimo* and *protector* of the churches. "I swear," said he, "to defend the religion, and to persevere in the common cause, until either death or victory has restored to us the liberty we seek."

On the 23rd June, 1569, Coligny gained the advantage in the fight of the Roche-Abeille; but he lost many of his men at the siege of Poitiers, which he had been forced to undertake at the instance of the gentlemen of the province. On the 3rd of October following, he was beaten at Moncontour. The German soldiers had mutinied, and the Admiral

could not avoid a conflict with the enemy, as he had intended. The battle lasted but three-quarters of an hour, and the disaster was terrible. Out of twenty-five thousand soldiers, only six or eight thousand remained under his standard. Entire companies had been put to the sword. The lansquenets cried for mercy, saying, "*I am a good Papist! I am a good Papist!*" but no one was spared.

Coligny received three wounds at the commencement of the action, and the blood which flowed under his visor was nigh choking him. He had to be carried off the field. In the evening, when some officers proposed to embark, he roused their courage by his calm and decisive words. Never was Coligny so great as in misfortune; he had always calculated the consequences beforehand.

Another trait of his character deserves to be recorded. "As the Admiral was carried in a litter," says Agrippa D'Aubigné, "Lestrange, an old gentleman, and one of his principal councillors, also wounded and borne in a similar equipage, had it brought up in front of the other at a point where the road widened, and then putting his head out of the curtain, he looked intently upon his chief, and parted from him with tears in his eyes, with these words: '*God is very good*.' They then bade each other farewell, united in thought, but unable to say more. This great captain confessed to his intimate friends that this little word from such a friend had raised him up, and turned him into the path of good thoughts and firm resolutions for the future."[53]

Every misfortune seemed to fall at once upon Coligny. He had lost his brother D'Andelot. The Parliament of Paris had just declared him guilty of *lèse-majesté*, a traitor and a felon, inviting any one to

attack him, with a promise of fifty thousand crowns to any one who should deliver him up, dead or alive; in fact, he had been exposed to several attempts at assassination. Bands of miscreants had burned his château and devastated his domains. Lastly, as if to overwhelm him with a final blow, Pius V. had addressed letters to the king and queen-mother, in which he described him as "*a detestable, infamous, and execrable man, if indeed he deserved the name of man!*"

Behold, then, this great unfortunate, outlawed by the government of his country, and, in a manner, by the human and divine law, by the chief of (Roman) Catholicity, covered with wounds, despoiled of all he possessed, with mutinied mercenaries, an army struck down by defeat, abandoned by many of his friends, blamed by a great number, and having to contend against adversaries without mercy and without faith! Behold him thus, and then read this letter, so pious and so calm, which he wrote to his children on the 16th of October, 1569, thirteen days after the disaster of Moncontour: it is one of the most beautiful pages of the history of humanity:—

"We must not count upon what is called property, but rather place our hope elsewhere than on earth, and acquire other means than those which we see with our eyes, or touch with our hands. We must follow Jesus Christ, our Chief, who has gone before us. Men have taken from us all they can; if such is always the will of God, we shall be happy, and our condition good, since this loss has happened to us through no injury that has been done to those who caused it, but simply for the hatred borne to me, because it has pleased God to make use of me to help His Church.... For the present, it is enough for me to

admonish and conjure you, in the name of God, to persevere with courage in the practice of virtue."

Coligny did not confine himself to writing: he collected together another army. At his voice, from every mountain of Béarn, of Cevennes, of Dauphiné, of Vivarais, of the county of Foix, there came down intrepid gentlemen, and warlike peasants, who promised to defend their faith and their liberty to the death. He traversed the half of France, passed the Loire, defeated the (Roman) Catholics near Arnay-le-Duc, and marched towards Paris, saying, "The Parisians would incline to peace when they found the war at their gates."

The court was seized as much with astonishment as with fear, at finding Coligny at the head of a third army, as numerous as those he had lost, and better disciplined. It once more offered conditions of peace, and a treaty was signed at St. Germain-en-Laye, on the 8th of August, 1570. It was more favourable to the Reformed than the preceding ones. It gave them liberty of worship in all the places which were in their possession; in addition, two towns for every province for the celebration of service, an amnesty for the past, equal right of admission to public offices, permission to reside in any part of the kingdom without being molested on account of religion, and four hostage-towns,—La Rochelle, La Charité, Cognac, and Montauban.

The queen Catherine showed herself generous. The (Roman) Catholic historian Davila, who well knew the secrets of this court, assures us that she was agreed with the Cardinal de Lorraine and the duke of Anjou about the project of the massacre of Saint Bartholomew. "It was determined," he says, "to return to the project already formed so many times,

and so often abandoned, to free the country of foreign troops, and then to employ artifices to get rid of the chiefs, in the hope that the party would yield of itself, as soon as they saw themselves deprived of this support."[54]

The Admiral, who suspected nothing, signed the peace with joy. "Rather than again fall back into these disorders," he said, "I would die a thousand deaths, and be dragged through the streets of Paris." And so, in effect, he was; but the disorders, far from ceasing, recommenced with fury, and lasted twenty-five years.

XI.

This is the proper place to point out the changes, which had been effected since the wars of religion had begun, both in the position and character of the Reformed, and in their relations with the (Roman) Catholics.

Although still numerous on the south of the Loire, the Reformed had lost much ground. Paris, henceforth, belonged exclusively to the Romish church. Picardy, Normandy, Orleanais, Champagne, all the north, and a considerable portion of the centre of France, now possessed only scattered and timid flocks. The boldest had perished; the least courageous had returned to the dominant communion. A crowd of those who filled public offices, gentlemen and rich citizens, had done the same. The women, also, in order to escape from the brutal violence to which they were subjected, had taken refuge in great number in (Roman) Catholicism, as the last asylum for their chastity.

Another difference, equally important, must be related. At the States-General of Orleans, and at the conference of Poissy, the Reformed might hope to draw the masses to themselves, the Parliaments, even royalty itself; in 1570 they could do so no longer. Every one had clearly chosen his side for the one church or for the other; opinions had become sharply defined and matured; the floating population had disappeared.

Before the wars, proselytism was wholesale; it embraced towns and entire provinces; afterwards, proselytes were rare, being only made one by one, and with infinite trouble: so many were the corpses

piled up between the two communions! So many were the bitter enmities and cruel remembrances around the two camps, forbidding communication!

The destiny of the Reformed in France was truly strange and deplorable. Had they not taken arms, they would probably have been exterminated like the Albigeois. In taking up arms, they kindled the fiercest hatred, and dug a pit, which no longer permitted the (Roman) Catholics to approach them.

But even these calamities might have become the source of good for both communions. The Reformed had been instructed by misfortunes. They now understood and proclaimed that two religions might exist in the same state. Resigned to being only a minority, they cited in their writings the arrangements concluded between the rival churches in Germany. They went so far as to invoke the toleration of the Roman pontiff for the Jews, and of the Turks for the Christians. They had renounced the pretension to reign; they only asked for the right to live, and (Roman) Catholicism might have given them that, without putting its ancient prerogatives in danger.

A respected modern historian says upon this subject: “The experience of the edicts of toleration during the peace, and of the mutual efforts of the two parties during the war, had extinguished in them (the Reformed) many illusions as to their strength. They could no longer believe that they were the more numerous, and that fear alone held the masses in apparent conformity with the Romish church. They had, on the contrary, become convinced, that progressive opinions, which called for the exercise of the understanding and of judgment, could only be dominant among the *élite* of the nation.”[55]

It is therefore a grave error to advance either religious or political necessity in justification of the massacre of Saint Bartholomew. Rome had no longer anything to fear for her supremacy, nor the crown for the maintenance of its political power. It was fanaticism, it was the resentment of the past struggles, which led to the crushing of the minority in 1572: it was no state reason.

The piety and the manners of the Reformed had also suffered much from the misfortunes of the time. Without having fallen into the hideous corruption of the court of Catherine, and without giving themselves up to the irregularities, which defiled the (Roman) Catholic clergy, they had lost much of their fervid and simple faith, and of the pious severity of conduct of their earlier years. In surrendering themselves to the spirit of party, religion had been degraded; they adhered, perhaps, the more strongly to their sect; they belonged less to Christianity.

Some Huguenots, who had been incessantly under arms for eight years, could not again settle quietly under their own roofs. They only lived, they only breathed in freedom, in the tumult of camps and the madness of battles. For this reason, Coligny wished to employ them in the war of Brabant. Others, who had only assumed the trade of the soldier for the moment, had learned from it less of brotherly love, and more of the thirst for revenge. Avarice and ambition had returned with the rest. “The consciences of several,” says a contemporary, “began to shake, and there were few who evinced a strong affection for religion; both great and small already thought much of the world, and built many castles in the air.”[56]

The pastors applied themselves to cure these

wounds by means of the pious men of their consistories and synods; unhappily the massacre of Saint Bartholomew, and the fresh wars which it excited, left them but little leisure for so great a work.

We have made no mention of the national synods which were convoked after that of 1559, because their acts had no reference to general affairs, and because they were exclusively directed to points of discipline or to private matters, which have no interest for the present time. The second national synod was held at Poitiers, in 1561; the third at Orleans, in 1562; the fourth at Lyons, in 1563; the fifth at Paris, in 1565; the sixth at Verteuil, in 1567. These assemblies were properly severe concerning the preservation of the faith and good order of their flocks.

The seventh national synod, held at La Rochelle, in April, 1571, under the presidency of Theodore de Bèze, was the first of those great assemblies which took place with the full consent of the king. It deserves to be distinguished from the rest from its importance and the extraordinary solemnity, by which it was surrounded. The queen of Navarre, the princes Henry of Béarn and Henry of Condé, the Admiral de Coligny, and the Count Louis of Nassau, were present, and several of these distinguished personages took a direct part in the deliberation in their capacity as deputies of the churches.

The confession of faith of 1559 was then sanctioned and reduced to a uniform text: “Inasmuch as our confession of faith is printed in different ways,” said the members of the assembly, “the synod declares that that is the only true one which was drawn up at the first national synod.” It was

determined to make three copies on parchment, of which one should be kept at La Rochelle, the second in Béarn, and the third at Geneva, after being signed by the members, ecclesiastic and lay, of the synod. The two copies of Béarn and La Rochelle were lost during the religious wars.

XII.

An illustrious magistrate of the sixteenth century said, in speaking of the massacre of Saint Bartholomew: “Let it be blotted out from the memory of man!” This wish has not been fulfilled, nor should it ever be; the great crimes of mankind are great lessons!

So far from this event being forgotten, a vast library might be filled with the books which have been written upon it. Authors of every nation—French, Italian, English, German—have devoted long and patient research to this subject. Every word has been weighed, every act commented on; and they have striven to assign to each person his due share of responsibility.

These are questions, which in our day are exhausted in the estimation of the enlightened and honest men of every opinion. Thus no one would now dare to maintain the fable of a plot by Coligny against the king’s life. The thesis of the Abbé de Caveyrac upon *salutary rigours*, will not be reproduced. The premeditation of the massacre can be no longer seriously denied. The (Roman) Catholic French historians, De Thou, Mézeray, Péréfixe, Maimbourg, all admit it; the Italian historians, Davila, Capilupi, Adriani, Catena, these confidants of Catherine de Medicis, or of the Roman conclave, do more; they admire and extol the premeditation, and see in it a marvellous effect of the blessing of heaven. These, then, are settled points.[57]

But there is another question, which, as it concerns the honour of the French name, as well as the rights of truth, must be considered. Who were the first, and

the real authors of the massacre of Saint Bartholomew? We make answer, from researches, of which we will here give a short analysis.

The popes and the king of Spain, who never ceased to demand by their legates, their ambassadors, their public and secret agents, the extermination of the chiefs of the Huguenot party;

Catherine de Medicis, the niece of Clement VII., the woman of Florence, who had been nurtured in the precepts of Machiavel;

The Cardinal de Lorraine, doubly a foreigner by his birth, and in his quality of prince of the Roman church;

His nephew, Henry of Guise, a Lorraine, a young man of twenty-two, who sought to persuade himself that the Admiral was guilty of the death of his father, in order to incite himself to assassinate him, and to become, after his death, the first person in the state;

Albert de Gondi, the Florentine, whom we have already named, who cited the murder of the duke of Orleans, by the duke of Burgundy, as an example to Charles IX., and said it was necessary not to do things by halves, but to kill all, even the young Bourbon princes, the sin being as great for a small as for a great crime;

René Birago, or de Birague, a Milanese adventurer, whom Francis I. had brought to France; he had risen by climbing to the highest offices of the magistracy, and received a cardinal's hat, as a reward for the part he took in the massacre of Saint Bartholomew. It was this Birago, who went about repeating the atrocious phrase, that to terminate the religious wars "*cooks were needed more them soldiers*;"

Lastly, Louis de Gonzague, a native of Mantua, and duke of Nevers, a skilful courtier, an indifferent captain, and one of the most eager of his day in promoting assassinations.

Up to this point there was not a single Frenchman [connected with the plot]. But besides Spain and the Papacy, there were two Lorraines, three Italian men, and one Italian woman[58] [engaged in it]. Albert de Gondi was the most intimate of the confidants of Catherine de Medicis. The duke of Guise, Birago, and Louis de Gonzague, formed a second secret council, which decided everything.

There remains, however, three Frenchmen [to be named]: the Marshal de Tavannes, the duke of Anjou, and Charles IX. These alone, with the Lorraines and the Italians, had any influence in the deliberations; the other Frenchmen were but creatures and tools.

The Marshal de Tavannes authorized the crime and helped in its consummation; he even showed himself, after the affair was begun, extremely violent; but in the councils he had spoken with more moderation than his accomplices, and had rejected the proposal to kill the two Bourbon princes.

The duke of Anjou, then in his twentieth year, had been brought up, like his brother, by Gondi, who had taught him to violate faith and to feast himself with spectacles of blood. He was already given up to those unbridled debaucheries, and to those ignoble superstitions, which made him a modern Heliogabalus, and the most abject prince ever seen upon the throne of France. “As for me,” said Charles IX. to Coligny, “I am a Frenchman and king of the French; my brother, the duke of Anjou, speaks only with his head, his eyes, and his shoulders; he is an

Italian."

Charles IX. was the last [to give his adhesion]. The execration of the human race has fallen upon his head, because he held the sceptre on the fatal day, and because, as soon as he smelt the odour of blood, he was maddened to become the executioner of his subjects. But he was not the most guilty. He had moments of candour and generosity; he alone hesitated, and was the only one of this infamous court who felt the pangs of remorse.

"Will there be no pity," asks M. de Châteaubriand in his *Etudes historiques*, "for this monarch of twenty-three years of age, born with good talents, with a taste for literature and the arts, a character naturally generous, whom a detestable mother had delighted to deprave by all the abuses of debauchery and power?" Yes, there will be pity for him, even amongst those Huguenots whose fathers he caused to be slaughtered, and with a pious hand they will wipe off the blood which covers his face, to discover in it something that is human.

These were the real authors of the Saint Bartholomew massacre, and this is the manner in which they prepared and accomplished it.

The court saw with displeasure that the chiefs of the Reformed, Jeanne d'Albret, Henry of Bourbon, Henry of Condé, Coligny, Larochefoucauld, Lanoue, Briquemant, and Cavagnes, had retired to La Rochelle, or to their provinces. It was necessary to draw them out, in order to get them into their power. Men of the third party were sent to them, who, without raising their distrust, might induce them to approach nearer to Paris. The Calvinist deputies positively went to court, where they experienced the most favourable reception. Charles

IX. behaved not only as a king, who forgets and pardons, but as a prince who was anxious to gratify his discontented subjects. He gave much and promised more; he especially heaped favours upon Téligny, son-in-law of the Admiral, a young man of frank and amiable character, who almost thought that he had found a friend in his master.

However, these chiefs of the second rank were not enough; those of the first rank were necessary, and in order to succeed, the marriage of Margaret of Valois, the sister of Charles IX., with Henry of Béarn was brought forward, a brilliant alliance for the poor house of Navarre, but one which dazzled Jeanne d'Albret but little, because she balanced the vices of the Valois against their fortune. "I would rather," she said, "descend to be the most humble maiden of France, than sacrifice my soul and that of my son to grandeur."

The envoys of the court set before her and the chiefs of the party, considerations of another kind. They represented that this marriage would be the best guarantee of a solid peace between the two religions. Coligny allowed himself to be deceived,—he came to believe, in the simplicity of his great heart, that the entire kingdom would be united at the same time as the royal family. Charles IX. indeed declared that he married his sister not only to the prince of Navarre, but to the whole party. "It will be," he said, "the strongest and the closest bond of peace between my subjects, and a sure testimony of my good-will towards those of the religion."

Jeanne d'Albret dared resist no longer, she went to Blois in the month of May, 1572, leaving her son behind her, out of a lingering feeling of distrust. "On the day of her arrival," says L'Estoile, "the king and

the queen-mother caressed her with much [apparent tenderness], especially the king, who called her his great-aunt, his all, his best-beloved, and never left her side, and entertained her with so much honour and respect, that every one was astonished." In the evening, on retiring, he said to the queen his mother, laughing, "And now, madam, what do you say, do I not play my part well?" "Yes," she answered, "very well; but nothing is well which is not kept up." "Leave me alone," said the king, "and you shall see how I will put the bit on them."[59]

Jeanne d'Albret set out on her journey for Paris on the 15th May. On the 4th June she fell ill; on the 9th she was dead. Had she been poisoned? Many believed so. It was said that a Florentine perfumer, Master René, known by the name of the queen's poisoner, had sold her some poisoned gloves.

She showed in her last days the same consistent piety, which had adorned her life. She uttered neither complaints nor murmurs in the most cruel accessions of pain; a faith resigned and serene shone through all her sufferings. Her tranquil heroism astonished that court, when in dying they could laugh, but knew not how peacefully to collect themselves before God. She had no regret for her life, but in reflecting on the youth of her son and of her daughter Catherine. "In any case," she said, "my trust is that God will be to them a father and protector, as He has been to me in my greatest afflictions; I commit them to His Providence to provide for them." She died at the age of forty-four.

The Admiral Coligny had already gone to court in the autumn of 1571; he returned in July, 1572, in spite of the warnings of many of his friends. "I trust," he answered them, "to the sincerity and the oath of

his majesty."

In his first interview, Coligny knelt before the king. Charles IX. raised him up, called him his father, and embracing the illustrious old man thrice, said to him, "We have got you now; you shall not escape when you wish; this is the happiest day of my life."

He opened his councils to the Admiral, and seemed to listen to him with the deference of a son. Coligny laid before him the political plans which had long occupied his thoughts, and which were afterwards adopted by Henry IV. and Cardinal Richelieu—humiliation of the house of Spain; aid to the insurgents of the Low Countries; alliance with the Protestant princes of the empire and of Sweden, in order to become the arbiter of peace and war in Europe. The conquest of the Low Countries was then easy; for the Belgians, out of hatred to Philip II. and the duke of Alba, would have joyfully offered to become an integrant part of the kingdom. If the Admiral's plan had been followed, France from the sixteenth century would have become the first power in the world, and the entire pages of modern history would have been changed. But the popes, the queen-mother, her advisers, and the Guises prevented it, in spite of Charles IX., who felt at last the instinct of national honour.

The marriage of Margaret of Valois with Henry of Béarn, who had just taken the title of king of Navarre, was celebrated on the 18th August, 1572, and four days were spent in games, festivals, masquerades, and ballets.

On Friday, the 22nd August, Coligny was returning from the Louvre, accompanied by twelve or fifteen gentlemen. He was walking slowly, being engaged in reading a petition, when passing in front of the

cloister of Saint Germain, he was struck by three balls shot from an arquebuse, which shattered the forefinger of his left hand, and wounded his left arm. The door of the house whence the arquebuse had been fired, was burst open, but only a laquais and a female servant were found. The murderer had had time to escape: it was Maurevel, formerly a page of the dukes of Guise, and one of their intimates; "*the slayer on the king's wages, the common assassin*," as he is styled by the historians of the epoch.

The surgeon Ambrois Paré examined the Admiral's wound. It was feared that the copper balls had been poisoned, and Coligny believed he was approaching his last hour. "My friends," he said, "why do you weep? as for me, I hold myself happy to have received these wounds for the cause of God; pray to Him to strengthen me."

The news of the crime was spread in a moment throughout Paris, and excited the greatest agitation. The sheriffs (*échevins*) ordered the captains of the militia to assemble their companies, and to guard the Hôtel de Ville. The king was playing at tennis when he heard of the event, and angrily throwing down his racket, exclaimed, "Shall I never have any peace? Must I witness fresh troubles every day?" This first utterance of his conscience tends to clear his memory; the assassination was the work of the duke of Guise, supported by Catherine and her confidants; it had not been ordered by Charles IX.

The Calvinists gathered in consternation at the dwelling of the Admiral, and held counsel together. They wished to remove him instantly from Paris, but the physicians would not permit it.

The marshals Damville and De Cossé, men of the third party, also came to offer their services to the

Admiral. “I have no other regret for what has happened to me,” he said, “but that of being deprived of the opportunity of showing the king the affection I bear to his service. I could have wished,” he added, “to converse a while with the king upon things of great moment for him to know, and which I think there is no one who would dare to tell him.”

In the afternoon, Charles IX. came with the queen-mother, the duke of Anjou, and other personages of the court, to see him. The occurrences at this interview are variously related. Coligny spoke to the king concerning the war of the Low Countries, and the Edict of Pacification; then he discoursed with him for some minutes, in a low voice. Charles IX. and his mother wished to see the ball, which had been extracted from the wound. “You bear the wound,” said the king, “and I the perpetual pain; but, by God’s death, I will take such terrible revenge, that it shall never be forgotten!”

Was his indignation sincere? From the manner in which he addressed the duke Henry of Guise, and from the order given him to quit the court without delay, it may be supposed to have been so. But Catherine and the duke of Anjou represented to the king that the accusation of the murder of the Admiral would certainly ascend to him, notwithstanding anything he might do; that civil war was about to be renewed; and that it was better to fight the battle in Paris, where all the chiefs were assembled, than to encounter the risk of a new campaign. “Well,” said Charles IX., in a fit of frenzy, “since you think the Admiral must be killed, I am willing; but it must be with all the Huguenots, so that there be not one left to reproach me.”

The day of Saturday was spent in preparations,

and secret councils. The duke of Guise, who had speedily returned after feigning to depart, arranged matters with the sheriffs, the captains of the *quartiers*, and the Swiss. “Let every good Catholic,” he said to them, “tie a strip of white linen round his arm, and wear a white cross in his hat.”

The hour drew nigh. Catherine declared to Charles IX. that it was too late to go back; that the moment had come to lop off the gangrened limbs; and, recurring to the language of her cradle, as will happen under the dominion of powerful emotions: “*E pietà,*” she said, “*lor ser crudele, e crudeltà lor ser pietoso* (it is pity to be cruel to them, and it would be cruelty to show them pity).”

Charles still hesitated; a cold sweat stood upon his forehead. His mother struck a blow upon the point, on which he was most sensitive. She asked if by his irresolution he would have his courage called in question. The king was indignant at the thought of a suspicion of cowardice. He rose, and cried out: “Well, begin!” It was then half-past one in the morning.

In the king’s chamber there were now only Catherine, Charles IX., and the duke of Anjou. All three preserved a sullen silence. The report of the first pistol was heard. Charles started, and sent word to the duke of Guise to precipitate nothing. It was too late. The queen-mother, distrusting the hesitation of her son, had commanded that the hour for the signal should be anticipated. The great bell of Saint Germain l’Auxerrois began to toll between two and three in the morning of Sunday, the 24th of August. At the sound of the tocsin, armed men rushed out from every door, shouting, “For God and the King!”

The duke of Guise, accompanied by his uncle, the

Duke d'Aumale, the Chevalier d'Angoulême, and three hundred soldiers, hastened to the dwelling of the Admiral. They knocked at the first gate in the king's name. A gentleman opened it: he fell stabbed. The inner gate was then burst in. At the noise of firing Coligny and all his people got up. They attempted to barricade the entry to the apartments; but this feeble rampart crumbled before the onset of the aggressors.

The Admiral had invited his minister Merlin to pray with him. A servant hurried to him terror-stricken: "Sir," cried he, "the house is broken into, and there are no means of resistance." "I have long been prepared to die," answered Coligny. "As for you, save yourselves if you can; for you cannot secure my life. I commend my soul to the mercy of God."

All reached the upper part of the house, except Nicolas Muss, his German interpreter. Coligny rested against the wall; his wound prevented him from standing upright. The first who entered the room was a Lorraine, or German, named *Behem*, *Besme*, a servant of the duke of Guise. "Are you not the Admiral?" he demanded. "Yes, I am," replied Coligny; and looking without discomposure upon the naked sword of the assassin, [he added]: "Young man, you ought to consider my age and my infirmity; but you will not make my life shorter." Besme plunged his sword into his breast, and gave him a second blow upon the head. The others finished the murder with their daggers.[60]

Guise was waiting impatiently in the courtyard. "*Besme*, hast thou done it?" [he shouted]. "It is done, my lord," [was the reply given]. Monsieur le Chevalier would not believe it unless he saw it with

his eyes; “Throw him out of the window,” [was, therefore, the command]. *Besme* and one of his companions lifted up the body of the Admiral, who still breathing, clutched the window-frame. They flung him into the courtyard. The duke of Guise, wiping off the blood from his face with a handkerchief, said: “I know him, it is he;” and kicking the dead body with his foot, he hastened into the street, exclaiming: “Courage, comrades; we have begun well—now for the rest; the king commands it.”

Sixteen years and four months afterwards, on the 23rd of December, 1588, in the castle of Blois, the corpse of this same Henry of Guise was lying before Henry III., who, in like manner, kicked it in the face. Sovereign justice of God!

Coligny was fifty-five years and a half old. Since the peace of 1570, he every morning and evening read the sermons of Calvin upon the book of Job, saying that this history was his help and consolation in all his troubles. He also spent several hours of the day in writing his memoirs. These papers having been brought to the council after the massacre of Saint Bartholomew, were burned by the king’s order, lest they might increase regret for his death.

Some time after this event, when the English ambassador expressed his grief for the murder of Coligny, Catherine made answer to him: “Do you know that the Admiral recommended the king, as a matter of the last importance, to keep under the king of Spain, and also your mistress (Queen Elizabeth), as much as possible?” “Very true, madam,” replied the ambassador; “he was a bad Englishman, but a good Frenchman.”

Let us also cite a saying of Montesquieu: “The

Admiral Coligny was assassinated, having only had the glory of the state at heart."

XIII.

We are willing, whilst fulfilling our task, to abridge as far as possible the details of the massacre of Saint Bartholomew.

When the sun of the 24th of August rose upon Paris, all was tumult, disorder, and carnage; rivers of blood flowed in the streets; corpses of men, women, and children blocked up the doorways; on all sides groans, blasphemies, death-cries, and imprecations, were heard; ruffians by thousands insulted their victims before butchering them, and then loaded themselves with the spoils; the poniard, the pike, the knife, the sword, the arquebuse, every weapon of the soldier and the brigand, were brought into the service of this execrable slaughter; and the vile populace running after the murderers, finished the Huguenots, by mutilating them and dragging them in the mire, by a cord round the neck, to have their share also in this feast of cannibals.

At the Louvre, the Huguenots, brought up one after another between a double line of halberts, fell bleeding before they reached the end; and the ladies of the court, well worthy to be the mothers, the wives, and the sisters of assassins, came to gloat over the bodies of the victims.

It has been remarked that of so many brave men, who had a thousand times faced death on the field of battle, there was but one, Taverny, who sought to defend himself; and even he was a lawyer. The rest presented their throats to the poniard like women. A crime so monstrous overwhelmed their minds, and paralyzed their hands; and before they could recover themselves, they were no more.

Some, however, who lived on the other side of the Seine, in the faubourgs Saint Germain, Montgomery, Rohan, Ségur, and La Ferrière, had time to comprehend their position and to escape. It was then that the king, maddened with fury, seized an arquebuse and fired at Frenchmen. Two hundred and twenty-seven years afterwards, Mirabeau picked the arquebuse of Charles IX. out of the dust of centuries, to turn it against the throne of Louis XVI.

On the same Sunday morning, the king sent for Henry of Navarre and Henry of Condé. He said to them in a ferocious tone: "*The mass, death, or the Bastille*." After some resistance, the princes consented to make profession of the Romish faith; but neither the court nor the people believed in the sincerity of their abjuration.

The massacre lasted four days. It was necessary to clothe it with a pretext before France and Europe. At first it was endeavoured to throw the burthen upon the Guises, but they refused [to bear it]. Next a pretended conspiracy of the Huguenots against Charles IX. and his family was invented. There were tergiversations of every kind, fabrications, which could not be maintained for an hour, confessions, which were retracted on the following day, orders and counter-orders to the governors in the provinces: a miserable play of the actors after the tragic scene.

On Thursday, when the blood of the victims deluged the streets of Paris, the clergy celebrated an extraordinary jubilee, and made a general procession. They even determined to consecrate an annual feast to a triumph so glorious; and whilst the (Roman) Catholic pulpits re-echoed with thanksgivings, a medal was struck with this legend: "*Piety has awakened Justice!*" The massacre of Saint

Bartholomew was renewed in the provinces, and horrible to say, it lasted more than six weeks.

We would collect with a religious care the names of those governors who refused to imbrue their hands in these massacres. The Viscount d'Orte, at Bayonne; the Count de Tende, in Dauphiné; Saint Héran, in Auvergne; Chabot Charny and the President Jeannin, at Dijon; La Guiche, at Mâçon; de Rieux, at Narbonne; Matignon, at Alençon; Villars, at Nismes; the Count de Carce, in Provence; and the Montmorencys in their demesnes and governments.

We delight also, to be able to inscribe in this list the name of a priest, Jean Hennuyer, bishop of Lisieux. When the lieutenant of the king imparted to him the order for the massacre of the Huguenots, he answered: "No, no, sir, I oppose, and will always oppose the execution of such an order. I am the pastor of Lisieux, and these people, whom you command me to slaughter, are my flock. Although they have at present strayed, having quitted the pasture which Jesus Christ, the Sovereign Shepherd, has confided to my care, they may still come back. I do not see in the Gospel that the shepherd can permit the blood of his sheep to be shed; on the contrary, I find there, that he is bound to give his blood and his life for them." Upon this the governor asked him for his own acquittance for a refusal in writing, and this the bishop Hennuyer gave him.[61]

The blow fell upon the provinces with a variable force. In those where the Reformed were few in number, as in Brittany, Picardy, Champagne and Burgundy, no great excesses were committed. In certain cantons of the provinces, on the contrary, where they were very numerous, as in Saintonge, and in Lower Languedoc, they did not dare to attack

them. It is important also to observe, that in general, Saint Bartholomew's day was nowhere so kept, but in the towns. This explains why so many Calvinists escaped death.

The faithful of Meaux were butchered in the prisons during several days, and the sword being too slow, iron hammers were employed. Four hundred houses, in the most handsome quarter of the town, were pillaged and devastated.

At Troyes, the executioner had more humanity than the governor, who gave him the command to massacre the prisoners. "It is against my duty," said he, "for I have not learned to execute any one without a sentence of condemnation being first passed." There were other executioners, who, finding their hearts fail them in the midst of the butchery, sent for wine to strengthen them for their work.

At Orleans, where there still remained three thousand Calvinists, men on horseback cried throughout the streets: "Courage, friends, kill all, and then you shall pillage their goods." The most ruffianly were those who had abjured in the last wars; they parodied the psalms, whilst they immolated those whose faith they had forsworn.

At Rouen, many Huguenots took to flight; the rest were cast into prison. The massacre began only on the 17th September, and lasted four days. The prisoners were called over by their names, from a list given to the murderers. There perished, according to the relation of Crespin, near six hundred persons.

At Toulouse, the events of Paris were made known on Sunday, the 31st August. The gates of the town were instantly closed, and the Reformed, who had gone to celebrate their worship at the village of

Castanet, were only admitted one by one, by little posterns. They were taken to the prisons and the convents. There they remained a month. It was not till the 3rd October that they were executed, by order of the chief president Dafis. Three hundred perished, amongst whom were five councillors, who after they were killed, were hanged in their robes on the great elm, which stood before the court of the palace.

The massacre of Bordeaux was delayed like that of Toulouse, and during these hesitations, a Jesuit named Augier declaimed every day from his pulpit against the pusillanimity of the governor. At length, companies of assassins were organized: they had the name of "*the red*, or *cardinal band*," bestowed upon them.

The towns of Bourges, Angers, and many others, witnessed similar scenes. But these were trifling by the side of the massacres of Lyons: here there was a second Saint Bartholomew, more frightful still than that of Paris, because it was conducted with a sort of regularity. The governor Mandelot gave orders that the Calvinists should be shut up in the prisons of the Archbishoprics, of the Cordeliers, and of the Célestins, and be slaughtered in detachments. The executioner of Lyons, like his brother of Troyes, refused to lend his hand to the work. "After sentence," said he, "I will do what I have to do; there are but too many such executioners as are needed residing in the town." A writer says upon this subject: "What a re-establishment of order it would have been, if in this unhappy city the governor had been the executioner, and the executioner the governor!"[62]

There perished at Lyons, according to some, eight

hundred, according to others, thirteen hundred, fifteen hundred, or eighteen hundred, Huguenots. The dwellers on the borders of the Rhone, in Dauphiné, and in Provence, stood aghast at the sight of so many corpses floating on the waters, or thrown up on the banks of the river; many were tied to long poles, and horribly mutilated. “At Lyons,” says Capilupi, a gentleman attached to the court of the pope, “thanks to the excellent order and singular prudence of M. de Mandelot, governor of the town, all the Huguenots were taken one after the other like sheep.”[63]

The correspondence of Mandelot has recently been published. He expressed his deep regret to Charles IX. that a few Huguenots had escaped, and supplicated his majesty to grant him a share of the spoils of the dead. Lyons has witnessed other massacres, but we have not learned that the proconsuls of the Convention held out their hands to clutch the wages of blood.

What was the number of victims throughout France? De Thou says 30,000; Sully, 70,000; the bishop Péréfixe, 100,000. This last figure is probably exaggerated, if we reckon those only who met with a violent death. But if there be added those who died of misery, hunger, grief, the aged, who were helpless and abandoned, women without shelter, children without bread, the many wretched beings, whose lives were shortened by this great catastrophe, it will be confessed that the number given by Péréfixe is still below the truth.

The sensation produced by the massacre of Saint Bartholomew throughout Europe was immense. Men were unwilling to believe the first accounts. When they were confirmed, all the courts, all the churches,

all the public places, every house resounded with acclamations; and there was not a hut, into which the deeds done on that day did not carry, according to the sentiments of the inhabitants, the exultations of joy, or the stupor of overwhelming grief.

Many thought, at first, that it was only the first scene of a vast conspiracy, and that the (Roman) Catholic powers had resolved to exterminate all the Protestants of Europe. The Papacy, Philip II., and the court of Charles IX., in fact never ceased to talk of the complete extirpation of heretics: the power, not the will, was wanting.

At Rome, the news of the massacre, which Charles IX. had announced in ambiguous words to the legate, was expected, and received with transports of joy. The messenger was gratified with a present of a thousand pieces of gold. He brought a letter from the nuncio Salviati, written on the very day, the 24th August, in which this priest said to Gregory XIII., that "he blessed God to see his pontificate commence so auspiciously." The king Charles IX., and the queen Catherine, were praised for having shown so much prudence in extirpating this pestilent race, and for having so well chosen their time that all the rebels had been secured under lock and key, as in a dovecot (*sotto chiave, in gabbia*).

After having offered up solemn thanksgivings with the college of cardinals, the pope caused the guns of the castle of Saint Angelo to be fired, declared a jubilee, and struck a medal in honour of the great event. The Cardinal de Lorraine, who had gone to Rome on the election of the new pontiff, also celebrated the massacre by a great procession to the French church of Saint Louis. He caused an inscription to be written on the gates in letters of

gold, in which he said that “the Lord had granted the prayers, which he had offered to Him for twelve years!”

Madrid shared in the rejoicings of Rome. Philip II. wrote to Catherine that this was the greatest and best news that could ever be announced to him. This prince, who has been surnamed “the Demon of the South,” had other reasons for his joy besides fanaticism.

In the Low Countries, the duke of Alba cried out, on learning the assassination of Coligny: “The Admiral is dead; there is a great captain the less for France, and a great enemy the less for Spain.”

But how shall we relate the impression produced by the massacre of Saint Bartholomew in Protestant countries? It may be seen in the letters of Theodore de Bèze, and others of his contemporaries, that, for more than a year, they could not chase from their minds that bloody and horrible image, and that they spoke of it with a trembling, which attested the profound shock which their souls [had sustained].

Germany, England, Switzerland, in witnessing the arrival of a multitude of fugitives appalled and half-dead, and on hearing from their mouth the narrative of the massacres, cursed the name of France. At Geneva, a day of abstinence and prayer was instituted, which has been kept up to this day. In Scotland, all the pastors preached upon the massacre of Saint Bartholomew; and the aged Knox, borrowing the language of the prophets, pronounced in a church at Edinburgh the following words: “The sentence is gone forth against this murderer, the king of France, and the vengeance of God will not be withdrawn from his house. His name shall be held in execration by posterity; and no one who shall spring

from his loins, shall possess the kingdom in peace, unless repentance come to prevent the judgment of God."

The ambassador Lamothe-Fénélon, charged to justify the massacre at the court of London, on accusing the Admiral of having conspired against Charles IX., cried out in the bitterness of his spirit that he blushed to bear the name of a Frenchman. "Never," says Hume, "was there a spectacle more terrible and more touching than that of the solemnity of this audience. A gloomy grief sat on every countenance; the profound silence of night seemed to reign in all the apartments of the queen. The lords and ladies of the court, in long mourning apparel, suffered the ambassador to pass between them without saluting him, or deigning to give him so much as a look."[64] On coming near the queen, Lamothe-Fénelon stammered out his odious apology, and retired in confusion.

The justification of the massacre was not an easier matter in Germany. The ambassador Schomberg did what he could to support the fable of the plot of Coligny. They refused even to treat with him otherwise than in writing, so much did they mistrust an envoy of Charles IX.; so deeply degraded was the word, the honour, and the name of France! When the duke of Anjou traversed Germany in 1573, the Elector Palatine led him into his cabinet, and showing him the portrait of Coligny, said to him, "You know this man; you have killed the greatest captain of Christendom, and you ought not to have done it; for he had rendered great services to you and the king." The duke of Anjou answered that it was the Admiral who had sought to destroy them all. "We know that tale, sir," was the cold reply of the

Elector.

If all the circumstances of the massacre of Saint Bartholomew be well weighed,—the premeditation, the intervention of the court and of the councils of the king, the snares that were laid to entrap the Calvinists, the solemn oaths which had drawn them to Paris, the royal marriage ceremony stained with blood, the dagger put into the hands of the people by the chiefs of the state, the hecatombs of human victims immolated at a time of universal peace, the carnage prolonged for two months in the provinces, and lastly, the priests and the princes of the priests, ankle-deep in blood, lifting their hands to heaven to thank God,—if, we say, we ponder upon all these circumstances, we cannot escape the conviction that the slaughter of Saint Bartholomew is the greatest crime of the Christian era since the invasion of the men of the North. The Sicilian Vespers, the extermination of the Albigeois, the tortures of the Inquisition, the murders committed by the Spaniards in the New World, odious though they be, do not unite in the same degree the violation of all laws, human and divine. And frightful calamities have sprung from this monstrous crime. Individuals may indeed commit crimes, which remain unpunished in this world; but dynasties, castes, and nations, never go unrewarded.

The race of the Valois was exterminated by the poniard, and nearly every actor in the massacre of Saint Bartholomew perished by a violent death.[65]

In France, the detestable reign of Henry III. followed, together with ignoble and brutal manners, laws despised, the madness of the League, and twenty-five years of civil war. Abroad, every old and natural alliance was broken off; Protestant

Switzerland, Germany, England, were against France, or wrapped themselves in a suspicious neutrality; the country was at length reduced to a depth of opprobrium, submitting to the tutelage of the king of Spain, and of humbly begging for an army at Madrid. The great reigns of Henry IV. and of Richelieu could scarcely restore her to that place in Europe which she had lost, and they only restored her by a policy diametrically opposed to that of Saint Bartholomew's day.

Where then was the compensation for so much disgrace, and so many misfortunes? One there was, if any chose to invoke it. Without the deeds of Saint Bartholomew's day, the French Reformation, notwithstanding the losses it had suffered, would still have constituted an imposing minority; half the nobility of the kingdom would have remained in the new communion. It is doubtful whether Henry IV. would have abjured. In any case, the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes would have been impossible, and there might have been, in our time, with the progress of population, five or six millions of the Reformed in France. The massacre of that day, by murder, emigration, and abjuration, inflicted a wound, from which France has never recovered. Is this a justification of the crime?

But we would deprive those, who would dare appeal to it, of even this resource. "The execrable day of Saint Bartholomew," says Châteaubriand, "only made martyrs; it gave to philosophical ideas an advantage over religious ideas, which have never since been lost."[66]

Thus there have been some millions of Protestants the less, and several millions of philosophers or atheists the more; that is the balance of the massacre

of Saint Bartholomew. What then did the priests gain by diminishing the number of the disciples of Luther and Calvin, in order to increase that of the followers of Montaigne and Voltaire? They gained the anti-Catholic reaction of the eighteenth century, the hostility of the Constituent Assembly, the massacres of the Abbaye, the proscriptions of 1793; and what besides?—the spirit of our own epoch. This spirit, which has passed from France into Italy, has not yet said its last word to (Roman) Catholicism!

XIV.

The Calvinists, who had survived the massacre of Saint Bartholomew, now only thought of organizing their means of defence. In Cevennes, Rouergue, Vivarais, and Dauphiné, they had the refuge of their mountains. In the plains of the south, fifty towns, large and small, Aubenas, Anduze, Milhau, Sommières, Privas, closed their gates, and resolved to oppose a desperate resistance to the king's troops. At Nismes, the inhabitants were summoned to admit a garrison, but they refused, notwithstanding they were most vehemently threatened. A councillor, M. de Clausonne, "*a man of great credit in the district*," says Jean de Serres, "had made them understand that firmness alone could save them."

Some gentlemen and pastors, gathered together at Montauban, even drew up a project of religious and political federation, "*until it should please God to change the heart of the king, or to raise up a liberator for this poor afflicted people*." Every town was to appoint a council of one hundred persons, without distinction of nobles, citizens, or peasants, to direct all affairs of justice, police, taxes, and war, and these councils were to elect a general chief. The utmost severity was recommended to be employed towards the seditious in arms; but they were to exercise moderation and gentleness towards peaceable (Roman) Catholics.

Catherine de Medicis and Charles IX. were then in a condition to become convinced that they were egregiously deceived in supposing that all would be at an end when the principal Calvinist leaders were no more. They had reckoned too much upon the

strength of the old principle of vassalage, and not enough on the power of religious principle. The Reformation had given the feeling of a personal conscience to the humblest, which could but emanate from God, and this new sort of independence prepared the way for the advent of modern right.

Wheresoever resistance was possible, it showed itself, more decisively and obstinately than before; for in the prince they now saw only an enemy. The siege of Sancerre has remained famous. This little town held out for more than ten months against the royalist army, although the inhabitants, wanting fire-arms, were compelled to defend themselves with simple slings, which were called the arquebuses of Sancerre. It endured a famine, which brought back the recollection of that of Jerusalem, in the time of Titus and Vespasian. An eyewitness, the pastor Jean de Léry, has written the details of this siege, day by day. The inhabitants were reduced to feed upon snails, moles, and wild herbs, upon bread made with the flour of straw, mixed with slate-dust, harness of horses, and even the parchment of old books and title-deeds, which were steeped in water. “I have seen some served up,” says Léry, “on which the printed and written characters were still visible, and one might read from the pieces placed upon the table to be eaten.”

Moreover, from hour to hour the besieged fell from inanition. The war killed but eighty-four; hunger destroyed more than five hundred. “The young children under twelve years,” says Jean de Serres, “almost all died. It was lamentable to hear the wailings of the poor fathers and mothers, of whom nevertheless the greater part fortified themselves by

the assurance of the grace of God. A boy of ten years old, drawing nigh unto death, seeing his parents weeping near him, and handling his arms and legs, which were as dry as wood, said to them: 'Why do you weep to see me die of hunger? I do not ask you for bread, mother. I know you have none. But since God wills that I must thus die, we must be content. The holy Lazarus, did he not suffer hunger? Have I not read that in the Bible?' Saying these words, he gave up his soul to God."[67]

The inhabitants had resolved to perish to the last man, sooner than give themselves up to the cut-throats of Saint Bartholomew's day. "Here we fight," they said; "go and assassinate elsewhere." An unexpected event delivered them. Deputies, who came from Poland to offer the crown of Jagellons to the duke of Anjou, interceded in their behalf, and the sureties they demanded were granted to them.

It was the same at La Rochelle. This town, which by its ancient municipal franchises, formed a kind of republic, and by its numerous vessels, equalled the forces of the royal navy, refused to receive a garrison. Fifty-five pastors of Poitou and of Saintonge, and a multitude of gentlemen, citizens, and peasants, had, on the first news of the massacre of Saint Bartholomew, sought an asylum behind its lofty walls, all of whom were determined to defend themselves to the death. The proposals made to the people of La Rochelle having ended in nothing, and the besieging army having lost many men, Charles IX. took the strange course of sending a Calvinist negotiator and governor into the town, the upright Lanoue.

François de Lanoue, surnamed *Bras-de-Fer*, who had only figured in the second rank in the Huguenot

armies, became their most distinguished chief after the death of Coligny. He was a man of a wise and penetrating mind, of a generous character, and of perfect loyalty. He was ever seen in these unhappy wars, forgetful of danger, intrepid without boasting, modest in victory, calm and serene under reverses. He was the Catinat of the sixteenth century.

From the peculiarity of his military life, Lanoue was four or five times made a prisoner. He bore this misfortune like a soldier who had deserved a better fate, and the (Roman) Catholics had learned to esteem him. Not one of the Reformed, without excepting even Coligny, has obtained from them so much praise. Two Jesuits, Maimbourg and Daniel, do homage to his rare virtues; they regret nothing in him but his heresy. The ferocious Montluc calls him as valiant and prudent a man as any captain in France; the frivolous Brantôme says it was impossible to grow tired of recounting his virtues, his valour, and his merits; the sceptic Montaigne praises his constancy as well as the gentleness of his manners. Lastly, when Lanoue died, Henry IV. pronounced over him, in a few words, the most beautiful of funeral orations: “He was a great warrior, and a still better man!”

During one of his long captivities, he composed some *political and literacy discourses*, of which a part form what are called his *Memoirs*. They are written in a terse, nervous style, in the language of a soldier and of an honest man, who speaks to do good, not to acquire applause.

Lanoue was a prisoner of the duke of Alva during the days of the Saint Bartholomew slaughter: it was this that saved him. Restored to liberty, he was charged by the king with the duty of offering

conditions of peace to La Rochelle. He was personally well received, but his mission was rejected, and the inhabitants defended themselves until the arrival of the Polish deputies.

The duke of Anjou, who commanded the royal army, was annoyed at losing his troops and his reputation in this long siege, and waited impatiently for an opportunity of withdrawing without excessive disgrace. This was offered him by his election to the crown of Poland.

A new edict, published the 11th August, 1573, authorized the public exercise of the Reformed religion, but in three towns only—La Rochelle, Montauban, and Nismes. The lords high-justices were only allowed to celebrate marriages, baptisms, and sacraments, at private meetings, which were not to exceed ten persons. For all other Calvinists, nothing but the simple liberty of household worship was permitted. It was in this edict that the expression of "*pretended Reformed religion*," was first used.

This was but one of those half-measures, contradictory in principle, and impracticable in action, which only served to exasperate the minds [of the persons concerned], and to augment the embarrassments of the case. If the worship of the Reformed religion was a crime, it ought to have been everywhere forbidden; if not, it should have been nowhere forbidden. And what was this arbitrary limitation of certain assemblies to ten persons? How could Calvinists be prevented from meeting together in places where they were in power? Did they purpose to place a garrison in every town and every village of the south, and post soldiers in all the gorges of the mountains?

The Reformed of Montauban drew up, on the 24th

August, a year after the massacre of Saint Bartholomew, energetic remonstrances, day by day, in which they re-demanded all that had been accorded them by the treaty of 1570, and three noblemen undertook to present this petition to Charles IX. The king, whom they met at Villers-Coterets, contrary to his usual habit, listened to the reading of the memorial without giving utterance to a word. But Catherine exclaimed, in an irritated tone of voice, “If your prince Condé were still alive, and if he were in the heart of France with twenty thousand cavalry and fifty thousand infantry, he could not demand one-half of what these people have the insolence to propose to us.”

This was haughty language; but pride tells badly after infamous assassinations, and Catherine de Medicis was in no position to speak in so high a tone. There was nothing but trouble and anarchy throughout the kingdom; and even in the royal family division and disorder prevailed. The queen-mother feared the eldest of her sons, despised the youngest, loved only the second, who was on the point of starting for Poland, and was distrusted by all of them.

The three brothers were enemies, and their sister Margaret of Valois was stained with adultery and incest.

The party of the *Politicians*, or the Third Estate, was growing. It was composed of those, who had retained some remembrance of ancient national honour, and who felt profound disgust for a court filled with hired assassins, poisoners, astrologers, and prostitutes. The three sons of the Constable, François de Montmorency, Damville, and Thoré, the marshals Cossé and Biron, several provincial governors,

magistrates, and members even of the privy council, were among the number of these politicians or malcontents. Their chief was the Duke d'Alençon, since known under the name of Duke d'Anjou, the last of Queen Catherine's sons. His position as the king's brother gave him credit; but this prince, then in his twentieth year, was wanting both in mental and bodily vigour, he was fickle, presumptuous, faithless to his word, and ready to throw himself into great enterprises, which he was incapable of carrying out to a successful issue.

He even circulated among the citizens new maxims of law and political liberty. It was at this period that La Boëtie published his treatise on *Voluntary Servitude*, which even now astonishes us by its boldness; and François Hotman his *Franco-Gallia*, in which he maintained that the States-General might depose bad princes, and appoint their successors.

These malcontents opened negotiations with the Calvinists, who had strengthened their bond of union at Milhau, on the 16th of December, 1573, by promising *fraternity, mutual, perfect, and eternal, in all things, civil and religious*. They had provided in their act of union for the regular convocation of their assemblies every six months, a new judicial code, and the course to be adopted in raising men and money. This was a state within the state; a sad but inevitable consequence of the overthrow of all law by the massacre of Saint Bartholomew. Charles IX. died in the midst of these troubles, beset by vague and sombre terrors, believing that he heard groans in the air, starting up out of his sleep at night, and affected with a strange malady, which caused his blood to ooze through every pore.

"Two days before his death, he had near him,"

says D'Estoile, "his nurse, whom he much loved, *although she was a Huguenot*. As she was seated upon a box, and was just beginning to doze, she heard the king murmur, weep, and sigh, which induced her softly to approach his bed, when, drawing aside the curtains, the king, heaving a profound sigh, and weeping so much that his sobs interrupted his utterance, began to say to her: 'Ah! my nurse, my nurse, what blood and what murders! Oh! that I should have followed such wicked counsel! O my God! pardon me, and have mercy upon me, if it please Thee; I know not where I am. What shall I do? I am lost, I see plain enough.' The nurse replied to him: 'Sire, these murders are upon those, who have caused you to commit them! And since you did not give your consent, and you now regret them, believe that God will not impute them to you, but will cover them with the mantle of His Son's righteousness, in which alone you must take refuge.' After this, she having fetched him a pocket-handkerchief, because his own was wet with tears, and his majesty having taken it in his hand, he signed her to retire and leave him to repose."[68]

Charles IX. died on the 30th of May, 1574, not having yet attained the age of twenty-four years, and rejoicing, he said, that he left no male heir of tender age, inasmuch as he would have had too much to suffer.

XV.

Catherine de Medicis resumed the regency, which she had never really abdicated, and endeavoured to negotiate with the Calvinistic party and the malcontents, until the arrival of her second son, whom we shall now call Henry III. He escaped from Poland as from a prison. During his journey he received some good advice from the Emperor Maximilian, the doge of Venice, and even from the dukes of Savoy, who recommended him to re-establish peace in his kingdom by equitable edicts, which should be faithfully observed; but he derived no profit from these counsels.

Arrived in France in the month of September, 1574, Henry III. was joined by his mother at Bourgoin, and made with her a triumphal entry into Lyons. The Duke d'Alençon and the king of Navarre, who were free in appearance, but in reality captives, followed them. It was there that the course of conduct to be pursued towards the Calvinists and the politicians was discussed. Several members of the council,—Pibrac, Bellegarde, Christophe de Thou, Paul de Foix,—inclined to the side of moderation and compromise; but Catherine and her Italian confidants, Retz, Nevers, and Birague, held opposite views, and their opinion biassed that of Henry III. This prince, who was but twenty-three years of age, had shown some marks of courage before the treaty of 1570. He did not want for ability in business, nor for dignity and grace when he appeared in public. Unhappily, he had been corrupted by the voluptuousness of the court. He passed long hours in bedecking himself like a woman, and dishonoured the dignity of his manhood, and the majesty of a

king, by riotous debauchery. The creatures by whom he was surrounded, led him into a contemptible and shameful indolence, and the baseness of his vices was only equalled by the extravagance of his superstition.

On his return to France, he joined the brotherhood of the Flagellants or *Frères-Battus* of Avignon; and in a solemn procession, he led the white, Catherine the black, and Cardinal d'Armagnac the blue order of these *Frères-Battus*. They went through the city with naked feet, uncovered heads, with chaplets of death-bones at their girdles, and making blood spirt from their shoulders with cords. Some historians have been desirous of discovering political reasons under these ignoble masquerades. What is the use of going so far to seek for what is so near? Between the excess of depravity and the extreme of bigotry, there is a singular and close relationship.

In the month of December, the Cardinal de Lorraine caught a fever, from the effects of which he died. The queen-mother, whom history accuses of having been on too intimate terms with him, could not assume on this occasion her habitual dissimulation. On seating herself at table the same evening, as they handed her a glass, she began to tremble so much that it had almost fallen from her hands, and she exclaimed, "Jesus! it is the cardinal that I see." During the night, for more than a month, she would not remain alone, being incessantly followed by this melancholy apparition, and saying to her women, "Drive away that cardinal; do you not see that he beckons me with his finger?" What was it that had passed between her and this priest that a woman like Catherine de Medicis should have been so terrified at his death?

At Paris Henry III. continued his devotional practices; his was the religion not of a king, but of a besotted monk. He caused oratories (otherwise called *paradis*) to be erected in the churches, where he took his place every day during Lent. He also followed the processions dressed in a false wig and ridiculous costume, and in the company of a fool called Sibillot, "the greatest scoundrel," says Jean de Serres, "that could be found in France, who walked between his master and Cardinal de Ferrara; and whilst the priests sang the burden of their hymn *Ora pro nobis*, this fool was grinning and uttering silly jests, and playing ridiculous antics." After this, Henry III. would proceed in his carriage with the queen his wife, through the streets, and by the houses of Paris, purchasing little dogs, monkeys, and other rare animals, for which he was made to pay their weight in gold.

At the end of six months he was despised even by the dregs of the people, and by his domestics. A placard in the following terms was distributed throughout the city: "Henry, by the grace of his mother, inert king of France, porter of the Louvre, churchwarden of Saint Germain l'Auxerrois, harlequin of the churches of Paris, plaiter of his wife's collars, and her hair-dresser, guardian of the four mendicants, conscript father of the Blancs-Battus, and protector of the Capuchins."

The number of malcontents still increased, and made more direct proposals of alliance to the Calvinists. They were divided as to the course which they ought to adopt. On one side were the Consistorial Reformed, as they were called, on the other, the nobles, great personages, magistrates, and councillors of the towns. This distinction had already

been made in the first wars, and it became more marked in those which followed.

The Consistorials, composed mostly of clergymen, principally occupied themselves with the interests of the faith, and only wished to perform their duties quietly. Tradesmen and merchants, for the most part considering these questions under their most simple aspect, and deciding upon them in a religious point of view, felt more repugnance than the others to taking up arms, and only did so at the last extremity, when they were absolutely prevented from serving God according to their conscience; nevertheless when they were once on the battle-field, they would not accept peace without a sufficient guarantee for the liberty of the church. The nobles, on the contrary, always on the alert to raise levies, were more ready to compromise religious differences, and looked mainly to their personal position in the state. The Consistorials were the strongest in number, but the weakest in rank; they were habitually compelled to submit to the domination of the Calvinist nobility, and to share their fortunes.

This was the result of their alliance with the malcontents. It was concluded in Languedoc, notwithstanding the opposition of the Consistorials, and the consequences of it were soon apparent. “The dissoluteness and strange scandals of the politicians, who were mixed with the religious orders,” says a contemporary, “finished by extinguishing whatever warmth of affection for piety and discipline remained to them. Marshal Damville cared but little to observe the conditions promised by him, and included in the association. However, he made use of fair expressions to the clergy and others; but debauchery advanced, and flowed along far and wide, like a

torrent. Exactions and brigandage perceptibly increased."[69] The war continued with varying results, and without any decisive battle being fought. The heroic defence of the small town of Livron, in Dauphiné, has been related. When Henry III. presented himself before its gates in the month of January, 1575, the besieged called out from the ramparts, "Ah! murderers, you shall not stab us in our beds, as you did the Admiral and others. Bring out these bedaubed and perfumed favourites; let them see if they can hold up their heads, even against our women!" Henry III. was compelled to swallow this insult; two-thirds of his little army perished before the town, and the siege was raised. The prince of Condé and the king of Navarre, who had been retained at court since the events of Saint Bartholomew's day, succeeded in making their escape, and abjured (one at Strasbourg, the other at Tours) the (Roman) Catholic faith, which, under fear of assassination, had been imposed upon them. The Duke d'Alençon himself took refuge in his appanage of Dreux, and published a manifesto, in which he took the French of both religions under his safeguard.

Having no longer either men or money wherewith to oppose the confederates, who threatened to march on Paris, the court endeavoured to gain over the chiefs of the Third Estate, by offering them personal advantages, and submitting very favourable articles of peace to the Calvinists—free exercise of their religion throughout the kingdom, except at Paris, and within a circle of two leagues; admission to all public offices; equal numbers in the Parliaments: eight places of surety; the right to open schools and convoke synods; the restoration of the memory of Coligny; and, in short, the re-establishment of the

king of Navarre, of the prince of Condé, and of the nobles of the religion in their appanages and governments. This treaty, called the *Peace of Monsieur*, because it had been concluded under the guarantee of the king's brother, was signed at Chastenoy, on the 6th of May, 1576.

Catherine and Henry III. only proposed, in putting their signatures to this treaty, to dissolve the alliance of the politicians with the Calvinists. This accomplished, it was treated as void. The (Roman) Catholics of Picardy were secretly authorized to repulse the prince of Condé, who had come to take possession of his government, and persecution did not cease for a single day.

The Reformed of Paris, to adduce only one example, in obedience to the edict, which enabled them to worship at two leagues from the city, held a meeting at Noisy-le-Sec. The populace, on their return, killed several of them, and wounded a larger number. Complaint was made to the king, who at this moment was playing at the ring, dressed as an Amazon (says d'Estoile), but he took no more notice of them than if these murders had been committed in another part of the world.

One article of this treaty had decreed the early convocation of the States-General. They eventually assembled at Blois, in the month of December, 1576; but no longer with the spirit of the States of Orleans. A great part of the nobility had again joined the (Roman) Catholic church, and the misfortunes of the kingdom had ulcerated the heart of the citizens. The deputies of the three orders agreed to demand the unity of religion. They prayed the king to command the ministers, deacons, superintendents, schoolmasters, and other teachers, to quit the

kingdom, in default of which they should be proceeded against as guilty of a capital crime.

Unity, thus expressed, was nothing else than war. But to make war, money was necessary; and when this was alluded to, each of the three orders excused itself. The clergy declared that they had been very much impoverished by the disorders of the kingdom, and could give nothing; the nobility only offered their swords; and the Third Estate commissioned its speaker to say, that it contemplated the reunion of all the king's subjects by gentle means, without war —a great and puerile mockery.

The Calvinists, however, at the news of these resolutions, had again recourse to arms; but, deprived of the aid of the malcontents of the (Roman) Catholic party, and disunited among themselves, their plans did not prosper. The Consistorialists, this time, were the most determined, because with them it had become a question of losing all, or saving all, in the exercise of their religion. Earnest remonstrances were therefore addressed to the nobles by the consistory of La Rochelle. Theodore de Bèze wrote from Geneva: "I cannot in good conscience see how we can consent to limit the spirit of God to certain places; above all, to shut it out from the towns, which do not die and change, like the hearts and houses of princes. I cannot bring my mind to believe that God either can or will bless such agreements, and I would counsel you to place your heads on the block, and to suffer everything without resistance, if it must come to that, rather than approve of such conditions." These complaints of the Consistorials were disregarded, and the nobles of the party signed a peace at Bergerac, in the month of September, 1577. On the 8th of

October following, appeared the Edict of Poitiers, which only granted to the mass of the Reformed the simple liberty of conscience, with admission to public offices. The exercise of religion was limited to the places, in which it was professed when the treaty was under signature. Henry III. boasted of this edict as his own work; he liked to say, "*My edict, my treaty*;" but it was no better observed than those which had preceded it.

XVI.

Catherine de Medicis had conceived a method of overcoming the Huguenot nobles, during the peace, whom it had been found impossible to vanquish by arms; and this was by debauching them. She passed through the provinces with a numerous troop of maids of honour (sometimes to the number of one hundred and fifty), who were called her flying squadron. Everywhere throughout her progress, balls, *fêtes*, gallantries, and intrigues took place, in the midst of which the former austerity of the companions of Coligny was lost.

It was thus, under the pretext of conducting Margaret of Valois to the house of her husband, the king of Navarre, that Catherine set out, in the month of July, 1578, for the southern provinces. The Béarnese king, who had too soon forgotten the lessons of his mother during his long residence at the Louvre, could not resist the seductions with which he was surrounded. “The court of the king of Navarre,” says Agrippa d’Aubigné, “was renowned for its brave nobility and virtuous ladies. Idleness attracted vice to it, as heat draws serpents. The queen of Navarre took the rust off their wits, and let it gather on their arms. She taught the king her husband that a cavalier was without a soul when he was without an amour.”[70]

The same historian relates that Catherine de Medicis affected a style of language borrowed from the Bible. She had composed a vocabulary of expressions in use among the most rigid of the Reformed, and made use of them, sometimes as a matter of policy, and sometimes in derision. “She had learned by heart,” says he, “several phrases,

which she termed Consistorial; as, *to approve of the counsel of Gamaliel*; or, *beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace*; to call the king, *the anointed of the Lord, the image of the living God*, with several sentences of the Epistle of St. Peter, in favour of dominion; she would often exclaim, *Let God judge between you and us! I call the Eternal to witness! Before God and his angels!* This style, which the ladies called among themselves the *language of Canaan*, was studied in the evening, when the queen retired to rest, and not without merriment."[71]

Before and after the *fêtes*, conferences were held, from which resulted the explicative Treaty of Nérac, signed on the 28th of February, 1579. It added nothing essential to the Edict of Poitiers. The king of Navarre obtained only some fresh places of safety in Guienne and Languedoc, on condition that he should only retain them for six months.

An intrigue of the court caused arms again to be taken up, and this ridiculous quarrel was named *the war of the amorous*; but the great body of the Reformed took no part in it. It terminated by the signing of a peace at the castle of Fleix, in Périgord, on the 26th of November, 1580, which treaty confirmed the Edict of Poitiers; the Béarnese king, however, conquered, the appanage being given as a dowry to his wife in Agenois and Quercy.

Four or five years elapsed without war being declared, but they passed neither with security nor repose. Upon different occasions, the Reformed sent whole volumes of grievances and remonstrances to the court. Promises of reparation were made, but the next day the council troubled themselves no more about them.

Another means was invented of weakening the

Calvinist party, and it had better success than all its predecessors. This was to remove or leave out the Huguenots from public appointments. Although the Edict of Pacification accorded to them an equal right of admission to all public offices, a thousand pretexts were made use of to elude this article. It was an indirect and underhand persecution, but it was both systematic and constant.

Mézeray pretends that these proceedings converted more of the Reformed in four years than either the executioner or war had done in forty. This is saying too much. It is certain, however, that many nobles yielded to the temptation of holding offices or court favours. Some, according to the historian Elie Benoît, ashamed of abandoning their religion themselves, made their children renounce it on the score of affection and paternal foresight. Others, on the contrary, declared themselves (Roman) Catholics, that they might enter upon offices, and caused their children to be brought up in the Reformed communion, in order, as they said, to tranquillize their conscience. Has the human heart ever been found deficient in sophisms when desirous of gratifying its passions?

But the more ardent (Roman) Catholics again complained, and also accused the leniency of Henry III. and Queen Catherine. Their spirit of opposition was increased by the death of the duke of Alençon or Anjou, which took place in 1584. Henry III. had no children, and his physicians feared that he would not survive the year. The race of Valois then would become extinct. Who would succeed him? Henry of Bourbon, according to the ancient laws of the kingdom. He was the nearest heir male, and no one could contest with him the title of first prince of the

blood. But a heretic, an apostate, one who had relapsed (for they affected to look in a serious light at the abjuration, which had been imposed upon him at the massacre of Saint Bartholomew), one, in short, excommunicated by the Holy See, should he mount the throne of the most Christian kings? This single thought shocked three-fourths of the nation, and the League experienced an immense augmentation.

The *League* or *Holy Union* had existed since the year 1576. It even dated further back, and extended beyond the French frontier. The Cardinal de Lorraine formed the plan at the Council of Trent; the Jesuits had adopted and enlarged it; Philip II., the popes, and Duke Henry of Guise, had successively put their hand to it, and by degrees the association became developed to such an extent as to aspire to rouse (Roman) Catholic Europe in order that it might crush Protestantism. It was in France that the first blow was struck.

After having exterminated the Huguenots, the new crusaders would have overthrown the rebels of Holland, then they would unitedly have invaded England, and afterwards Germany and the north, never stopping until they had either brought back the last of the disciples of Luther and Calvin to the Church of Rome, or drowned them in their own blood.

Philip II. was the principal leader of this vast conspiracy. In his retreat of San-Lorenzo he incessantly revolved, as the published correspondence of our times attests, these great and dark thoughts. He understood but two things in the world,—the sovereign power of the prince in political matters, and the popes infallibility in questions of religion. The right of resistance to the

temporal power, and the privilege of search on points of faith, were in his eyes the most detestable of crimes. All authority, in his idea, was concentrated in the hands of a few chiefs, and there was no liberty beyond or beneath them. The two swords were to strike together, to keep the people enslaved and trembling; and he added the axe of the executioner, with the fire of the inquisitor, and even the poniard of the assassin; for this (Roman) Catholic king descended to such a depth of infamy as to confer letters of nobility on the relations of Balthazar Gérard, the murderer of the prince of Orange. Philip II. had conceived this execrable system of terrorism, that it might redound to the profit of royalty and the pontificate. But it only resulted in the downfall of Spain and the execration of posterity.

The Holy See entertained implacable resentment at the sight of heresy raising itself up so pertinaciously, and was desirous of establishing at any cost, the one faith, under one single spiritual chief. Cardinals, bishops, priests, Jesuits, and monks of all orders, went about spreading these maxims of extermination, at the courts and in the bosom of the people, from the pulpits and in the confessional.

In France, Henry of Guise, *le Balafré*, was the soul of the League. Keeping himself at first in obscurity, he at length came more prominently forward, and made himself esteemed by the masses, in proportion to the contempt which Henry III. inspired. He endeavoured to be affable to wards the lower orders, was a sure friend, an inexorable enemy, generous towards those who were serviceable to him, prodigal of gold to the covetous, and never wanting in promises to the ambitious; he also showed attentions to the citizens and artisans of Paris, which were very

flattering to their vanity. Capable of profound dissimulation, he yet assumed the frank and open air of a soldier. As a great captain he understood still better the art of gaining victories at the proper time, than that of merely achieving them. He evinced much zeal for the church of Rome, but without falling into the abject devotions of Henry III.; and, always watchful of his fortunes, he thought nothing more of religion than as a means of improving them.

One of the dependants of his house, Jacques d'Humières, was employed in 1576 to recruit in the cities of Picardy for adherents to the League, and that association soon spread through all the provinces. There was some difference in the articles which were presented for them to swear to, and to sign, but their ultimate object was the same—a mutual understanding between the members of the union; absolute obedience to the secret chief of the League; and an engagement to sacrifice everything, body and goods, in order to exterminate heretics and to re-establish the unity of religion.

The association was composed of very different elements. For the Guises, it was a question of aggrandizement and power; for one portion of the citizens and magistrature, a means of establishing public order; for another part, a precautionary measure against the reprisals, which the Calvinists might adopt towards the murderers and spoliators of Saint Bartholomew's day; for the tradespeople, a manifestation of antipathy against the Huguenots; and for the priesthood, an affair of religious domination. Among these, as it always happens, there were conscientious men, who devoted themselves to the prosecution of an idea; and ambitious or hypocritical individuals, who thrived

upon the sincerity of others. The most moderate were made to figure in the advance-guard, for fear of frightening the well-disposed; but those who were high in rank were resolved to reap all the advantages of the conspiracy.

At Paris, the prebendary Launoy, the curates Prévôt and Boucher, and adventurers of every description, addressed themselves to the very lowest orders,—the men of the slaughter-houses, mariners, horse-dealers, and street-porters,—and told them that the Huguenots were watching their opportunity to cut the throats of all good (Roman) Catholics, and that ten thousand of them were concealed in the faubourg Saint Germain, ready to commence the massacre. The most violent clubs assembled in the churches, and the preachers, monks, or doctors of the Sorbonne, hounded on the people to the most bloody excesses, invoking the will of Heaven. The same provocatives were repeated throughout the kingdom, and the League became a formidable combination.

Henry III., not daring openly to oppose the League, thought that he should perform a master-piece of policy by signing the articles of the union with his own hand; but he only emboldened the League and disgraced himself. From being king, he became the second among the conspirators, and a conspirator despised by his accomplices.

The League demanded that he should declare the king of Navarre disinherited, and name the Cardinal de Bourbon as his heir, an old man of upwards of sixty years of age, of limited capacity, of feeble character, and a priest of little reputation, since he had lived in habits of effeminate and dissolute luxury. This cardinal would have made way for the duke of Guise. Henry III. was aware of this, he knew

also that the Lorraines only awaited an opportunity of making him turn monk, and shutting him up in a cloister, as other do-nothing kings had been treated in times gone by.

At this critical moment Henry III. displayed some courage, and refused. The kingdom was then a prey to the greatest anarchy; neither authority, government, nor law any longer existed. The Leaguers published manifestoes in the name of the Cardinal de Bourbon, and by treachery or force obtained possession of Toul, Verdun, Lyons, Châlons, Bourges, and other important towns. Henry III., who had no army to oppose to them, contracted a peace with the duke of Guise, at the expense of the Huguenots. He engaged by the treaty of Nemours, signed in 1585, to deprive them not only of the public exercise of their religion, but also of liberty of conscience. It was ordered that all the Calvinist clergy should quit the kingdom at the expiration of a month, and that all the Reformed should abjure or emigrate at the end of six months, under penalty of death and confiscation of their property. This term was shortly afterwards reduced to fifteen days, as if it were intended to take away from these abjurations even the appearance of good faith.

In thus putting an end to war on one side, it again broke out on the other. It no longer originated in some wretched court quarrel, but it became a war of liberty, of religion, of fortune, and for existence itself.

The Edict of Nemours was apparently intended to be so rigorously executed, that the king rejected the request of some poor women, who prayed to be permitted to live with their children in some corner of France, which it might please his majesty to assign

to them. Henry III. would only promise to have them conveyed without injury or insult to England. Some women were even burned at Paris after the treaty,—the atrocious laws of Henry II. were again reverted to.

Some timid Calvinists endeavoured to find refuge by the use of equivocal terms, such as: “Since it pleases the king,” &c., and in that manner they subscribed, not an abjuration, but an act of obedience to the royal will. The bishops perceived this, and were most rigorous with those whom they admitted. One of them, the Bishop d’Angers, gave directions that none of the Huguenots should be received until they had undergone a lengthened course of instruction, and a strict examination on points of faith. Thus the prince enjoined their conversion in fifteen days, and the bishops repulsed those, who were not minutely versed in all the details of the Romish doctrines. Thus there was nothing but contradictions.

Henry III. did not, however, wish to crush the Calvinist party entirely; he feared lest too much power should be given to the League, and to the duke of Guise. His most ardent desire was to ruin each of the two parties by means of the other, and he was frequently heard to mutter: “I will be revenged upon my enemies by my enemies.”

Seeing that the king was deficient in energy in the prosecution of the heretics, Pope Sixtus V. lost patience, and fulminated a bull of excommunication against the Bourbons, which twenty-five cardinals signed with him. It stated that Henry of Bourbon, formerly king of Navarre, and Henry, also of Bourbon, Prince de Condé, being heretics, having relapsed into heresy, and not having repented, were

deprived of all their principalities, they and their heirs for ever. If any one again dared to obey "this bastard and detestable race of Bourbons," and to recognise as his sovereign this former king of the pretended kingdom of Navarre, he should incur the same excommunication. Never, even in the most violent invectives against "the *ci-devant* king, Louis Capet," did the Convention of 1793 so completely fail in decency and modesty.

The Béarnese king replied to this insolent bull, by causing a protest to be posted up, on the 6th of November, 1585, in all the public resorts of Rome, commencing thus: "Henry, by the grace of God, king of Navarre, sovereign prince of Béarn, first peer and prince of France, protests against the declaration and excommunication of Sixtus V., calling himself pope of Rome, declares that it is false, and appeals against the same as slanderous to the court of the Peers of France. And in that, which touches the crime of heresy, of which he is falsely accused by the declaration, he says and maintains that Sixtus, calling himself pope in that behalf, hath falsely and maliciously lied, and that he is himself a heretic, as shall be made manifest in full council freely and lawfully assembled." It is said that Sixtus, astonished by so bold an act, began from that time properly to appreciate the character of his adversary.

XVII.

The prince of Condé was first in the field; still young and full of zeal for religion, he was impatient to vindicate his claim to the high place, to which his birth entitled him. But he possessed less military talent than courage; he passed the Loire upon false intelligence, and having advanced too far, lost at the gates of Angers the first army, which was raised against the Leaguers.

In Languedoc, the Duke de Montmorency (formerly Marshal Damville) renewed his alliance with the Calvinist party, and nothing took place in this province but the encounters of partisans. Lesdiguières, at the head of the Huguenots of Dauphiny, took possession of several strong places, and managed to keep all that country quiet. The king of Navarre maintained his position in Guienne. Henry III. courted him, and proposed that he should change his religion, in order to deprive the League of its most formidable argument; and Catherine de Medicis, always ready to open negotiations, visited and conferred with the Béarnese king, towards the end of the year 1586, at the castle of Saint Bris, near Cognac. But her Italian *finesse* this time met with no success.

The war continued without any important engagement until the battle of Coutras. The two armies met on the 20th of October, 1587. They presented a striking contrast. On the side of the Calvinists there were from five to six thousand men, badly attired, with buffalo-skins in tatters, and having no other ornaments than their faithful swords and good cuirasses. On the side of the (Roman) Catholics, who were commanded by the Duke de

Joyeuse, there were from ten to twelve thousand men, the flower of the courtiers, dressed in silk and velvet, with arms chased with silver and enamel, their lances adorned with large streamers, floating plumes, and bearing on their scarfs the mottoes of their mistresses. The former were soldiers fashioned in trouble and hardship; the latter elegant cavaliers, who seemed as if they had assembled to assist at a tournament.

Some days before the battle, at the instance of the faithful Mornay, Henry publicly expressed his repentance for having brought dishonour upon a family of La Rochelle. Upon being told that the clergy were very severe towards him, “A person cannot,” said he, “humiliate himself too much before God, nor too boldly brave mankind.”

At the commencement of the battle the Reformed kneeled down, and sang the 118th Psalm:—“This is the day that the Lord hath made,” &c. “S’death,” cried the nobles in Joyeuse’s camp, “they tremble—the poltroons—they confess!” “Gentlemen,” said an old officer, “when the Huguenots are in this vein they are ready to fight well.”

They fought bravely, in truth, and the rout of the (Roman) Catholics was complete. The Duke de Joyeuse fell, together with half his army. The Béarnese king showed great humanity after the victory; he gave orders that the wounded should be cared for, dismissed nearly all the prisoners without ransom, and deplored that so much French blood had been shed.

At the news of this defeat, the indignation of the League was redoubled against Henry III., and the doctors of the Sorbonne decided at a conventicle, that the crown might be taken from an incapable

prince, as a worthless guardian is deprived of the charge intrusted to him. All eyes were now turned towards the duke of Guise, who had just cut in pieces a numerous army of German troopers that had been sent to aid the Huguenots.

In consequence of this success, the popularity of the Balafré had greatly increased. The pope sent him a sword which he had blessed; Philip II. and the duke of Savoy congratulated him; and the Parisians, excited by the voice of the priesthood, proclaimed him the saviour of the Church.

He showed himself grateful for the assistance of the clergy; for, at a meeting held at Nancy, it was by his means decided that a proposal should be made to the king to publish the canons of the Council of Trent, and to institute the Holy Inquisition in France; —"a worthy means," said the manifesto, "of exterminating heresy, provided the officers of the Inquisition be strangers."

From the enthusiasm of the priests and people sprung the day of the Barricades, the 12th of May, 1588. Henry of Guise was carried in triumph to the Louvre; and the king, whose personal liberty was endangered, fled disguised as a countryman, accompanied by some footmen, swearing in his heart, death to him whom he called "*the king of Paris*."

Five months afterwards, he opened the second States-General of Blois, which were entirely composed of Leaguers. He protested by the most solemn oaths that he was desirous of labouring to accomplish the total extirpation of heresy, and that no one should be more ardent in the work than himself. But he was not believed. The duke of Guise alone possessed the confidence of the States, and had

only another step to ascend in order to seat himself upon the throne of France.

Henry III. prevented this by causing him to be assassinated on the 23rd of December, by some of his nobles. “Ah! my friends, ah! my friends,” exclaimed the Balafré, when he felt that he was pierced by a dagger, “have mercy!” When all was over, the king came out of his closet, and asked one of the murderers, “Do you think that he is dead, Loignac?” “I believe that he is, sire; he has the hue of death upon him,” was the answer. Henry having for a moment looked at his victim, kicked him in the face. Had the duke retained a last breath of life, he could but then have remembered the murdered Coligny.

Henry III. left the room and visited his mother, who was ill in bed. “The king of Paris exists no longer, madam,” said he; “henceforth I shall reign alone; I have now no rival.” “It is a clean cut, my son,” replied Catherine, “but it must be sewn up again; have you taken proper precautions?”

Twelve days after this event Catherine died, leaving her last son with an insecure crown, the kingdom inflamed, and the whole nation discontented. She descended to the tomb amid the execration of the Calvinists, and the disdain of the (Roman) Catholics. “There were none to care for her, her malady, or her death,” says L’Estoile, “and no more notice was taken of her than of a dead she-goat.” Lincestre, one of the preachers of the League, in announcing this news to the people, said, “A difficulty presents itself to-day, and that is whether the Church should pray for one, who has lived so ill, and so often countenanced heresy; upon which I would say, that if you should think it worth while to venture upon giving her a *Pater* or an *Ave*, as an act

of charity, it will be as useful to her as it can be." Here then were the fruits of thirty years of intrigue, treason, and crime.

The murder of the duke of Guise interposed an abyss between the king and the Leaguers. Seventy theologians of the Sorbonne, after having attended mass, absolved the people from their oath of fealty. The priests formed a procession of one hundred thousand children, who carried lighted tapers, and extinguished them by trampling them underfoot, whilst repeating, "God grant that the race of Valois may soon become utterly extinct!" From the pulpits, dreadful imprecations were denounced against Henry III.; the duty of regicide was openly proclaimed, and one of the preachers declared that France could only recover from its malady by a potion of French blood.

Reduced to the greatest extremity, and compelled to shut himself up in the city of Tours as a last resource, Henry III. made advances to the Calvinists, who were in possession of the country on the other side of the Loire.

The latter had undertaken no enterprise of importance. They had lost, in the month of March, 1588, Henry of Condé, their second chief in rank, but the first perhaps in the confidence with which he inspired them. This prince died at Saint Jean d'Angély, at the age of thirty-four years. His early death, and the mysterious circumstances attending it, gave rise to suspicion that he had been poisoned, which was confirmed after the body had been opened. His wife, Princess Charlotte de la Trémoille, a recent convert, and surrounded by a (Roman) Catholic family of high rank, was accused of the crime. This affair, however, which was subsequently brought before the Parliament of Paris, has never

been properly cleared up.

Whilst the League held its States-General at Blois, the Calvinists convoked a political assembly at La Rochelle. It was opened on the 14th of November, 1588, in the town-hall. The king of Navarre attended with Viscount de Turenne, Prince de la Trémoille, and the other nobles of their party. There was more order and respect for authority displayed in this assembly than at that at Blois. Rules were determined upon in reference to the administration of justice, the finances, the levy of soldiers, military discipline, and to all those objects, which were of interest to the common weal. Before separating, the deputies addressed a memorial to Henry III., in which they prayed for the re-establishment of the Edict of January.

After the death of the duke of Guise, the Béarnese king addressed a manifesto to the three estates of France, in which he protested his fidelity to the crown, and invited the French nation to put an end to their differences. “I conjure you all, then,” said he, in conclusion, “Catholics, servants of the king, as well as those who are not so; I appeal to you as Frenchmen; I beseech you to have pity on this state and on yourselves. We have all committed and suffered evil enough. We have been intoxicated, senseless and furious, for four years. Is not this sufficient? Has not God visited all enough to make us wise now, and to appease our wrath?”

Although the two kings had a common interest in coming to an understanding, long hesitation was manifested on both sides. Could Henry tender his hand to his oldest enemies? Would he not, in calling them to his aid, justify all the reproaches of the Leaguers, who accused him of never having ceased to

hold secret correspondence with the Huguenots? And the Calvinists on their side, did they not know that the hatred of Henry III. against heresy was inveterate, and that he could never become sincerely reconciled to the brothers and sons of those, whom he had massacred on Saint Bartholomew's day? Could they so forget that inconceivable, that shameful speech of Henry III. before the Estates of Blois, that even when he promised by the most sacred oaths to spare the heretics, he was not to be believed? But notwithstanding these mutual dislikes, they were forced to yield to necessity.

On the 30th April, 1589, the two kings had a first interview at the castle of Plessis-les-Tours, an old manor of Louis XI. The Béarnese king caused a portion of his nobility to cross the water, and entered the boat with his guards. During the passage, he only said to Marshal d'Aumont, who had been sent to him by the king, "Marshal, I go upon your word." Arrived at the other bank, he kneeled before Henry III., who raised and embraced him.

On the same day he wrote to Mornay: "The ice has been broken, not without numerous warnings, that if I ventured, I was a dead man." His faithful minister replied to him, "Sire, you have acted as you should, but as no one ought to have counselled you."

From this period the affairs of Henry III. took a favourable turn. The Leaguers were defeated in several encounters. An army of forty-two thousand men, commanded by the two kings, advanced to the gates of Paris and prepared to commence a general assault. The Duke de Mayenne had only eight thousand disheartened troops. The leaders of the League began to lose all hope, the priests were cast down; the Reformed looked forward to a better

future, when the knife of a Dominican monk, Jacques Clément, disconcerted at the same time the hopes and the fears of each party.

Henry III. died of his wound, at the end of eighteen hours, on the 10th August, 1589. With him the race of Valois became extinct. Francis I. met with a shameful death; Henry II. was mortally wounded in a tournament; Francis II. did not attain the age of manhood; Charles IX. expired in the convulsions of an unknown malady; the Duke d'Alençon prematurely expired in debauchery and disgrace; and Henry III. perished by the knife of an assassin. The Valois carry on their forehead the ineffaceable brand of the massacre of Saint Bartholomew.[72]

If history ought not to be a mere object of curiosity, it is still desirable to tell what were the ideas of religion and the manners of this court, where such fanatic intolerance was paramount.

After the celebration of mass, astrologers were visited at their houses, in order to procure philtres and poisons. All the magic arts, all the witchcraft imported from Italy by Catherine de Medicis, were in vogue. The courtiers kept small wax figures in their cabinets, and pierced their hearts with pins, pronouncing at the same time cabalistic words, in order, as they believed, to cause the death of their enemies.

Religious ceremonies were made use of to rouse the vilest and most sanguinary passions. The sermons of priests connected with the League, like torches, inflamed the whole kingdom. Processions were projected to excite the ferocity of the populace, and frequently presented spectacles of indecency and impiety. At Chartres, after the day of the barricades, a Capuchin represented before Henry III. the Saviour

ascending Calvary. He had painted drops of blood, that appeared to ooze from his head, which was crowned with thorns; he seemed to drag along with difficulty a cross of painted cardboard, and fell down at intervals, uttering piercing cries. At Paris, after the assassination of the duke of Guise, men, women, and young girls, covered only with a chemise or sheet, formed night-processions; and in the midst of sacred songs gave themselves up to Saturnalia, worthy of the pagan world in its most vicious days.

The soldiers of the League, who bore arms which had been blessed by the priests, committed acts of infamy, even on the steps of altars. The atrocities perpetrated in the churches of Saint-Symphorien, in that of D'Arquenay, and in a crowd of others, cannot be related.

Religion of the king, religion of the court, religion of the clergy, religion of the people and of the soldiers,—what wretched mockery was it all! Manners were on the same level; the cardinal of Lorraine, and the greater part of the prelates, impudently violated all the laws of chastity. The Balafré was leaving a night debauch when he was assassinated. Margaret of Valois, the princess of Condé, the duchesses of Nemours, of Guise, of Montpensier, of Nevers, led a life of the foulest immorality. Two of them having caused the heads of their lovers to be cut off, kissed and embalmed them, and each kept that of her own lover among her love-tokens. It is well known in what manner the duchess of Montpensier, sister of Henry of Guise, nerved the arm of Jacques Clément.

Everywhere there was a hideous admixture of blood and superstition. The great nobles employed hired assassins and duellists, who killed each other

as a pastime, without remorse or pity; every day two were pitted against two, four against four, a hundred against a hundred; and the address of an assassin or poisoner could then be as easily procured as that of an hotel-keeper in the present day.

As a last instance, the assassin, the regicide, Jacques Clément, was canonized from all the pulpits as "*the most blessed child of Dominique, the holy martyr of Jesus Christ.*" His portrait was placed on the altars with these words: "*Saint Jacques Clément, pray for us.*" When his mother came to Paris, the nuns addressed her in the language of the Evangelist: "Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked." And Pope Sixtus V., more infamous still, declared in full consistory, that the action of the martyr Jacques Clément might be compared, as regarded the safety of the world, to the incarnation and resurrection of Jesus Christ.[73]

A church that has uttered such blasphemies by the mouth of its chief, should for ever seek pardon both from God and man. It should moreover bless that principle of tolerance, which has imposed upon it both the Reformation and philosophy; for it is this alone, which prevents its relapse into the degraded condition of former times.

XVIII.

Religion was but a secondary matter in the war between Henry IV. and the League, and in the other events of this epoch. We need not relate them, since they belong to the general history of the country, and not to our special subject.

Thirty years earlier, the advent of a Calvinist prince to the throne of France would perhaps have made the Reformed the dominant religion; but in 1589 all was changed. Far from deriving advantage, the affairs of the Reformed were compromised by the event. Henry of Navarre, as lieutenant of Henry III., could dictate his own conditions; it was necessary that as king, he should accept those of the (Roman) Catholics. He had their desertion to dread, whilst he did not fear that he should be abandoned by his co-religionists. He therefore did little for his own party, but much for that of his adversaries, according to that old court maxim, that "enemies should be gratified at the expense of those friends whose support may be depended upon."

Before taking an oath of fidelity, the (Roman) Catholic nobles demanded that he should again enter the communion of the Romish church. It was the Marquis d'O, superintendent of the finances, who conveyed to him this message—a singular choice for a religious mission! This former creature of Henry III., one of the most contemptible and despised of men, had disgusted the courtiers themselves by the barefaced double-dealing of his language and conduct. He, however, protested in the name of the nobility, that he would rather throw himself upon his sword than allow (Roman) Catholicism to be ruined in France.

Henry IV. refused to change his religion all at once. “Would it be more agreeable to you,” said he to the (Roman) Catholic nobles, “to have a king without a God? Could you place confidence in the faith of an atheist? And in the day of battle would you follow the banner of a perjurer and an apostate with alacrity?” After long discussions he only promised that he would seek instruction during the next six months.

These words were regarded in two very different ways. The promise of seeking instruction seemed to the (Roman) Catholics equivalent to his re-entering the pale of the church of Rome; to the Reformed, on the contrary, it appeared that they only related to the duty of examining anew the points of controversy and the sincere adoption of the side of truth. As to Henry IV. it appears that he had already determined to become instructed, not by the doctors, but by the course of events.

At the end of some weeks, his army was almost dissolved. Of forty thousand men he only retained from six to seven thousand, and was compelled to fall back upon Normandy. The Duke d’Epernon and other (Roman) Catholic chiefs, retired with their troops, on the ground that they could not serve under a Huguenot chief. Those who remained, demanded that their aid should be paid for by great personal favours. The Calvinist chiefs were more faithful and less exacting. Among them were the Duke de Bouillon, sovereign of the principality of Sédan; François de Châtillon, son of the Admiral Coligny; the Duke Claude de la Trémoille, Jacques Caumont de la Force, Agrippa d’Aubigné, Lanoue, Rosny, and Mornay. The last held a high position in the confidence of his master.

Philippe de Mornay, lord of Plessis, was born at the castle of Buhi, in the old French Vexin, in 1549, and was brought up by his mother in the doctrines of the Reformation. He had not attained the age of twelve years, when he replied to a priest who cautioned him against Lutheran opinions: “I am determined to remain firm in what I have learned in the service of God, and when I shall have doubts upon any point, I will diligently read the Evangelists and the Acts of the Apostles.”

His uncle, the bishop of Nantes, and afterwards archbishop of Rheims, advised him to study the Fathers of the Church, and offered him, with the revenue of a rich abbey, the prospect of becoming his successor. Mornay read the Fathers, who, far from estranging him from his faith, confirmed him in it; and he said to his uncle on refusing the abbey: “I trust in God for what I shall want.”

In after-life he did not belie the disinterestedness of his youth. Animated by strong and firm convictions, modest in prosperity, patient in adversity, always ready to risk his property and his life in the service of his faith, Duplessis-Mornay has displayed to the world one of the greatest and most upright characters that ever honoured the Christian church. He has been called the pope of the Huguenots; it would have been better to have said that he was their model.

His talents equalled his piety. A warrior, a doctor of theology, a counsellor, diplomatist, orator and author, a skilful writer, working fourteen hours a day, and displaying an equal superiority in the most opposite pursuits, it would be difficult to indicate one order of merit, in which he did not excel, if we except the talent of advancing his own fortunes.

Escaped as by a miracle from the massacre of Saint Bartholomew, Mornay took refuge in England, where he met with a gracious reception from Queen Elizabeth. The Duke d'Anjou, on becoming king of Poland, wishing to give a proof of his tolerant intentions towards the Polish Protestants, offered Mornay a place in his council; but he answered: "I will never enter the service of those, who have shed the blood of my brethren."

The invitation of the Béarnese king was better responded to. Mornay joined this prince, who was then poor and weak, at his small court at Agen; and these two men, so different in character, habit, and conduct, contracted a friendship, which was on more than one occasion interrupted, but never entirely destroyed. Henry stood in need of Mornay, of his prudence, his devotion, and even of his severity; and Mornay, notwithstanding his reproaches, saw in his master a man who had been raised by Heaven to defend the cause of the Reformation.

His functions at the court of Agen and Nérac were as multifarious as his genius was versatile. During the less important wars, which were continually springing up between Henry III. and the Béarnese king, he acted at different times as captain, engineer, camp-master, and chief financier of the army; and instead of gaining by these employments, he more frequently contributed to the cause. When in the tent, he would take his pen and draw up diplomatic notes, memorials, manifestoes, replies to the (Roman) Catholics, and remonstrances to the Reformed, with admirable promptitude. In council he prepared the speeches of the king of Navarre, and furnished him with suitable arguments to satisfy men of jealous or suspicious temperament.

He visited the court of France in order to defend the interests of his co-religionists. Henry III. asked him one day, how a man of his science and capacity could be a Huguenot; “Have you never read,” he asked, “the Catholic doctors?” “I have not only read the Catholic doctors,” was Mornay’s reply, “but I have read them with earnestness; for I am flesh and blood, like another man, and was not born without ambition. I should have been very glad to have discovered what would have quieted my conscience, in order that I might have participated in the wealth and honours which you distribute, and from the enjoyment of which my religion excludes me. But everywhere I have found arguments to fortify my belief; and worldly considerations should always yield to those of conscience.” Noble words, and passing strange to have been spoken at the court of the Valois, and of Catherine de Medicis!

After the death of Henry III. Mornay was, near Henry IV., as the organ of those whose faith was the most decided, and whose intentions were the purest of the Consistorial Reformed.

The Baron de Rosny, afterwards Duke de Sully, represented the political Calvinistic party, or those who advocated measures of compromise. A great minister of state, an able and upright financier, he repaired, more than any other person, the unhappy consequences of the civil wars under the reign of Henry IV.; and if the people measured glory by benefits, his should be immense. He would also display a manly courage when it became necessary, to hinder the king from compromising the dignity of his crown by his weaknesses. But in matters of religion his convictions were not strong, and without leaving the Reformed church himself, he powerfully

contributed to its being abandoned by his king. “He was,” says a French historian, “one of those strong-minded men, who place themselves above all prejudices where the service of God is concerned; so that his religion consisted only of superficial forms.”[74]

The old Huguenot chiefs were assembled round Henry IV. at the battle of Ivry in large numbers, and he remembered in the hour of danger the lessons of his pious mother. Lifting up his eyes to heaven, he called God to witness his right: “But, O Lord,” said he, “if it has pleased Thee to order otherwise, or if I should be one of those kings whom Thou givest in Thy wrath, take my life with my crown, and may my blood be the last shed in this quarrel.”

The battle was gained. The Calvinists, nevertheless, remained in an unsettled and critical position. With no legal security, they maintained, in fact, simple possession of those places where they were strong enough to defend themselves, but they held nothing by law. No edict, given in regular form, had abolished the decrees of extermination pronounced against them. The Parliaments could, by the terms of these ordinances, decree that the Calvinists could be taken, judged, and condemned to banishment or capital punishment. The king celebrated the Reformed worship in his camp; at two leagues’ distance it was punished as a crime. Duplessis summed up their position in two words: “They had the halter always round their necks.”

Many complained of this; and seeing that their requests were received with disdain, they proposed, at a meeting convened at Saint Jean d’Angély, to choose another protector for the Church. Henry IV. was much distressed at this course; but the faithful

Mornay replied to him by energetic representations: “What! is it not intended to revoke the edicts of proscription, and yet do they counsel the Reformed to be patient? Have they not been patient during fifty years? and does the service of the king require that they should be patient in things of this nature? Ought not children to be baptized? shall not marriages be consecrated? Each hour’s delay brings troubles and sufferings. If three families pray together for the prosperity of the king, if an artisan sings a psalm in his shop, or should a bookseller sell a French Bible, here are grounds for persecuting decrees. Our judges answer that such is the law. Well! let the law be changed. To such evils prompt remedies should be applied.”

The king knew that it would be doubly perilous for him to persist in his denial of justice; from within, because the Reformed at length sought other protection than his own; from without, because the Protestant powers would refuse him their aid. He therefore caused an edict of toleration to be adopted at his council, in the month of July, 1591, known as that of Nantes, which reinstated the Reformed in the same position which they held in 1577; a very meagre concession, since no more was granted than had been given by Henry III. Moreover, this ordinance did not pass without difficulty, and was never well observed, especially in those matters which related to admission to public employment.

We may judge from the following occurrence what was the amount of fanaticism which reigned in the camp even of Henry IV. Several Calvinists having been killed at the siege of Rouen, had been buried indiscriminately with the bodies of (Roman) Catholics, but the priests caused the bodies to be

disinterred, and ordered that they should be thrown as food to the beasts of the field. Thus, men who had fought under the same banner were not permitted to sleep together in the same dust.

XIX.

The League, however, in proportion as it felt its strength decreasing, redoubled its violence. It had called to Paris bands of Spanish and Neapolitan soldiers and preachers, and with obscene or atrocious language, had demanded millions of heads. The prior of the Sorbonne, Jean Boucher, taught that it was necessary to take the knife in hand to kill and exterminate all; the bishop Rose argued that another bleeding like that of Saint Bartholomew was again necessary, and that by such means the disease would be cut short; the Jesuit Commolet said that the death of the politicians was life to the (Roman) Catholics; and the curé of Saint André asserted that he would march foremost to slay them.

Pope Gregory XIV. at the same time sent monitions to the (Roman) Catholics of France, threatening with severe pains those who had taken the oath of fidelity to Henry of Béarn, the heretic and the excommunicated. These bulls, which were worthy of the age of Robert the Devout, appeared so monstrous, that the Parliaments of Tours and Châlons, having declared them scandalous, seditious, and contrary to the rights of the Gallican church, caused them to be burned by the hands of the executioner.

But the six months, at the expiration of which Henry IV. had promised to make himself acquainted [with the difference of the two creeds], had long since expired. He had been in the field nearly four years without having made any sensible progress in this respect. All the (Roman) Catholics who had attached themselves to his fortunes, pressed him

warmly to change his religion; the bishops, because they were blamed at Rome, and were desirous of freeing themselves from the reproach of infidelity; the nobility, because they were impatient to receive the reward of their services; the members of the Parliament, no less than those of the privy council, because they better understood state exigencies than conscientious scruples. The greater number of the other portions of society felt disposed to content themselves with form only; it was sufficient for them that they could tell the populace that the king of France attended mass.

The Abbé Duperron, afterwards bishop of Evreux and cardinal, an intriguing and cunning person, as well as an eloquent orator, spoke with these views to Henry IV., introducing into his arguments few theological, but many political considerations.

Gabrielle d'Estrées added to this the weight of a more direct and more intimate influence. She had no love for the Calvinists, who had frequently addressed severe expressions to her. The Béarnese, moreover, vanquished by fond passion, had led her to see in perspective the half of a throne. But to re-marry, it became necessary to be unmarried, and this, without exciting scandal, the pope alone could permit.

The king himself, whose "soul was steeped in voluptuousness," according to the energetic expression of a contemporary, and who never had any solid religious principles, waited only for the proper time and opportunity. The single question for him, since his accession to the throne, was to abjure wisely, that is to say, that in gaining the (Roman) Catholics he might not lose the Reformed.

Among these, many of the nobility, wearied with war, showed themselves well disposed. Sully set

them the example. “That I should advise you to attend mass,” said he to Henry IV., “is a thing you should not, as I think, expect from me, being of another religion; but I tell you frankly, that it is the most prompt and easy mode of overturning all these malignant projects. You will no longer have to encounter so many enemies, troubles, and difficulties in this world; as to the other,” he continued, laughing, “I will not answer for that.” On which the king laughed also.

Sully relates, in his “*Economies Royales*,” how he had conceived a theory, which admitted of passing in conscientious security from the Reformed communion to the Roman (Catholic) church. The king having caused him to be called very early one morning, requested him to sit down near his bed, and demanded his advice. Sully at first invoked political reasons, and as “the king was scratching his head in great perplexity,” he continued in these terms: “I hold it to be infallible, that of whatever kind of religion men make an external profession, if they die having observed the Decalogue, with a belief in the Apostles’ Creed, if they love God with all their heart, are charitable towards their neighbour, hope in the mercy of God, and to obtain redemption by the death, the merit, and the righteousness of Jesus Christ, they cannot fail to be saved.”

It was thus that Henry IV. became furnished with his famous argument of the most safe course, the (Roman) Catholics affirming that there was no safety out of their communion, and the Calvinists admitting that it is possible to be saved out of theirs. It will be seen at the first glance that the question had been improperly stated by Sully; it was a matter not of

faith only, but of good faith; and when in speaking of dying in the observance of the Decalogue, which forbids us to bear false witness, he advised the king to commit an act of fraud and hypocrisy, one-half of his argument overturned the other half. Clearly it could only carry conviction to a mind already convinced by reasoning of a totally different nature.

Duplessis gave opposite advice, for he had seriously taken up the instruction of the king. He was desirous that the several points of religion should be discussed before him by the most celebrated doctors, and of recommencing in some manner the conference of Poissy. He invited each of the principal theologians of the Reformation to study one of the questions of controversy, in order that they might all come well armed before their adversaries. Henry IV., "the most cunning, and the most subtle prince in the world," as Agrippa d'Aubigné, who had lived thirty years in his confidence, called him, permitted Mornay to take his own course, and enjoined him even to select his champions without delay.

The (Roman) Catholic nobles were deceived by this, and offered Mornay twenty thousand crowns on condition that he should not again awaken the king's scruples. "The conscience of my master is no more to be sold," said he to them, "than my own!" A beautiful reply, but unhappily only true on one side.

Despairing of being able to seduce Mornay, the politicians prayed Henry IV. to remove him from his person. But coming upon them unexpectedly at one of their meetings, "It is hard, gentlemen," said he, "to prevent a master from speaking to a faithful servant. The proposals which I make to him are of such a nature that I can state them to him aloud, before you all. I propose to him that he should serve

God with a good conscience, that he should have Him constantly before his eyes in every action, that he should appease the schism which is in the state, by a sacred reformation of the Church; that he should be an example to all Christians and to all posterity. Are these things to be said in secret? Would you wish that I should counsel him to attend mass? You do him wrong to imagine that he would profit by doing so. With what conscience can I advise him, if I do not first go there myself? and what religion is that which we may throw off like our shirts?"

Astonished by so much courage and virtue, Marshal d'Aumont cried, "You are more estimable than we are, Monsieur Duplessis; and if I said, two days since, that it was necessary to shoot you through the head, I say to-day, on the contrary, that you merit a statue."

It will be surprising that the judicious Mornay, who had so closely and for so long a time observed the king, should have entertained so good an opinion of his firmness. But he had the sublime ingenuousness of men of great faith; and moreover, Henry IV. displayed in this matter—it is with regret that we say so of the most popular of the French kings—the most consummate duplicity. He went so far as to invite the Reformed of France to fast, and pray that God would bless the pretended conferences, which were about to be opened; and he said to the pastors assembled at Saumur, "If you learn that I have committed some excess, you may believe that there is some foundation in the report, for I am a man subject to great infirmities; but if they should tell you that I have been seduced from my religion, do not believe it; I would die first." Three

months afterwards he abjured at Saint Denis.

On the 22nd July, 1593, the archbishop of Bourges and other dignitaries of the (Roman) Catholic clergy, repaired to the king. It had been arranged that they alone should speak. We meet with a curious proof of this from a letter in which the bishop of Chartres was informed, that "he might come in full confidence, without troubling himself about theology." For greater safety, Mornay had been sent away.

At a later period, Henry IV. explained the exclusion of the ministers by the following position. His mind was made up beforehand, he said. Why, then, expose the advocates of the Reformation to a certain defeat? Had they attended the conference, the bishops would have boasted of having vanquished them; in not attending, the ministers preserved the right of saying that they had not been heard. It is thus that sometimes the most serious matters are dealt with in this world.

On the 23rd July, the archbishop of Bourges delivered a discourse before the king, which lasted from six until eleven o'clock in the morning. The Béarnese only interrupted it from time to time, in order to ask for some explanation; or, if he raised an objection, he took care to add that he submitted himself entirely to the authority of the (Roman) Catholic church—conduct more worthy of a mocking philosopher than of a king. It was a ceremony arranged beforehand. Henry IV. had written to Gabrielle d'Estrées: "I commence this morning to speak to the bishops. It will be to-morrow that I shall make the perilous leap."

An act of abjuration had been prepared, in which the king rejected, one after the other, all the doctrines of the Reformed faith. But he would not

sign it, and they [the clergy] were contented with a vague adhesion in six lines to the articles of the Roman church. Nevertheless, by a cheat, very much resembling an act of forgery, and which paints the manners of the age, Loménie counterfeited the king's signature on the first of the two formularies which it became necessary to send to the pope.

On Sunday, the 25th July, 1593, at eight o'clock in the morning, the king presented himself at the great gate of the church of Saint Denis, accompanied by the princes and the officers of the crown. At the entrance were the prelates, who awaited his arrival with the cross, the book of the Evangelists, and holy water. "Who are you?" said the archbishop of Bourges. "I am the king." "What do you demand?" "I demand to be received within the pale of the Catholic, apostolic, and Roman church." "Do you desire it *sincerely*?" "Yes, I wish it and desire it." Then kneeling, he pronounced the formulary agreed upon, and the archbishop gave him absolution, and the benediction. The priests sang a grand mass, and at the termination of the ceremony, Cardinal de Bourbon carried to the king the book of the Evangelists to kiss.

This is what has been termed the conversion of Henry IV.—a matter of policy, through the influence of women, a lie of the priests, and a falsehood from beginning to end!

XX.

The act of abjuration did not immediately bring back the Leaguers to submission. The Spanish ambassador distributed gold with lavish hands. The legate pretended that to the pope alone belonged the right of reconciling one, who had been excommunicated by the Church, and the States-General of the League swore to obey the decrees of the Holy See. Boucher delivered nine sermons against the simulated conversion of the Béarnese, saying that the bishops of St. Denis were traitors, their prayers anathemas, and the mass sung before the heretics a miserable farce. All the preachers of the faction of the Sixteen (*de la faction des seize*) declared openly for regicide; and the fruit of their provocation was soon apparent. Jean Banière in 1593, and the year following Jean Châtel, attempted to assassinate the king. A decree of the Parliament drove the society of Loyola from the kingdom; it returned to give birth to Ravaillac.

But the mass of the nation accepted the abjuration of Henry IV. as real and sincere, because it thirsted for repose. The chiefs of the League, having lost all hope of vanquishing, now only thought of selling themselves as dearly as possible. It cost the king enormous sums, and the Reformed were nearly everywhere sacrificed in the capitulations. Rouen, Meaux, Poitiers, Agen, Beauvais, Amiens, Saint Malo, and many other cities, both large and small, stipulated, in making submission, that the preaching of the Huguenots should be banished from within their walls and their suburbs. Paris claimed an extension of the interdict to ten leagues from its

gates. The king opposed some resistance to these demands, but he finished by granting all of them.

The least mark of attachment which the Béarnese might show towards his old co-religionists, was watched with an eye of jealousy, and he was unable openly to press the hand of those faithful servants, who had defended his crown at the expense of their blood.

A new *protector* was again begun to be spoken of, notwithstanding the energetic expressions of Henry IV., who called himself the natural and legitimate protector of his subjects. Duplessis loyally supported the remonstrances of the king; however, he, in his turn, preferred to him heavy complaints: "See, sire," he wrote to him, "by what steps you have been conducted to the mass. Those, who do not believe in God, have made you swear by images and relics, purgatory and indulgences. Your poor subjects see you go further still, by this same road. They see you send to make your submission to Rome. They know that there cannot be absolution without penance. The pope, on the first opportunity, will send you the sacred sword, and will impose upon you the law of making war against heretics; and under this name will be comprehended the most Christian and the most loyal of the French."

Clement VIII., in truth, demanded as the price of absolution, the abrogation of the edicts of toleration, the exclusion of heretics from all offices, and the promise of exterminating them, so soon as peace should be concluded with the League and with Spain. On this occasion Henry IV. rebelled. He caused a reply to be returned by D'Ossat and Duperron, to the effect that he should be accused of indecency and ingratitude, if, after having experienced so many

services from those of the (Reformed) religion, he reduced them to extremity, and forced them to take arms against his person.

The pope and the king, by the aid of equivocation, finished with a mutual understanding, and on the 16th September, 1595, the two ambassadors of Henry IV. were kneeling under the portico of Saint Peter. They sang the *Miserere*, and at each verse they received for their master blows from a rod or switch, on the shoulders. The Spaniards ridiculed them, and the more estimable of the French papists were indignant at this humiliation.

The king continued to give the Reformed nothing but fair words. He told them privately that he trusted in them more than in the others, and he endeavoured even to justify the privileges which he had granted to the (Roman) Catholics, by the parable of the prodigal son, for whom the father caused the fatted calf to be killed: “It is well,” replied the deputies of the churches, “but treat us also as the son who has always been faithful, and to whom the father said, ‘All my goods are thine.’ To despoil the obedient son of his legitimate rights, in order to give them to him who has trodden underfoot the paternal authority, is not the spirit of Christ’s parable.”

To this the king could only reply by new exhortations to patience. “You shall have satisfaction,” said he to them, “when I am master at home.” Truly it was very difficult to exercise patience in the unhappy condition of the Reformed. Excluded from all offices, maltreated, persecuted, without anywhere being able to invoke the Almighty in peace, without security in their own houses, having no longer their ancient protector, and forbidden to name another, they at length resolved,

with the tacit authority of the king, to manage their own affairs, and convoked political assemblies. The first was held at Sainte Foy, in the month of May, 1594.

These assemblies must not be confounded with the synods. In the synods, the clergy and laity were equal in number, and were always occupied with the interests of the Church. In the political assemblies, the laity were greatly in the majority, and they treated also concerning state affairs.

Assemblies of this kind had been held during the religious wars, but they then took a more regular organization, and adopted the plan of uniting at periodical intervals.

France was divided into ten departments, each of which named a deputy to form the *General Council*. Their distinction of three orders was borrowed from the States-General. The General Council was to be composed of four noblemen, four members of the Third Estate, and of two pastors. When the number of members was raised to thirty, there were twelve delegates of the nobility, twelve representatives of the Third Estate, and six clergymen. The president was to be a layman, the vice-president an ecclesiastic. One half of the council was re-elected every six months. Dukes, lieutenant-generals, and other personages of high rank, took part in the deliberations without being deputies, provided they were not objected to by the assembly.

The provincial councils were next in authority to the General Council, and were composed of from five to seven members, chosen equally from the three orders. They were to include at least one resident governor and a clergyman.

These councils were to promote peace between those of their own religion, to levy rates for the necessities of the cause, and to regulate the disposal of them, to watch over the stores and munitions of fortified towns; in a word, to do everything that was necessary for the defence of their common interests. The deputies took the oath of obedience, and the members of the Church were obliged to respect the decisions of the general and private assemblies. A permanent fund of forty-five thousand crowns was supplied by the contributions of the faithful.

The General Council received memorials and complaints from the provincial councils, sent them to court, discussed the terms of the new edicts with the commissioners of the king, and sought to establish the free exercise of religion upon a more solid basis.

Judging according to present ideas, nothing could be more contrary to good order than this organization; it was, as we have already remarked, a state within a state. But to appreciate as we ought the institution of these political assemblies, we must recollect that the Reformed were excluded in France from the common right. The intolerant dogmas of (Roman) Catholicism did not recognise them as Frenchmen. They were looked upon as foreigners, or rather as enemies, and were treated as such. The king was obliged to capitulate with some of his subjects at the expense of the others. The pope demanded their extermination. The bishops had forced Henry to say at his coronation, “I will, in good faith, do all in my power to drive all heretics, denounced by the Church, out of my jurisdiction and territory;” and this was only a mitigated formula, that the priests had sanctioned after much hesitation. Public authority attacked and condemned the

Reformed as malefactors. If then they established a distinct society amongst themselves, it is because they were cut off from society in general; and it would be absurd, as well as odious, to accuse those in the name of the law, who had been put out of its pale.

The Leaguers had also formed a state within the state, but with this difference, that they were associated together in order to oppress the Calvinists, whilst the latter united that they might not be oppressed; and cruel experience proved to them, under the reign of Louis XIV., that in losing their political organization, they were exposed to the loss of everything.

The council of the king heard with astonishment of the decision of the assembly of Sainte Foy. It had imagined that the great Calvinist body, deprived of its ancient protector, would be destroyed. Catherine of Medicis and Charles IX. fell into the same error after the massacre of Saint Bartholomew. Seeing the Reformed rise up under the strokes of persecution to take a firmer attitude than ever, statesmen began to think that it was necessary to temporize with them.

The king feigned to be discontented, but secretly encouraged the political assemblies. He preferred them to a protector, who might have made himself too conspicuous in the kingdom, and he made use of them with the Leaguers, and even with his advisers at Rome, to grant more favourable conditions to his former friends. The Edict of Nantes, one of the most glorious acts of Henry IV., would never have been agreed to in council, nor registered by Parliament, if it had not been for the assemblies of the Reformed.

The negotiations were long, laborious, and intermixed with incidents which would offer little or

no interest [to be here related]. Political assemblies were held at Saumur, Loudun, and Vendôme, and again at Saumur and Châtellerault in the years 1595, 1596, and 1597. The court addressed them with menaces or words of encouragement, according to circumstances. Commissioners were appointed to treat with the Calvinists; but they only possessed limited powers, and even within these limits they were not authorized to conclude a definitive arrangement. There was a perpetual interchange of communications, much playing at cross-purpose, between the two parties; some were only willing to grant the Edict of Poitiers, with amendments of no importance; others demanded the full and free exercise of their religion; the former alleging state reasons, the latter principles of justice and conscience.

In the midst of these sterile disputes, persecution continued to be violent in some places, and vexatious in others. At Châtaigneraie, upon the confines of Poitou and Brittany, the Leaguers, encouraged by the Duc de Mercœur, had fallen suddenly upon the faithful, whilst they were at prayers, in 1595. Two hundred persons, of every age, men and women, had been cowardly butchered. It was a repetition of the massacre at Vassy.

Amongst the victims was an infant brought to be baptized A poor boy, eight years of age, in the simplicity of his heart, offered eightpence, the contents of his little purse, in the hope of ransoming his life; but the murderers loved his blood better; whilst the Lady of Châtaigneraie afterwards amused herself with the butchers in counting the dead.

This cold-blooded butchery revolted even the most violent of Henry IV.'s advisers, and the authors of the

massacre were expressly exempted in cases of amnesty. Nevertheless, it may be seen in a publication of 1597, under the title, *Complaints of the Reformed Churches of France,* how much oppression, injustice, and violence, had to be submitted to. These grievances would alone fill a volume; but we will only cite a few examples.

The Reformed were forbidden the free exercise of their religion throughout such provinces as Burgundy and Picardy; they had but a solitary place of worship in Brittany, and two in Provence; they were ill-treated, stoned, or thrown into the river on their return from worship; cannons were fired against their meetings; the king's own sister was constrained to set out for Rouen, to take the sacrament, because the legate disapproved of her receiving it in the city; Bibles and the Book of Psalms were burnt by the hand of the executioner; they were forbidden to comfort the sick; and at Saint Quentin, for example, a man was outlawed for having relieved one infected with the plague in the street; children were carried off or baptized by force in the houses by priests, accompanied by officers of justice. The curate of Saint Etienne starved an old man in prison to extort an abjuration, and forced him to sign a deed in the presence of a notary, by which he condemned himself to banishment if he renounced the (Roman) Catholic faith; cities, given as hostages, were taken away or ransacked; the poor were neglected and driven away, even where the Reformed contributed the most to the common fund; there was systematic exclusion from all appointments, even from the magistracy of the city, from the freedom of companies, from the offices of notary and attorney; there was no justice before the tribunals; exorbitant fines and imprisonments [were inflicted] for the

slightest cause; [as well as] disinterment of the dead, even of those who had been buried in the tombs of their ancestors, &c. &c. &c.

In terminating this long list of grievances, the Reformed said to the king, “But, sire, we have amongst us neither Jacobins nor Jesuits, who aim at your life, nor Leaguers, who desire your crown. We have never presented the points of our swords instead of petitions. We are paid by political considerations. They tell us the time is not yet come for granting an edict. And this, great God, after thirty-five years of persecutions, ten years of banishment by the edicts of the League, eight years of the king’s reign, and four years’ entreaty. We only ask of your majesty an edict which would permit us to enjoy that which is common to all your subjects. The glory of God, the safety of our property and lives, would be the summit of our wishes and the end of our petitions.”

The king and his council were again for temporizing with them; however, the fresh dangers which menaced the kingdom, the surprise of Amiens by the Spaniards, the resolution of many Huguenot noblemen to remain inactive, instead of drawing their swords for a king who had abandoned them, the conscience of many of their most celebrated men, which at last began to trouble them, caused the Edict of Nantes to be granted in the month of April, 1598, which took its name from the place where it was first published.

In the preamble of this celebrated act, the king acknowledged that God is adored and worshipped by all his subjects, if not in the same form, at least with the same intentions, in such manner that his kingdom will always merit and preserve the glorious

title of “very Christian.” The edict was declared perpetual and irrevocable, as being the principal foundation of the union and tranquillity of the state.

This great charter of the French Reformation briefly consisted of what follows under the ancient *régime*—entire liberty of conscience in the domestic circle; the public exercise of religion in all places where it was established in 1597, and in the suburbs of the towns; permission to lords of high rank to have service performed in their castles, and to noblemen of second rank, the right of admitting thirty persons to their private worship; the admission of the Reformed to public employment, of their children to the schools, of their invalids to the hospitals, of their poor to partake of the alms; the right of printing their books in certain towns; equal representation in some of the Parliaments; a chamber of the edict at Paris, entirely composed of (Roman) Catholics, except a single member, but offering sufficient guarantee by its particular object; four academies for scientific and theological instruction; authorization to convoke synods according to discipline; and lastly, a certain number of places of surety.

The (Roman) Catholic church had also its share in this edict. The property of the clergy was to be everywhere restored, tithes paid, and the exercise of (Roman) Catholicism re-established throughout the kingdom. This last article, which restored the mass in two hundred and fifty towns, and two thousand country parishes, narrowly missed exciting an insurrection at La Rochelle.

Yet this was not religious liberty, nor even simple toleration, as we understand it now; it was still a treaty of peace between two people juxtaposed upon

the same soil. There was a twofold law; there were two armies, two judicial establishments, and each party had its places of hostage. Henry IV., the head of the whole state, had filled the office of arbitrator between the two camps. But this was already a great step in advance of the past.

The false maxim that there should be only one faith, as there are only one king and one government, had cost France three millions of actual money, and two millions of men. It had erected the scaffold and the stake during sixty years, kindled civil war during thirty-five years, provoked the massacres of Mérindol, of Vassy, and of Saint Bartholomew, and inspired spoliations and murders, and crimes without number. At the termination of the wars, half of the towns and castles were in ashes, commerce destroyed, and the country so devastated that thousands of the peasantry had resolved to emigrate, having no longer the wherewithal to live upon the soil which had nourished their forefathers.

Humanity has achieved the principle of religious liberty through rivers of blood and over heaps of ruins: it has been too dearly purchased to be lost.

BOOK III.

FROM THE PROMULGATION TO THE REVOCATION OF THE EDICT OF NANTES. (1598-1685.)

I.

The compromise between the two religious communions met with the approval of good men; but it was slow in passing from the law into the ideas and manners [of the people].

The (Roman) Catholic clergy made the strongest protestations against the Edict of Nantes, and Clement VIII. wrote to say that "a decree, which gave *liberty of conscience to all, was the most accursed that had ever been made*." The university, governed by the Sorbonne and the Jesuits, wished to close the gates of the colleges against the Huguenots; and several Parliaments even raised serious obstacles against the registration of the edict.

Little by little, however, passions died away; and in spite of the quarrels, which were inevitable after such cruel conflicts, the twelve years which elapsed from the promulgation of the edict to the death of the king, form one of the most tranquil epochs of the French Reformation. The old historians express but one regret,—that the reign of Henry IV. had not lasted twelve years longer, in order to have given him time to perfect his work of reconciliation.

Proselytism, already confined within narrow limits by the religious wars, almost entirely ceased after the edict, at least on the part of the Calvinists. The (Roman) Catholics alone continued to enlist a few adherents; but politics weighed more in this cause than argument. Huguenot gentlemen went through the Church of Rome in order to pass into the antechambers of the court.

The priests wished above all things to gain over the pastors. They even became generous in the cause,

and upon the authority of a papal brief, they raised a fund to produce thirty thousand livres a year, for the purpose of giving pensions to those ministers and professors, who should be tempted to abjure. But no one could be found to draw upon the purse of the clergy on such conditions.

From 1598 to 1610 the Calvinists entered little into state affairs. The young Henry de Condé had been summoned to Paris in 1595, on the promise that he should be left to the enjoyment of the religion of his father. Scarcely, however, had he arrived before he was placed in the hands of zealous (Roman) Catholics, and he was not only converted, but he became a *converter*. This prince rewarded his domestics with fifteen sous every time they went to confess, provided they brought him certificates in due form.

One single member of the family of the Bourbons, Catherine of Navarre, sister of Henry IV., remained faithful to the religion of Jeanne d'Albret. She manifested a singular constancy; and upon a false report that she had been to mass, wrote to Mornay —"I shall go there when you become pope."

She pursued her devotional exercises at Saint Germain-en-Laye, after the entry of Henry IV. into Paris, in order to avoid altercations. But one day, having caused the marriage of a niece of Coligny to be celebrated at the Louvre, and having had for this occasion the doors thrown open during the sermon, the priests bitterly complained. "You are bold," said the king to them, "to hold such language in my house, and with reference to my sister." "But a marriage has been performed." "Well, since it is over, what would you have me do in the matter?"

This trifling incident serves to show how the clergy

at that time watched the Reformers with hostile eyes, tightening their chain when it could be done, but never permitting it to be loosened.

It does not appear that the Béarnese king ever set his mind upon his sister's abjuration, and he would even refer the Calvinists to her, when he found it difficult to comply with their requests. "Address yourselves to my sister," said he, laughing, to some gentlemen from Saintonge; "for your state has fallen under the spindle."

He desired in the end to marry her to the Duke de Bar, of the house of Lorraine. This affair, of so little intrinsic importance, occupied the attention of the royal council, the Holy See, and the synods for a long time. A disputation was held before the princess between a doctor of the Sorbonne and a professor of Sedan, which did not, however, result in Catherine's forsaking her faith. The pope refused to give a dispensation for the marriage; the prelates, in their turn, also refused to move any further; whilst the king, whom these delays disgusted, conceived the idea of summoning his natural brother, the archbishop of Rouen, to his cabinet, a worldly priest, who consented to give the nuptial benediction.

The marriage was not a happy one. The sister of Henry IV. had to suffer coldness and ill-treatment from the Duke de Bar, who allowed himself to be wholly led by the Jesuits. She died in 1604, and no Bourbon since that time has belonged to the Reformed communion.

Some noblemen of high rank still endeavoured to draw the Huguenots into their individual quarrels, but they were not listened to. The Duke de Bouillon, among others, who had been compromised in the conspiracy of Marshal Biron, invited his co-

religionists to come to his aid. “It is necessary,” said he, “that the ministers and the churches, altogether, without exception or distinction, should defend this very just and important cause.” Some gentlemen rose at his call, but the majority did not respond to it. The freedom, guaranteed by the Edict of Nantes, satisfied the Consistorialists, and the others could effect nothing without them.

If some political assemblies continued to meet, it was only every third year. They sometimes consisted of seventy members, namely, thirty gentlemen, twenty delegates of the *Tiers-parti*, and twenty pastors. They displayed no spirit of faction, and commonly confined themselves to drawing up statements of grievances, and to naming two general deputies for the protection of the interests of the churches at court.

The king, without absolutely interdicting these meetings, took umbrage at them, and, through Sully, expressed his sentiments to the assembly of Châtellerault. “If Henry IV.,” answered the delegates, “were immortal, we, content with his word in everything respecting ourselves, would instantly renounce the thought of the slightest precaution; we would abandon our places of security; we would consider every individual rule useless for the preservation of our society. But the dread of finding different sentiments in one of his successors” (was not their caution prophetic?) “compels us to preserve the measures, which have been taken for our safety.”

The national synods also assembled in a more regular manner than they had done hitherto. Five were held from the Edict of Nantes to 1609. Pastors, elders, and the faithful, each and all, understood that the exact observance of the synodal system was

essential to the prosperity of their religion. There was no discussion, no circumstance of any importance, that did not, either directly or by way of appeal, come before this high tribunal, where local passions were without influence with reference to the common interest.

One of the attributes of the national synods was to dole out the *deniers de l'octroi du roi*, or the king's gift, among the provinces and the academies, which amounted, or rather ought to have amounted (for the funds were not very exactly paid), to forty-five thousand crowns. A professor of theology received seven hundred livres a year; a professor of Hebrew or Greek, or of philosophy, four hundred livres; the regents of the colleges, from one hundred and fifty to three hundred livres. The academies, maintained by the synods, were established at Montauban, Saumur, Nismes, Montpellier, and Sédan; of these, the two first were the most flourishing.

A question, which greatly agitated these assemblies, and became almost a state affair, was an article that was added, in 1603, to the confession of faith by the national synod of Gap, in which the Roman pontiff was accused of being *Antichrist*. We cite this article as a monument of the ideas and language of the times: "Since the bishop of Rome—having erected a monarchy in Christendom, by grasping at domination over all the churches and pastors—has raised himself to the point of calling himself God, to seek to be adored, to boast that he is all-powerful in heaven and on earth, to dispose of all ecclesiastical matters, to decide upon articles of faith, to authorize and interpret the Scriptures at his pleasure; to traffic in souls, to dispense from vows and oaths, to order new services to God; and, with

reference to government, to tread underfoot the legitimate authority of magistrates, by taking away, giving, and exchanging kingdoms; we believe and maintain that he is properly the *Antichrist* and the *son of perdition* prophesied of in the Word of God, under the emblem of the scarlet woman...."

This article made a great noise. It followed upon some theses with reference to the same subject, which had been brilliantly supported by Jérémie Ferrier, a pastor of Nismes, and submitted to the Parliament of Toulouse. The adhesion of the national synod of Gap conferred much more consequence upon them. The legate loudly complained; the pope was extremely angry; the king expressed his displeasure, saying that the decision of the synod threatened to endanger the peace of the kingdom; and the ardent (Roman) Catholics did not fail to represent this affair as a personal insult to him, or even as an act of rebellion against his crown.

A long and difficult negotiation ensued. At length the national synod of La Rochelle, convoked in 1607, decided that, though it unanimously approved of the contested article, and held it to be conformable with what had been predicted in the Scriptures, it consented, at the express command of the sovereign, to omit it from the confession of faith. In retaliation, it directed one of its members to prove the justice of the accusation, and the pastor Vignier acquitted himself of the commission in a book entitled, *The Theatre of Antichrist*.

We must, to understand this perseverance, bear in mind, that controversy was carried on at that time with extreme bitterness. The pen and the tongue having replaced the sword, passions, which had no longer another vent, were brought into this new

battle-field. The necessities of these polemics were so great, that by a singular resolution, the national synod of Saint Maixent distributed the most difficult points of controversy among the provinces, with directions to have them examined by persons capable of successfully opposing, on all occasions, the (Roman) Catholic doctors.

This contest assumed sometimes considerable importance, as was the case with the conference opened at Fontainebleau, on the 14th of May, 1600, between Duplessis-Mornay and Duperron.

Mornay, in a treatise upon the Eucharist, had collected five or six thousand texts of the Fathers, which appeared to him opposed to the doctrine of transubstantiation. This was, so to speak, the voice of the first centuries of Christianity, which he summoned to testify against the inventions of succeeding ages, and all the venerable doctors of the primitive church rose one after the other, in his book, to protest against the alteration of the Sacrament of the Supper. This treatise was at the same time both a religious and political event; and this is not to be wondered at, if we reflect, on the one side, that the author had lived thirty years in familiarity with the king; on the other, that the dogma of the Eucharist was the great question of the era between (Roman) Catholicism and the Reformation. It was upon this point that the sentences of death pronounced against the heretics had been principally founded, and nothing contributed more, as we have seen, to break up the colloquy of Poissy.

The Cardinal de Medicis, legate of the pope, sent six copies of Mornay's work to Rome, promising to have it refuted by Bellarmine. In place of a

refutation, there came despatches from Clement VIII. denouncing a new conspiracy on the part of the heresy. Henry IV. was the more vexed at this because he was then suing before the Holy See for a divorce from his marriage with Marguérite de Valois. The Parliaments also took part in the quarrel; and during a whole winter, the pulpits of the old preachers of the League re-echoed with violent anathemas against the audacious adversary of the real presence.

Henry IV. made known his displeasure to Mornay, by means of M. de la Force. “I have always regulated my services,” answered Mornay, “according to the following order—first to God, then to my king, next to my friends; and I cannot, with a good conscience, change my method.”

However, Duperron, bishop of Evreux, said publicly, that he had discovered in the tract “*more than five hundred enormous falsehoods*,” and that he would undertake to prove them [to be so]. The report of this having reached Mornay, he accused this assertion of being an unworthy calumny, and demanded the opportunity of justifying himself in a public conference.

At the single word “*public conference*,” the legate, the bishop of Paris, the doctors of the Sorbonne raised an outcry; for the priests had generally been worsted in their oral discussions with the theologians of the Reformation. “Rest easy,” said the king, “the affair shall be so well conducted that the defeat shall be with the heretics.”

For this end Henry IV. chose as judges of the controversy four very decided (Roman) Catholics, and only two Calvinists, who were moreover suspected. Dufrêne Canaye, who had already pledged his troth to the king to embrace (Roman)

Catholicism, and De Casaubon, who, caring only for Greek and Latin manuscripts, affected great indifference for matters of faith. It is related of him that he replied to his son, who asked for his blessing, after having entered the order of the Capuchins: “I give you my blessing with all my heart: I do not blame you; do not blame me either.”

Mornay perceived the snare, and remonstrated against such a want of impartiality. “Sire,” said he to the king, “if there were nothing more concerned than my life, or even my honour, I would cast them at your feet. But since I am obliged to defend the truth, where the honour of God is concerned, I beseech your majesty to pardon me, if I seek just and reasonable means to secure it.”

Far from acceding fairly to this request, the king answered roughly that he had greatly offended him by attacking the pope, to “*whom he was under more obligations than to his own father*.” “Well! sire,” said Mornay, “since it so pleases God, I see the thing is settled: you will be made to condemn the truth between four walls, and God will give me grace, if I live, to make it echo to the four corners of the world.”

The day was fixed for the conference. Henry had imported into this quarrel so violent a passion that he could not sleep the night preceding. M. de Loménie, who slept in his room, said to him, as an historian writes: “‘Your majesty must take this affair strangely to heart: on the eve of Coutras, Arques, and Ivry, three battles where all was at stake, your majesty was not so troubled.’ All this the king confessed; so eagerly did he desire to content the pope by the ruin of M. Duplessis!”

But the unfair choice of commissioners was not

enough. The incriminated texts were not indicated to Mornay until the very day of the conference at one o'clock, and he lost another hour before he could obtain the books that were required to verify his quotations. At eight o'clock, he was summoned to the king's presence, although the discussion was not to open till noon; the object was, to use the expression of an historian, "*to make him lose his time*." At this last trait, Mornay's whole soul was moved with indignation, "Sire," he exclaimed, "may your majesty pardon me! This extraordinary rigour towards a good servant is unnatural in you."

When the time had arrived, the lords and ladies of the court, members of the council, magistrates of the Parliament, bishops and priests, were assembled in the great hall of the palace of Fontainebleau. Duperron advanced, with smiling countenance, and proud of a victory he knew to be already won beforehand. Mornay came also, not thinking it possible to retreat without compromising the cause of the Gospel; but he had been able only to verify a very few of his quotations; he was suffering, dejected, and but too certain of the sentence that would be pronounced.

At the opening of the conference, the plan of attack was changed: instead of "enormous falsehoods," it became merely a question of "*simple mistakes*!" Now, what was there surprising that in a great book wholly filled with quotations, the author should have fallen into some inaccuracies? Mornay did not defend himself well, and upon some thousands of texts, the judges condemned nine. The following night he fell ill, which served as a pretext for breaking up the conference.

Henry wished to sup in the hall of this theological

tournament, as he would have done on a field of battle. He announced all over the kingdom the success he had obtained, and he wrote to the Duke d'Epernon: "I have done a marvel." Duperron was triumphant. "Let us confess the truth," said the king to him, who could not long repress his humour for raillery, "the good right stood much in need of good aid."

Clement VIII. manifested great joy at this victory. He annulled the marriage of Henry IV., and sent the cardinal's hat to Duperron.

It should be noted, in exculpation of Henry IV., that he publicly praised Mornay shortly after the conference, and declared that he had never had a better or a nobler servant. The conscience of the man protested against the diplomacy of the king.

Duplessis returned, broken-hearted, to his government of Saumur. "Courage," said his wife; "it is God who has done this. Only keep your heart and your mind ready for the work." He set himself to verify all the texts on the *Eucharist*, and published a new edition, which received the approbation of the theologians of France and Geneva. Neither the king, nor Cardinal Duperron, cared any more about the matter; they had both obtained what they wished.

These were the most important events of the second half of the reign of Henry IV.; and when we recollect the horrible scenes that had preceded them, we are happy that we have only to register theological strifes. If they still stirred up burning passions, human blood no longer flowed.

Divine worship was celebrated almost everywhere without obstacle in the seven hundred and sixty churches that remained to the French Reformation;

and when serious grievances were laid before the council, they were redressed. The faithful of Paris had been compelled to open their church in the little village of Ablon, five leagues from the town. The courtiers complained that they could not on the same day discharge their duty to God and the king. The poor also complained of the distance. Some of the children carried to the meetings, according to the discipline, for baptism, had died on the way. The king was touched with these difficulties, and in 1606 permitted the Reformers to exercise their worship at Charenton; which lasted until the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes.

Nevertheless, a horrible catastrophe was preparing in the dark. The Jesuits, expelled from the kingdom after the crime of Jean Châtel, had returned, because Henry IV., having to choose between two dangers, preferred having them near him than against him. And when it was urged upon him how wrong it was to recall these perfidious and sanguinary monks; "Ventre-Saint-Gris," said he, "will you answer for my person." He tried to gain them by confidence and good services. Father Cotton was even named confessor of the king, and preceptor of the dauphin. But nothing disarmed them, any more than it did the dregs of the people, who, mindful of the sermons of the League, always esteemed the Béarnese king as an excommunicated heretic.

On the 14th of May, 1610, Ravaillac buried his knife in the bosom of Henry IV. This wretch confessed in his interrogatories that he had given way to the temptation to kill him, because in warring against the pope, the king made war against God, "*inasmuch as the pope is God*!" Thus a sacrilegious doctrine had begotten the crime of regicide.

Henry IV. has occupied a great place in the memory and love of the French. He redeemed his weaknesses by eminent qualities, and his very faults by the splendid services which he rendered to his people. It is from his reign, as has been remarked, that the end of the Middle Ages really dates; and the Reformers have ever been grateful to a prince, who was the first that sincerely granted them the free exercise of their religion.

II.

The news of the king's death re-awakened all the fears of the Calvinists. Many families hastily quitted Paris, although the guardianship of the gates had been confided to burghers of both religions, as if they had been threatened with another Saint Bartholomew. The Duke de Sully shut himself up in the Bastille, of which he was the governor. The Huguenots of the southern provinces took arms. It seemed as if the Edict of Nantes had been torn by the same blow that had pierced the heart of Henry.

From the 22nd of May, the court published a declaration, confirming in the most explicit terms all the edicts of toleration, a useless precaution; for the Reformers believed neither in the power of the regent Marie de Medicis, nor in her good faith. They feared they should find in her, and in her son Louis XIII., then but eight years and a half old, a second Queen Catherine, and a new Charles IX.

Marie de Medicis was governed by two Italian adventurers, Concini and Leonora Galigaï. An ignorant, bigoted, and vindictive woman, with all the vices of ambition unmixed with its qualities, she ruled the great affairs of the state upon the predictions of astrologers, and thought, by throwing herself into the petty intrigues of the court, that she was using the means of government.

The public treasury, under her regency, was given up to the pillage of the great lords, and the kingdom to their turbulent factions. The dukes de Nevers, de Mayenne, d'Epernon, de Longueville, de Vendôme, cantoned themselves each in his province, dictating their conditions of obedience to the crown, and

offering to the chiefs of the Calvinists the dangerous example of subordinating the general interest to their personal pretensions.

Some of these were too much inclined to follow such an example, particularly the Duke de Bouillon and the Marshal de Lesdiguières, the former, a man of capacity and good counsel, but committing fault upon fault, through his ambition to be the first person in the kingdom; the latter, skilful and brave upon the field of battle, but loose in morals, unscrupulous as to the means of success, and seduced by the prospect of the constable's sword. Both pretended to feel a great zeal for religion, in order to win the support of the Huguenots; nevertheless they were soon suspected by their old friends, and did not render to the court the services they had let it to expect.

The Duke de Sully, despoiled of all his offices, imported into the affairs of the Reformation the bad humour of a disgraced minister. He did not always retreat before extreme opinions, but at the moment of passing to the execution of them, his solid sense restrained him, and he never forgot that he had been one of the most faithful servants of the crown.

His son-in-law, the Duke Henry de Rohan, then thirty-two years of age, had begun to show himself, and was preparing to take the highest place in the Calvinist party. Young, active, of almost royal birth, as much attached to study as to the trade of arms, he had already travelled through all the different states of Europe to acquaint himself with their powers and their genius. He was simple and austere in his manners, intrepid, generous, naturally inclined to great achievements, and capable of accomplishing them. His oratory was clear, terse, and vigorous—the

true eloquence of a party leader. His religious sentiments inspired more confidence than those of other noblemen of his rank; and history testifies that in all his enterprises, devotion to the Reformed cause prevailed over ambition.

Duplessis-Mornay, either because years had cooled his ardour, or because he had better calculated the small military resources of the Huguenots, inclined to pacific measures, and advised that everything should be borne rather than that they should fly to arms. As soon as he heard of the death of the king, he convoked the magistrates of Saumur, and said to them, “Let us talk no more of Huguenots and Papists; these words are forbidden by the edicts. But were there no edict in existence, if we are Frenchmen, if we love our country, our families, ourselves, they should be henceforth effaced from our minds. There should be only one badge for all. Whoever is a good Frenchman, him will I love as a good citizen, and as a good brother.”

As the court felt at that time the necessity of conciliating the Reformers, it offered to Mornay either money or favours. This disinterested servant of Henry IV. replied to these proposals that it should never be said that he profited by the general misfortune, importuned the mourning of the queen, or afflicted the minority of the king. “I leave to the queen,” he said, “to judge if I deserve anything, should she please to give me what has been long my due. But in this calamity I ask for nothing, and am as grateful as if the queen had bestowed [everything upon me.”]

He applied himself, without relaxation, under the regency of Marie de Medicis, to defeat intrigue, and to appease resentment. The president Jeannin wrote

to him after the troubles excited by the Prince de Condé, “You have so conducted yourself during this wretched war, that their majesties are well pleased, and therein acknowledge your prudence and fidelity.” Duplessis-Mornay had reason to know before he died, how oblivious and ungrateful are kings!

All the opposite passions of the Calvinist party appeared together in the political assembly, convoked at first at Châtellerault, and opened at Saumur on the 27th of May, 1611. The court authorized its meeting with repugnance and disquietude, and imposed upon it the condition that it should dissolve as soon as it had prepared the list of the six persons, out of whom the king had to choose two general deputies; but it was very evident that the delegates of the Reformation did not come from all points of the kingdom for the sole purpose of inscribing six names upon a bulletin.

The assembly of Saumur again numbered seventy members,—thirty gentlemen, twenty pastors, sixteen deputies of the *Tiers-état*, and four delegates of the government of La Rochelle, which formed at that time a separate principality. Fifteen provinces were represented, without counting Béarn, whose deputies were admitted after some little hesitation. The principal noblemen of the party had likewise been summoned by special letters. Among them appeared the Marshal de Lesdiguières, the dukes de Bouillon, de Sully, and de Rohan, and Duplessis-Mornay, who, without being of the same rank, compensated for the inferiority of his titles, by his long services and the authority of his character.

The Duke de Bouillon aspired to the presidency, by relying upon the intrigues of the court. He was not

elected. Three-fourths of the votes were given for Duplessis-Mornay, and the pastor Chamier was named as vice-president. By this decision the king's council were plainly told that political passions would not predominate in the assembly, and that its chief object would be the interests of religion, but that upon this article it was resolute not to make any compromise.

The session lasted nearly four months, in the midst of laborious negotiations, the court requiring the prompt dissolution of the assembly, and the latter resolving not to separate until it obtained a redress of its list of grievances. The oath of union was renewed, which consisted in swearing obedience and fidelity to the king, "*the sovereign empire of God remaining always in its entirety*." This reservation, so legitimate and so unimpeachable in itself, nevertheless opened the door to farther contests. At length the assembly separated, after having chosen and seen two general deputies accepted.

Henry de Rohan displayed his talents as a statesman and great political orator in this assembly. He recommended union, order, the duty of investigating the grievances of the most humble Reformer, of resolutely challenging admission to all offices in the kingdom, and of providing for the safe-keeping of the towns of hostage. "We have come," said he, "to a cross-way where many roads meet, but there is only one which has any safety for us. The life of Henry the Great maintained it; in this crisis our virtue must do so.... Let our aim be the glory of God and the security of the churches, which He has so miraculously established in this kingdom, striving with ardour for the good of one another, but by legitimate means. Let us be scrupulous in demanding

only those things that are necessary; let us be firm in obtaining them."

Other political assemblies were convened in succeeding years, at Grenoble, Nismes, La Rochelle, Loudun. The old historians distinguish the members who composed them, by the following qualifications: *the ambitious*, who used the pretext of religion to gain their particular ends; the *zealous*, or well-disposed, who only sought to practise their offices of piety in peace; the *judicious*, who tried to unite the interests of faith with those of policy; and lastly, the *timid*, who were ready to submit to everything rather than risk their ease or fortune. Those who dwelt in Paris and the provinces, where the Reformation was weak, habitually counselled measures of prudence, from the fear of being crushed; others, relying upon their power, spoke haughtily, and displayed the half-drawn sword. The distinction between the Reformers of the north and those of the south, already sensibly perceived, was shown more strongly in what followed.

The convocations of the national synods were equally frequent, and their ecclesiastical bodies interfered more than they had hitherto done in political questions, among others, in the synod of Privas, of which the session opened on the 23rd May, 1612. The pastor Chamier was its president or moderator, and the pastor Pierre Dumoulin was named as his deputy. The members of the synod complained of the letters patent of abolition or of pardon, published by the king's council in the preceding month of April.

"The churches of this kingdom," said they, "declare that they have never required, asked, or endeavoured to obtain grace or pardon, and that

none of their body are guilty of those imaginary crimes imputed to them; that they are all ready, individually and collectively, to answer for their actions, to publish them to the whole world, and to show them in open day, in the sight of every species of torture, more easy to bear than so shameful a blot of infamy, which would make them despicable and hateful to posterity, and rob them of the honour that has been ever attributed to them, of being good Frenchmen.... Moreover, they declared that they would not avail themselves, nor in any way use the said letters of amnesty and pardon; and that if there should be any persons who had accepted them, or consented to accept them, that they disavowed them."

The same synod undertook the re-establishment of harmony among the Calvinist noblemen who had disagreed at Saumur; and there resulted a solemn act of reconciliation, which was signed on the 16th of August, by the marshals de Bouillon and de Lesdiguières, the dukes de Sully, de Rohan, de Soubise, the marquis de la Force, and Duplessis-Mornay.

Another matter, more directly religious, was agitated on different occasions in the provincial and national synods. The subject was the conduct of Jérémie Ferrier—who has been already named—in the beginning a vehement defender of the Reformed communion, but afterwards secretly won over and paid by the court. Ferrier possessed considerable learning, combined with a fertile mind and ready speech; but his orthodoxy and probity were suspected. He was accused of having enunciated antichristian propositions concerning the Incarnation of Jesus Christ, and of having improperly

administered the funds of the Academy of Nismes. He was severely reprimanded on this account, and thereupon threw himself into the arms of the (Roman) Catholics.

Ferrier was recompensed for his apostasy by the title of councillor of the court of judicature at Nismes, in 1613. The consistory excommunicated him, and the people, who thenceforward styled him "*the traitor Judas*," desired to oppose his installation. His houses in town and country were gutted, and he himself was forced to retire for a while to Beaucaire.

The synod of Bas-Languedoc, upon the authority of the national synod of Privas, confirmed Ferrier's excommunication in the most solemn terms: "We, pastors and elders, declare that the said M. Jérémie Ferrier is a scandalous, incorrigible, impenitent, and unruly man; and as such, after having invoked the name of the living and true God, and in the name and by the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, by the direction of the Holy Ghost, and the authority of the Church, we have cast, and do cast him forth from the society of the faithful."

Ferrier obtained, through the favour of the Jesuits, the post of councillor of state, and became the apologist of Cardinal de Richelieu. He died in 1626, detested by the Calvinists and little esteemed by the (Roman) Catholics. His daughter, who married the criminal-lieutenant Pardieu, figures in the satires of Boileau, for her sordid avarice: she was murdered by robbers in 1664.

III.

The situation of the Reformers grew worse, in spite of the reiterated declarations of the council respecting the faithful execution of the edicts. Their rights were continually disregarded in the courts of justice, in the nominations to public offices, hospitals, the dole of alms, places of worship, everywhere and wherever it was possible to vex and harass them without too openly violating the laws.

In the States-General, assembled in 1614, the orator of the *Tiers-parti* spoke in favour of toleration. But the clergy and even the nobility gave the meeting to understand that, sooner or later, the king would fulfil the oath of his coronation, by which he had promised to expel all heretics denounced by the Church from the countries of his jurisdiction. Cardinal Duperron declared that the edicts were only provisional or suspensive, and that all that had been granted was a simple reprieve to rebellious subjects.

It would be difficult in our time to conceive to what extent the demands of the clergy against heretics proceeded, on being preferred to the king, after they had deliberated upon them in their general assemblies. They embraced a prohibition to write against the sacraments of the Romish church and the authority of the pope; prohibition to keep schools in the cities, and even in the suburbs of episcopal towns; prohibition for the ministers to enter hospitals to console the sick of their communion; prohibition for foreigners to teach anything but (Roman) Catholicism; prohibition for the judges of chambers, equally divided by an equality of votes, to adopt the less rigorous sentence; lastly, a speedy interdiction of all exercise of the pretended Reformed religion.

These demands were periodically renewed, with clauses increasingly harsh and oppressive, until the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and afterwards down to 1787. It was not until the great voice of the nation raised itself in the Constituent Assembly, that that of the priests was finally silenced.

The project of a double marriage—between the young king with an infanta of Spain, and of the prince of the Asturias with a daughter of France—a project supported by the Holy See—redoubled the fears of the Huguenots. It was generally rumoured that one of the conditions of the alliance between the two courts, was the destruction of heresy, and the (Roman) Catholic preachers took this as the text of their sermons. “If the Jesuits,” wrote Duplessis-Mornay to the chancellor De Sillery, “preach without circumlocution, that the design of this double marriage with Spain is to be the extirpation of heresy, can any one be surprised that our churches should take alarm, and that the minutes of the assemblies should speak of it?”

The Prince de Condé, a bigoted (Roman) Catholic, as we have seen, tried to turn the disquietude of the Calvinist party to the advantage of his personal cause, by invoking the memory of his father and grandfather. He published a manifesto in 1615, in which he told the Reformers that the Edict of Nantes would be abolished, and that the king’s only object in collecting his troops was their extermination. These provocations carried away some gentlemen of the political assemblies of Grenoble and Nismes. The Duke de Rohan took the field on the side of Saintonge; but the body of the Calvinists, including Lesdiguières, Châtillon, Sully, and Mornay, did not rise. The last wrote on this occasion, that “a

negotiation would be renewed, by means of which the prince would be contented; while their churches would remain behind, loaded with all the odium, and perhaps also with the war itself." This is exactly what happened. Condé made his peace with the court, without any regard for the position or the interests of his allies.

A more serious event—the oppression of the Reformation in Béarn—occurred to furnish more weighty motives for the recommencement of the wars of religion.

The principality of Basse-Navarre and Béarn, annexed to France by Henry IV., was more closely re-united in 1617. Three-fourths of the population, some say nine-tenths, belonged to the Reformed communion. They were nevertheless ordered to reinstate the priests in all the ecclesiastical property which had been applied, since the year 1569, to the use of the churches, schools, hospitals, and poor.

The Jesuit Arnoux said that this property "*belonged to God, who was its owner*," and that consequently no one had the power or the right to take it.

The States of Béarn, the nobility, the magistrates of the towns, the people, all protested energetically, but in vain. The king took the field at the head of an army, and the Béarnese not being able to oppose more than a short resistance, he entered the town of Pau on the 15th October, 1620. He remained there no longer than two days, "for there was no church there," says an historian of the time, "where he might thank God, from whom he held this inheritance, and he therefore went to have the mass chanted before his soldiers, at Navarreins, where it had not been solemnized for fifty years previously. Bishops, abbots, and curates re-entered into

possession of the property of the church, the Jesuits taking a goodly share."

The course of the royal troops was marked with cruel violence. "Nothing was heard to escape from the mouth of the most moderate," says Elie Benoît, "but threats of exemplary punishment; of hanging, decapitating, and abolishing the Reformed religion throughout the whole kingdom, which they called *accursed*; of banishing all who professed it, or of compelling them to wear some badge of infamy." The soldiers shattered the doors of the churches, demolished the walls, tore the books and the tables where the commandments of God were written. They robbed and maltreated the peasants with their staves and their swords, who came to the market of Pau, adjudging them beforehand to be all Huguenots. They forced the Reformers, who fell into their hands, to make the sign of the cross, and to kneel when the procession [of the host] passed by. The women dared not venture into the streets.... Some, who were with child, they compelled to swear to baptize their infants at the Romish church. "Children were carried off, the parents knew not whither, or how to recover them; and all this was done under the eyes of the king, who refused even to listen to the complaints of the injured. In the other parts of the country, the soldiers lived as they pleased; publicly told that the king had given the Huguenots up to them for pillage, they expelled the ministers, outraged their wives, and drove men and women to mass with blows and with curses."[75]

Such was the first essay of the *dragonnades*, which system was before long to be perfected and extended under the reign of Louis XIV.

The indignation of the churches on the news of the

persecutions in Béarn may be imagined. It was not this time the great lords of the party who cried for warlike measures. They saw too well that the Calvinists, doubly weakened by their internal dissensions and their defections, would not be able to make head against the king.

Some pastors also advised the Reformers to remain quiet. Pierre Dumoulin, who exercised great authority among the Consistorialists, wrote, after the national synod of Alais, of which he had been the moderator, that all ought to endure with patience the renewed strokes of the enemy. “If we must be persecuted,” said he, “all those who fear God desire that it should be for the profession of the Gospel, and that our persecution should truly be the cross of Christ.”

But the people of the Huguenots, seconded by the lesser nobility, and by the burghers of La Rochelle, would not hearken to this pacific counsel. Had not the king forsworn in Béarn the oaths he had taken at the assembly of Loudun? Was not the cause of the Béarnese the cause of all? Would not they be obliged to suffer likewise on the first occasion? Did not the advisers of Louis XIII. incite him to make an end of the Huguenots without delay? Was not their extermination preached from all the (Roman) Catholic pulpits? And was it not better to take counsel of their despair, than to wait in fatal security for their death-blow?

These sentiments were dominant in the political assembly convoked at La Rochelle in the month of December, 1620. The king had sent an usher to prohibit the deputies of the churches from meeting, and the inhabitants of La Rochelle from receiving them. When the usher had performed his mission,

the magistrates of the town replied to him: “Since you have executed your orders, you will quit this place as soon as possible.”

The noblemen of the party still essayed to act as mediators between the court and the assembly. The dukes de Rohan, de Soubise, and de la Trémouille, had an interview at Niort with some of the deputies. Duplessis-Mornay exerted in these negotiations all the power and influence he possessed. But the difficulties appeared insurmountable. The king’s council ordered the assembly to dissolve immediately, and the assembly would not separate until they had obtained the redress of their grievances, and solid guarantees for the free exercise of their religion. On one side it was said: “Return home, and you shall have satisfaction.” On the other it was replied: “Give us satisfaction, and we will return home.” Mornay, in speaking of the assembly of Loudun, had well stated this twofold position: “The king orders them to dissolve, and promises to act; we beseech him to act, being ready to dissolve.”

The debate had no result, because on either side there were after-thoughts. The council wished at least to destroy the political organization of the Reformers, and the latter maintained it with obstinate constancy, under the full persuasion, not without reason, that on such political organization their religious liberty depended.

The assembly of La Rochelle, tired of transmitting to the court justifications and useless petitions, passed, at length, on the 10th of May, 1621, by a majority of six or seven votes, a resolution, bold even to rashness, and which breathed the republican spirit of the people of La Rochelle. The measure went far beyond the rights granted by the Edict of Nantes, and

however bad were the designs of the council, it cannot be approved of.

France, with regard to the Reformers, was divided into eight departments or *circles*, an expression borrowed from the political establishment of Germany; and each circle was to be placed under the government of one of the leaders of the party. The supreme authority was confided to the Duke de Bouillon. The governors might levy money, appoint to offices, organize armies, and give battle. Three deputies of the assembly were to assist in the councils held by the general-in-chief and the military commanders. Lastly, the assembly reserved to themselves the power of concluding treaties of peace.

This organization, however, had more of appearance than reality. The Duke de Bouillon remained neutral. The Marshal de Lesdiguières was on the point of embracing (Roman) Catholicism. The Duke de la Trémouille, and the Marquis de Châtillon, grandson of Coligny, were wavering, and soon about to exchange the command of the Huguenots for the bâtons of marshals. The Marquis de la Force dreaded an open rupture with the court. The Duke de Sully was anxious for quiet. Mornay refused to take part in this recourse to arms. There were among all the leaders but the Duke de Rohan, and his brother, the Duke de Soubise, who showed themselves disposed to throw their whole fortunes into the new wars of religion.

Nor did the provinces that had been divided into circles, reply with a unanimous voice to the appeal of the assembly Picardy, Normandy, the Orleanais, the Isle of France, where the number of Reformers was small, even Poitou and Dauphiny, where they were more numerous, refused to take up arms. All

the efforts of resistance were concentrated in Saintonge, Guienne, Quercy, and the two provinces of Languedoc.

The regulations adopted by the assembly of La Rochelle, for the maintenance of religion and good order in the army, are deserving of mention, as an interesting trait of manners. Pastors were to say prayers and preach daily to the soldiery. The troops were forbidden to swear, under pain of a fine proportioned to the rank of the delinquent; a *teston* for a private, a *crown* for an officer. Heavier penalties awaited any who brought women into the military encampments. The protection of agriculture and commerce was enjoined. Prisoners were placed under the safeguard of the council. These regulations proved that the assembly of La Rochelle were anxious to honour this new war; but their execution required a fervent piety, that had already become rare at that time.

IV.

Louis XIII. had commenced hostilities, by advancing his army towards the Loire on the 24th of April, fifteen days before the adoption of the resolution at La Rochelle. Some, the sagest members of his council, had persisted in proposing means of accommodation. They represented that the Huguenots held two hundred fortified places, that their soldiers were of approved bravery, that despair made them still more redoubtable, that there were in the churches four hundred thousand men capable of bearing arms, and that the Calvinists had for sixty years lost more by peace than by war. Others counselled, on the contrary, that a great and decisive blow should be struck against the Calvinist party, and Louis XIII. adopted the last opinion.

The Jesuits, his early masters and spiritual directors, urged him unceasingly to undertake the destruction of the churches, and invented arguments to make him safely violate the word he had given to the heretics. “The promises of the king,” said his confessor Arnoux, “are either promises of conscience or of state. Those made to the Huguenots are not of conscience, for they are against the precepts of the Church, and if they are of state, they should be referred to the privy council, whose advice is, not to keep them.” Thus reasoned the contemporary and brother of Escobar.

The pope offered two hundred thousand crowns, on condition that the Huguenots were brought back willingly, or by force, into the Church of Rome. He also addressed a brief to Louis XIII., wherein he praised him for having imitated his ancestors, who had “*honoured the exhortations of the pope as much as*

the commandments of God." The cardinals offered, on the same condition, two hundred thousand crowns, and the priests a million.

In the harangues pronounced by the orator of the clergy, the king was pressed to follow the example of Philip Augustus, the grandfather of Saint Louis, who had utterly exterminated the Albigenses, or at least the example of the Emperor Constantius, who had forced the idolaters to quit the towns and to dwell in the villages, whence they had derived, said this priest, the name of Pagans.

The emissaries of Spain, with which country the double marriage had led to a strict alliance, were urgent for war, from reasons of a different kind. Every time France was troubled, the court of Madrid felt stronger, and its language assumed a higher tone.

The king therefore put himself at the head of his army, with the Constable de Luynes, the Duke de Lesdiguières, who had openly declared for the court, the Cardinal de Guise, a crowd of lords, and his mother, Marie de Medicis, whom he distrusted. His council had taken the precaution to distinguish, before the commencement of the campaign, between the *peaceable* Calvinists and those who were not so—a distinction which gave the timid and the venal the opportunity of keeping at home, without being accused of treason.

One of the first exploits of Louis XIII. was the capture of the town and castle of Saumur, by deceit and treachery. Duplessis-Mornay had been governor of the place from the reign of Henry III. He kept it as a town of hostage, granted by the edicts; and as it commanded the course of the Loire, it was of great importance to the Calvinist party. The Constable de Luynes demanded ingress in the name of the king,

promising that the immunities of Saumur should be as safe as the eye of the governor, and to this "*he pledged his word, as well as that of his majesty, with his own mouth, which was also confirmed by M. de Lesdiguières*." Mornay opened the gates of the fortress, and led out, according to custom, the Calvinist garrison. But as soon as the king had entered with his troops, he declared that he took definite possession of Saumur.

To give to this breach of faith the appearance of an amicable arrangement, Mornay was offered, beside payment of the arrears of his appointment, one hundred thousand crowns and a marshal's bâton. He retorted with indignation, that if he had loved money, he might have gained millions under the preceding reigns, and that, as for dignities, he had always been more desirous of rendering himself worthy of them, than of obtaining them. "I cannot, either in conscience or honour," he added, "traffic in the liberty or safety of others."

He went to dwell in his house, where he died on the 11th of November, 1623. His last hours were full of serenity. "We saw clearly the Gospel of the Son of God engraved on his heart by the Holy Ghost," said the almoner of his family, Jean Daillé; "we saw him in the midst of death firmly possessed of life, and enjoying a full contentment at a moment when all men are usually shaken with fear. And this lesson was so striking and efficacious, that even those who suffered most from his loss, reaped both joy and edification." He made his confession of faith, avowing that he had received much, and had little profited. And when he was told that he had faithfully employed his talent: "Ah! what is there of mine?" he exclaimed. "Do not say I, but God through me."

Philippe de Mornay was the last representative of that great and strong generation, which had received the lessons of Calvin, and the examples of Coligny. He had shown that it is possible to preserve, during half a century, even in those worst of all wars, the wars of religion, a spotless name, an irreproachable character, conduct always even, and a humane and generous nature. This is the highest glory to which man can attain.

Beyond Saumur, the royal army encountered no serious resistance until it arrived before the gates of Saint Jean d'Angély, commanded by the Duke de Soubise. The siege began on the 30th of May, 1621, and lasted twenty-six days. Among the number of volunteers was the Cardinal de Guise, who acquitted himself in the soldier's calling better than he had done in that of the priest. He embarked in it with so much ardour that he died of fatigue, a few days after, in the town of Saintes.

The king thence betook himself to Basse-Guienne, all the towns hastening to throw open their gates to him, except the little place of Clairac, which styled itself "*a town without a king, defended by soldiers without fear*." It was taken after twelve days' siege. A pastor named La Fargue, together with his father and son-in-law, was condemned to death.

On the 18th of August, the royal army commenced an attack upon Montauban. This siege is celebrated in the annals of the French Reformation. The town of Montauban enjoyed municipal franchises, which had inspired its inhabitants with a great spirit of independence. Its councillors were men of head and action, and the firmness of their faith redoubled their energy. The Marquis de la Force had the command. The Duke de Rohan held his head-quarters at a little

distance, and supplied it with succours of men and ammunition.

Louis XIII. presented himself before the walls of Montauban with the Constable, the dukes de Mayenne, d'Angoulême, de Montmorency, the Count de Bassompierre, and the *élite* of the nobility of the kingdom. He also, during the siege, enlisted an auxiliary of a very different kind. This was a Spanish Carmelite, the Father Domenique de Jesu-Maria, who had performed, it was said, miracle upon miracle, in the preceding year, during the war of the emperor of Germany against Bohemia. He passed for a great prophet: the soldiers called him the *Blessed Father*. As he was returning to his monastery in Spain, he visited the camp of the king, who asked him for his advice. The monk directed that four hundred discharges of artillery should be played against the town, after which it would infallibly surrender. The four hundred shots were fired, but the town did not yield.

The siege lasted two months and a half, and the royal army tried, at repeated intervals, to take it by assault, but without success. At length, after considerable loss, the king, on the setting in of the adverse season, was, with tears in his eyes, compelled to retire. He raised the siege on the 2nd of November. "The people of Montauban," says an historian, "were advertised of the approaching withdrawal of the army by a soldier of the religion, who the evening before the raising of the siege, betook himself to playing on the flute the sixty-eighth Psalm. The beleaguered inhabitants took this for the sign of their deliverance, and they were not deceived."[76]

The war recommenced in 1622, and was

conducted with unheard-of rigour. The prisoners were treated as rebels; some were executed on the spot, others were sent to the galleys. The Marquis de la Force, daunted by the dangers that menaced his person and his house, concluded a private treaty with the court, by which he delivered up Sainte Foy and Basse-Guienne. Many of the Calvinist leaders were either intimidated, or gained like him, so that the Huguenots were more injured by defections than by defeats.

The little town of Nègrepelisse, close by Montauban, was the object of horrible reprisals. All the inhabitants were put to the sword: they were accused of having massacred the (Roman) Catholic garrison in the preceding winter. “Mothers, who had saved themselves with their children, by crossing the river, could obtain no pity from the soldiers on the banks, but were thrust back or killed. In half an hour every one in the town was slaughtered, and the streets were so cumbered with the dead and blood that they were scarcely passable. Those who escaped into the castle were constrained to surrender on the next day at discretion, and were all hanged.”[77]

Another large village of the same parts, Saint Antonin, tried to defend itself; even the women armed themselves with scythes and halberts. But the place could not long withstand the royal army. The garrison, holding a white wand, were allowed to quit the town. Ten burghers were hanged with the pastor, formerly a monk of the order of the Cordeliers. The inhabitants redeemed themselves from pillage (the historians of the time perhaps exaggerate the amount) by a contribution of fifty thousand crowns.

To sanctify this war, at once so full of cruelty and treason, the lords and captains of the king’s army

performed great acts of devotion at Toulouse. The Prince de Condé, the Duke de Vendôme, the Duke de Chevreux, went to confession and communicated with six hundred gentlemen of their friends. Some of them affiliated themselves with the order of the Blue Penitents; “which,” says a chronicle, “had this advantage, that imposing no obligation, it offered great indulgences, even at the moment of death.”

The army arrived on the 30th of August, 1622, before the walls of Montpellier, which had a strong garrison of Huguenots. The siege made no progress; and Louis XIII., fearing a similar check to that which he had experienced before the ramparts of Montauban, consented to treat with the Duke de Rohan for a general peace. The articles were agreed upon about the middle of October.

The king confirmed the Edict of Nantes, ordered the re-establishment of the two religions in the localities where they had been before exercised, authorized the meetings of the consistories, conferences, and synods for affairs purely ecclesiastical, but forbade the holding of any political assembly without his express permission. The fortifications of Montpellier were to be demolished, and the town governed by four consuls, to be named by the king. The Calvinists retained two places of safety, Montauban and La Rochelle.

This last town had been attacked several times during the war, and had vigorously defended itself. It prolonged the struggle some time after the new edict of peace, but ended by accepting it with the stipulation that its liberties should be maintained. Thus, after torrents of blood had been shed and several provinces of the kingdom had been desolated, everything remained nearly the same as

when the war first began.

V.

The treaty of 1622 was, like many of its predecessors, nothing else than a dead letter; and to explain fully the new recourse to arms, which terminated by the Edict of Grace in 1629, we must state at some length the false position into which the maxims of intolerance, put in force from the death of Henry IV., had placed both sides.

The Calvinists, continually disturbed in the exercise of their religion, forced to carry arms to the very doors of their churches, and threatened with the loss of all the rights they had obtained by the Edict of Nantes, had become embittered against royalty. They suspected it of concealed thoughts and perfidious projects. They accused it of encouraging, at least by its inertness, the Jesuits, the monks, the bishops, the violent magistrates, and the populace, who not only heaped upon them numberless vexations, but loudly announced the approaching extirpation of heresy.

It necessarily resulted from this, that from being a simple religious communion, the French Reformation became every day more and more a political party, and thus from the very nature of things, as the struggle was prolonged, the ideas and passions of the Reformers were led into increased hostility against the crown. The spirit of independence had grown among the Huguenots with the persecutions, with which they were stricken, and with the menaces of destruction that were held over their heads, and many fostered the thought of a republican establishment.

They therefore constituted a considerable party in

the first years of the reign of Louis XIII., relying for support, within the kingdom, upon the malcontents of all kinds;—without, upon Protestant Europe. They communicated by La Rochelle with England, by Sédan with Germany, by Geneva with the Swiss cantons, and seemed ever ready to divide the strength of the state.

Such an organization was intolerable to the crown, and was so much the more the object of its dislike, as the principle of national unity gradually succeeded in freeing itself from the ruins of the old feudality. The lower the great families were reduced before the royal authority, the more would the political establishment of the Huguenots be regarded as a singular and dangerous anomaly; and the council was right in desiring enfranchisement from it at any price.

But through the unhappy confusion, which universally existed, at this epoch, in temporal and spiritual matters, royalty, while announcing that it fought only against the political privileges of the Calvinists, put many, very many more in peril, and compromised all their religious rights. People knew that there were impassioned spirits behind the statesmen, and even amongst themselves, who, after having reduced the Calvinists to become a simple sect, would constrain them to re-enter the (Roman) Catholic church, or to quit the kingdom.

It is true that the genius of the Cardinal de Richelieu, his diplomatic alliances, and the European interests of France, during half the reign of Louis XIV., retarded the complete realization of these fears. Nevertheless the plan for the extirpation of heresy was prosecuted in detail, without cessation and without pity, over the whole face of France, from the

moment the Calvinist party was reduced. The capture of La Rochelle was the first act of this cruel and merciless drama, of which the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes was the *dénouement*.

Such then was the situation of affairs in 1622.—the Calvinists drew the sword in behalf of their political immunities in the name of their religious rights, which were unceasingly compromised and menaced; and the crown attacked these immunities in the name of the royal sovereignty and of the unity of the country, in order afterwards to arrive at the destruction of religion itself.

As for the respective forces of the two parties, they had become strengthened on one side and weakened on the other, since the wars of the sixteenth century. In spite of the enterprises of some powerful noblemen, the authority of the prince was more generally recognised, respected, and obeyed. The lesser nobility, the *Tiers-état* or commons, the magistrates and the army, had, under the reign of Henry IV., abandoned feudal traditions to obey royalty alone, and this new spirit had naturally modified the sentiments of many Reformers, who went, unwittingly perhaps, with the great national stream. On the other side, the Calvinist leaders and towns, who clung to their privileges, had no longer the same faith, or the same enthusiasm. There were disunions, mistrust, depression below, and defections above, in the French Reformation. It could still make itself feared in the interior or exterior complications of the kingdom; but it could not form a coalition between province and province, or dictate conditions of peace.

The dukes de Rohan and de Soubise, attacked in their personal liberty after the treaty of 1622, took

up arms in Languedoc and Saintonge. The war was one of partisans only; nothing more than sieges of villages or strong castles, and devastations took place. The royal troops committed great ravages round Montauban and Castres. “At night,” say the memoirs of the time, “one might behold a thousand fires along the plain. Crops, orchards, vines, and houses were the aliments of the flames.... The destruction was so well executed that there was not left a tree or a house standing, a blade of corn, or the shoot of a vine.”

The majority of the Huguenots remained at their hearths, and the Duke de Rohan complained of this with sorrow. “It was more difficult,” he says, “to combat the cowardice, the irreligion, and infidelity of the Reformers, than the hatred of their enemies.”

In the beginning of the new troubles, a national synod had been convoked at Charenton. It was opened on the 1st of September, 1623. The place was convenient for the court, as the proximity of Paris guaranteed to it the docility of the assembly. An order was given to the synod to admit a royal officer to its meetings. Although this commissioner, named Galland, was of the Reformed religion, his mandate caused him to be suspected. The deputies of the churches, relying upon the letter of the treaties, and refusing to the crown the right of establishing so important a novelty by a simple ordinance, made many objections; but they were forced to obey, and to content themselves with inscribing on the minutes of their proceedings the following declaration: “This synod, desirous of marking clearly and unmistakably its dutifulness and fidelity to the king, admitted the said Seigneur Galland among the deputies ... under the assurance that his majesty would in his royal

goodness re-establish us in our ancient privileges and liberties."

A second article, less explicable than the foregoing, was that the king expressed his displeasure on the subject of the oath that the national synod of Alais had caused to be taken, three years before, to the doctrine of Dordrecht. The deputies were again obliged to temporize; they answered, that this doctrine was only conformable to that of their confession of faith, and that the synod of Alais had no other design than to establish the perfect union of the Reformers of France with those of the Netherlands.

A third injunction concerned the foreign pastors, who had been admitted to exercise their office in the kingdom. The king wrote, that he would permit this no longer, and required the immediate return of Primrose and Cameron, both natives of Scotland, and ministers at Bordeaux; "not so much because they are foreigners," said Louis XIII., "but particularly for reasons regarding our service."

The principal of these reasons was that they had displeased the Jesuits, especially Primrose. Wherefore he did not obtain, as Cameron did, permission to reside in the kingdom, on renouncing his pastoral charge.

One day Father Arnoux, the king's confessor, preaching before the court, solemnly affirmed that the casuists of his society did not authorize regicide, and Louis XIII. thereupon expressed great pleasure. Primrose, who was there, asked the Jesuit if Jacques Clément had killed *his king*, or even *a king*, by striking a prince *excommunicated by the pope*; moreover, if, in case the Holy See should excommunicate the reigning sovereign, whether the

Jesuits would still recognise Louis XIII. as *their king*; finally, if they were disposed to condemn their disciples Jean Châtel and Ravaillac as guilty of the crime of lese-majesty. These questions were embarrassing; Arnoux's answer was a sentence of banishment.

At the national synod of Castres, convoked in 1626, the king's officer Galland again took his seat, notwithstanding the protestations of the meeting. He was the bearer of an order to nominate six persons, from whom the king would choose the two general deputies. This election had up to this period been made by the political assemblies, and the synod alleged the text of the last edict, which prescribed to it to occupy itself solely with affairs of doctrine and discipline. But the court, without having expressly stated it in the last treaties, did not intend to permit the holding of any more political assemblies, and compelled the synod to exceed its powers, while it restricted it with inflexible rigour upon other questions. Thus the council supported or overturned the letter of the laws according to the object of the moment—the universal and perpetual practice of the strong.

The synod of Castres made deep complaints concerning the unhappy condition of the churches. It said to Louis XIII. "that his subjects of the Reformed religion were molested in many parts of the kingdom, obstructed in the exercise of their religion, and deprived of their places of worship; that even their cemeteries had been taken away from them, and the corpses disinterred with the extremest indignity; that their ministers had been cruelly treated, beaten, wounded, and driven out of their churches, although they were quite innocent,

wronging neither the public in general, nor any person in particular."

While the court gave the Reformers satisfaction upon a few secondary points, it prepared a formidable expedition against their last stronghold. The Cardinal de Richelieu, who became a member of the council in the year 1624, planned the establishment of the absolute authority of the king upon the ruins of La Rochelle. The design was no longer concealed. Louis XIII. announced it to the pope, who had exhibited great vexation at the news of the new treaty with the Huguenots. The priests published the near triumph of the (Roman) Catholic faith, and the archbishop of Lyons wrote to Richelieu, "We must lay siege to La Rochelle, and chastise, or to speak plainly, exterminate the Huguenots, whatever else be left undone."

The commune of La Rochelle enjoyed privileges far anterior to the period of the Reformation. Eléonore d'Aquitaine had in the twelfth century conferred important liberties upon it. The burgesses governed themselves. They named a town council, consisting of the mayor, twenty-four aldermen, and seventy-five peers. These hundred magistrates, or *prud'hommes*, had troops, a navy, a treasury of their own, and very extensive rights of jurisdiction. La Rochelle was rather annexed than united to France, and its position resembled that of the free towns of Germany.

To justify its pretensions, it declared that it had given itself freely to Charles V., with the express reservation of all its franchises and immunities, and the people of La Rochelle remembered with pride, that they had exacted from Louis XI. the solemn sanction of their rights. "Louis XI.," says the historian

of that city, “made his entry into La Rochelle the 24th of May (1472). He swore to preserve the privileges of the town; he took the oath on bended knees, with one hand upon the cross and the other upon the Holy Gospel, which the mayor held before him.”[78]

A governor resided at La Rochelle in the name of the king, but the burghers did not allow him to introduce a strong garrison, nor to build a citadel. Its real chief was the mayor, who was chosen every year. The inhabitants were rich, industrious, intelligent, and excellent seamen; they numbered from twenty-five to thirty thousand souls.

The Reformation was certain of finding an easy entrance into their town; for wherever there were intelligence and freedom, the gates were opened to them beforehand. From the year 1557, it was known at La Rochelle. “This first beginning was so favoured of God,” says Theodore de Bèze, “that in a short time a great part of the town abandoned the superstitions of the Romish church, the Lord preparing thenceforth this place whereby to sustain on a future day the direst efforts of His adversaries.”[79]

La Rochelle was several times besieged during the religious wars, without having been ever taken. Condé, Coligny, Jeanne d’Albret, and Henry of Béarn, found within its walls a secure refuge. The political assemblies were held there in the most troublous times. It was, in a word, the firmest rampart and the great stronghold of the French Reformation, since the north and the centre of the kingdom could afford it a rallying-point no longer.

The independence of La Rochelle was even important for the noblemen of the (Roman) Catholic

party, because it offered them a means of driving the crown to buy of them more dearly the succour they lent it, and of keeping the last remains of their feudal prerogatives safe. “We shall not be so foolish,” said one of them, “as to take La Rochelle;” and the Cardinal de Richelieu made this remark: “The greatest difficulty that I see in the design, is that most of them will labour by way of acquittal and with little affection.”

After the peace of 1622, the court had ordered the construction of a fort near La Rochelle, notwithstanding the petitions of the inhabitants, and the promise which had been given them, that their privileges should be respected. Out of this, continual collisions by sea and land had arisen, which produced no decisive result until the year 1627.

Richelieu at length sought to strike a great blow, by employing all the power of his genius and all the resources of the crown. He staked his political fortune upon the capture of La Rochelle, persuaded that if he succeeded in this expedition, he should break up the Huguenot party, reduce the first houses of the kingdom, and leave in France one dominant power alone—royalty.

VI.

The siege of La Rochelle began in 1627, and lasted more than a year before attentive Europe. The king of England promised to the inhabitants both his aid and credit. Thrice his fleet appeared in sight of the port; but the first time it could not take the citadel of the Isle of Ré; the second time it did not succeed in relieving the place, and the third, it seemed to have come only to assist at the ruin of the town. It was suspected that the duke of Buckingham had betrayed the cause of the Reformed communion, and that Charles I. shared in these disloyal manœuvres under the influence of his wife, Henrietta of France. The Puritans of England did not forget this grievance, when they drew up the account of the acts of that unfortunate prince in 1649.

The Cardinal de Richelieu constructed a dike in the sea, as Alexander did before Tyre, and shut up the besieged in an inclosure continually narrowing. He was at the same time admiral, chief engineer, and generalissimo; he superintended and directed everything, leaving to Louis XIII. only the vain pleasure of the chase, or of touching the sick at the grand *fêtes* of the Church. People cited the miracles of the king with admiration; those of the cardinal were more authentic and more useful to the monarchy.

We have a journal written by one of the besieged, Pierre Méruault, son of the chief of the artillery of the garrison. He relates the sufferings of the inhabitants with minuteness. As the mole gradually rose before the port, the dearth increased. It became horrible from the month of June, 1628. From two to three hundred persons died every day. The famished

had acquired so sad an experience of this kind of death, that they could foresee the very hour, and moment, when they would cease to live, and give directions for their own burial.

They were driven, in this extreme distress, to send bands of children, women, and old men, from the town. Louis XIII. was not so generous as his father, Henry IV., at the siege of Paris. He ordered their repulse without pity, and even caused his soldiers to fire against some of these poor creatures, who stopped to pluck roots and herbs upon the glacis, or to gather shell-fish left by the ebbing of the tide. He commanded, also, that some crops of beans, which the besieged had grown at the foot of their counterscarps, should be destroyed.

Many of the fugitives, urged by the inexorable voice of hunger, continuing to present themselves at the royal camp, gallows were erected for their summary execution; and when they came in too great numbers, lots were drawn for those who were to undergo this punishment. Others, despoiled of their clothes, were beaten and hunted out by the soldiers with rods and leathern thongs. The desire was, by sending them back into the town, that there might be more people to press upon the scanty stores.

Where were the co-religionists of the inhabitants of La Rochelle? What were they doing in this last struggle for their political existence? The Duke de Rohan went to Uzès, to Milhau, to Nismes, to Cevennes, from one end of Languedoc to the other, exhorting the Huguenots to rise for the common cause. His efforts were useless; he found none but timid spirits and cold hearts, or consciences gained by the favour of the court. He repeated the motto, of

which his mother, the dowager-duchess of Rohan, had reminded him from the bottom of her asylum at La Rochelle: "*Complete victory, certain peace, or honourable death*;" instead of arming and following him, he was met by every one of them with recrimination.

He thus complained of this inertness in the preface to his *Memoirs*; his language, though bitter, is that of the chief of a falling party; but it serves to paint the aspect of the epoch: "In the two former wars, divisions appeared in some quarters; in the latter, it burst out on every side, there being no place into which corruption had not entered, and where avarice had not appeared above piety, to such an extent, that, without tarrying for our enemy's seeking, men hastened to prostitute themselves by selling their religion, and betraying their party. Our fathers would have destroyed their children in the cradle, had they foreseen that they would become the instruments of the ruin of the churches, which they founded by the glare of the martyr-pyre, and cemented with their blood."

Deducting from these accusations what has been exaggerated by the irritation of defeat, it remains true that the great mass of the Reformers did not take part in this last war; some, as we have already explained, on account of the national impulse which induced entire submission to the royal authority; others, because they were weary of struggles which cost so many lives, and produced no good; some, because they did not perceive the bond that united their religious liberty to their political security; others, again, through indifference, through venality, or through that kind of prudence which is keener to see the greatness of the peril, than the means of

eluding it.

The thing is notable; for many historians say that the whole Reformed population rose against the crown in 1628, and was defeated. These historians are in error: the majority of the Calvinists refused to arm. If it be a title of honour to have thus acted, let them have it; if it be a disgrace, let them bear its weight.

The people of La Rochelle, however, continued to perform prodigies of valour and heroism under the leadership of their mayor, Jean Guiton, a brave and inflexible old seaman, who had said: “If there should be no more than one townsman left, it will still be his duty to keep the gates closed.”

At length, when every hope of succour from without or within had departed, when two-thirds of the population had fallen, when the streets and the houses were choked with corpses, which none had sufficient strength left to inter; when scarcely a man was to be found, who was able to bear the weight of arms, or to walk without a staff, the town surrendered. This happened on the 28th October, 1628. On that day the Reformers of France fell powerless before their enemies, and were never able to raise themselves again until one hundred and sixty years afterwards, when the principles of 1789 released them.

Misfortune had not cast down the courage of the men of La Rochelle, and it is a matter of astonishment that Richelieu, who had the capacity to understand great things, should have done them so little justice. “The audacity that ever accompanies rebellion,” says he in his Memoirs, “was so deeply impressed upon the minds of these wretches, that although they were but the shadows of living men,

and had no hope of life, except from the king's clemency, of which they were unworthy, they nevertheless dared even then to propose to the cardinal that they would make a general treaty for the whole party of the Calvinists." This proved that they were less careful, in their adversity, concerning their own fate than with reference to that of their co-religionists.

A declaration of the king, published on the 10th November, ordained the re-establishment at La Rochelle of the exercise of the (Roman) Catholic religion, and the restitution to the clergy of their churches and their property. A place of worship was to be designated for the Reformers. The privileges of the town were abolished, its franchises annulled, and its fortifications demolished, except those facing the sea. The Cardinal de Richelieu and the bishop Henri de Sourdis, who had plied the trade of the soldier during the siege, celebrated the first mass at La Rochelle, after having purified the churches. Perhaps the hands which had just quitted the sword, ought to have been first purified themselves before touching the host of the *Prince of peace*. But the history of mankind is replete with such violent contradictions.

There were great rejoicings at Rome upon the reduction of La Rochelle. Pope Urban VIII. sang a solemn *Te Deum*, made an extraordinary distribution of indulgences, and addressed to the king briefs of the most flattering kind. "Great prince," he thus apostrophized Louis XIII., "God sits upon your right hand. May He ever aid and sustain the power and strength of your spear!"

The Duke de Rohan kept the field in the south, until the middle of the following year. He displayed courage, constancy, and self-denial, worthy of a

better fate. An assembly of provincial deputies, convoked at Nismes, energetically protested against the overthrow of the political guarantee of the Reformation. It was too late. The Calvinist party had ceased to exist. Each town and village refused obedience to the assembly, and claimed to transact its affairs by itself: then division, defections, and treason, completed the ruin of the general cause.

The royal army presented itself before the little town of Privas, in the month of May, 1629. The inhabitants, seized with terror, amounting to a panic, fled to the fields; and the garrison, which retired to the fort, were soon forced to capitulate. At the moment of the troops entering, the explosion of a powder-magazine caused the suspicion of an ambush. The eight hundred Huguenot soldiers forming the garrison were murdered, fifty burghers hanged, the others sent to the galleys, the town sacked and burnt, and the property of the inhabitants confiscated to the crown. The missionaries, who followed in the rear of the army to convert the heretics, ascribed this catastrophe to the *anger of God*.

The merciless butchery at Privas spread consternation and dismay. The king marched upon Cevennes without meeting with any resistance; and the Duke de Rohan, seeing that the affairs of his party were desperate, sued for peace, in concert with the general assembly transferred to Anduze. Richelieu imposed as the first condition, that all the fortifications of the Huguenot towns should be razed to the ground. Anduze, and the province of Cevennes, submitted after some difficulty; and the king, being then at Nismes, published the *Edict of Grace*, in the month of July, 1629.

The name alone of this edict marked a new order of things. It was no longer a pacification—it was a *grace*, a grace granted by the good-will of the sovereign to his vanquished subjects. The preamble spoke of nothing but their *rebellion*, and of the goodness of the king: "to which we are the more easily disposed," Louis XIII. was made to say, "because we have been desirous, by a rare instance of clemency, after so many relapses, the more advantageously to win the hearts of our subjects, spare the effusion of blood, the devastation of the province, and all the disorders and calamities of war; and we are moved to this solely by compassion for their misery and love for their well-being."

The Reformers were reinstated in the possession of their places of worship, their cemeteries, and the exercise of their religion in the places they had before used, pending their return to the bosom of the (Roman) Catholic church, "in which," adds Louis XIII., "for more than eleven hundred successive years, the kings, our predecessors, have lived without interruption or change; there being no possible way of so well testifying to the affection we bear them, than by desiring to find them in the same road of salvation that we keep and follow ourselves."

There was a threat expressed in this hope, and the priests did not fail to avail themselves of it at the opportune time. There was also, as we shall see, a pretence of the Cardinal de Richelieu, who, aspiring to every kind of glory, flattered himself that he would be able to unite the two religions.

The conditions of the Edict of Grace were less severe than had been feared, except as regarded the political guarantees, and some authors have loudly extolled the clemency of the cardinal. If it be sought

to establish the opinion that he was more tolerant than other churchmen, because he had more genius, and that he was a better statesman, we shall accord with such an opinion without difficulty. But it must not be forgotten that Richelieu, being leagued with the Swedish and German Protestants for the humiliation of the house of Austria by the sword of Gustavus Adolphus, could not treat the French Reformers with excessive rigour. Nor must it be forgotten that, in France itself, having to combat against the great (Roman) Catholic noblemen, against the king's brother, the queen-mother, and the reigning queen, the prime minister of Louis XIII. would have been mad to have pushed a whole people to despair, who, in a case of extremity, might have compromised his fortunes and those of the kingdom itself. Richelieu was generous perhaps, but he was, above all, prudent.

The town of Montauban was the last to submit. It remembered with pride the heroic resistance it had opposed to the royal troops, and its inhabitants, accustomed to self-government from the commencement of the religious wars, felt a great repugnance to "*return to their duty*," as the phrase then was. Two deputies came from Nismes with an envoy of Richelieu, to exhort them to submission. The people wished to preserve their ramparts: they obtained nothing, and the most determined at length perceived that to continue the struggle had become impossible.

Montauban opened its gates; and on the 21st August, 1629, its inhabitants witnessed the entry of Marshal de Bassompierre, with a part of the army, the pope's nuncio, the first president of the Parliament of Toulouse, and lastly, Cardinal de

Richelieu, who presented himself as one who had gained a triumph. When the ministers of the religion came to pay their respects to him, he consented to receive them, "*not as forming a church body*," he told them, "*but as a people following the profession of letters*." This was indeed carrying fiction a little too far.

He celebrated mass in one of the churches of Montauban, instituted convents for the Jesuits and Capuchins, and ordered the demolition of the walls. Then he resumed his journey to Paris, surrounded with more homage than Louis XIII. himself ever received from his people.

The Duke de Rohan was the object of the attack of his co-religionists, who, becoming unjust by reason of their misfortune, accused him of being the author of all their calamities. He wrote his apology with the satisfaction of a good conscience, and concluded it in these terms: "These are my crimes, for which I have been condemned at Toulouse to be dragged to pieces by four horses, whereof I take glory to myself.... I wish those who come after me may have the same affection, fidelity, and patience that I have had; that they may meet with people more constant, less covetous, and more zealous than I have done; and that God may bless them with greater prosperity, to the end that by restoring the churches of France, they may execute that which I dared to undertake."

His hopes were realized otherwise than he had any notion of. Henri de Rohan was the last warrior-chief of the French Reformation; but that which the sword has not effected, civilization and liberty have accomplished in the day of God's destiny.

Rohan offered his sword to the republic of Venice, and afterwards to Gustavus Adolphus, and died in

1638, on the plains of Germany, for the same cause, which he had so long and so valiantly defended in his own country.

VII.

The Calvinist party had definitively ceased to exist after the taking of La Rochelle, and the history of the Reformers is no longer mixed up with the great affairs of the kingdom, until the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes.

It was in vain that persons of the highest birth, who belonged to the (Roman) Catholic communion, provoked them to resort to arms; Huguenots were no longer to be found in the ranks of the adversaries of royalty.

In 1632, the Duke Henri de Montmorency, supported by Gaston d'Orléans, brother of Louis XIII., essayed to re-awaken the religious passions in Languedoc, where he was governor. He addressed himself to the noblemen of the religion, to the pastors, the consistories, and the synods, and met with nothing but refusals. He had five or six bishops in his party, but not a single Reformer. The second consul of Nismes preserved the town for the king, by expelling the bishop and the first consul, who was a (Roman) Catholic. The inhabitants of Montauban offered to march against the troops of Montmorency, and, memorable fact! the miserable remnants of the population of Privas defended their town for the service of the king, and Cardinal de Richelieu could but say of the Reformers, "They have done more than all the rest."

About twenty years afterwards, during the troubles of the Fronde, the great Condé, counting upon the old associations of his house, sought to attract them to his standard, and employed emissaries, who sowed sinister rumours. They went from church to

church, saying that the regent Anne d'Autriche, had promised the clergy that the Edict of Pacification should be revoked, that her first minister, Mazarin, was an Italian cardinal without good faith, that it was force alone which would preserve the Reformers from utter ruin, and that the Prince de Condé would guarantee full liberty of conscience and of worship. But these appeals were also fruitless.

The people of La Rochelle took the side of the regent against their own governor. Those of Montauban exhausted their men and wealth for the same purpose. The town of Saint Jean d'Angély, which had nothing but dismantled walls, defended itself against the rebels. The province of the Vivarais and the Cevennes furnished devoted soldiers, and nearly all the Reformed nobility of the southern provinces, rising against the Prince de Condé, kept Languedoc, Saintonge, and a part of Guienne for the king.

These services were of great importance; Mazarin said, "I have no cause to complain of the little flock; if they browse on bad herbage, at least they do not stray away." When he mentioned the pastors of Montauban, he styled them his good friends, and the Count d'Harcourt said to the deputies of the same town, "The crown tottered on the king's head, but you have fixed it there."

Louis XIV. expressed his gratitude more than once, but particularly in his declaration of the 21st of May, 1682, in which he said, "Forasmuch as our subjects of the pretended Reformed religion have given us proofs of their affection and fidelity, notably in the present circumstances, of which we rest well satisfied, we make known that for these causes they be maintained and guarded, as now we maintain and

guard them, in the full and entire enjoyment of the Edict of Nantes."

But it was this very same king, who made those who had fixed the crown upon his head, to suffer the longest and the more odious persecutions! It was he who in 1685 signed the fatal Edict of Revocation! What were the causes of so many violences and misfortunes? We are about to enter on one of the most interesting problems of this history.

The most implacable enemy of the Reformed was the spiritual power. In the foremost rank the Jesuits figured, who had purposely been created for the extirpation of Protestantism in Europe, the born adversaries of the Huguenots, monks doubly redoubtable by their office of confessors to kings, and because their code of morality authorized them the use of any and every means. Lying, deceit, iniquity, the traffic of consciences, brutal force, spoliations, exile, even murder,—all things were lawful, provided they only conduced to their ends.

After the Jesuits came the secular clergy, who—except a few, such as Richelieu and Mazarin, who were rather politicians than ecclesiastics—were never weary of inventing new measures of oppression and persecution against heretics. They had the advantage over the poor and humble ministers of the French Reformation, of number, birth, position, authority, fortune, and high offices, and might do anything to crush them without fear of reprisals.

Every five years the secular clergy held assemblies, which were never dissolved, as we have already remarked, without the repeal of some portion of the laws of toleration. "The clergy," says Rulhières, "gave the king money. His servants negotiated with

this first body of the state, to obtain for the requirements of the kingdom, what was called the *gratuitous gift*; and the Protestants, on the contrary, wanted money from the king for the maintenance of their ministers and the holding of their synods. Each time they wished to meet, it was a pecuniary favour they solicited, and each time that the clergy assembled, it was a kind of favour that they conferred upon the state. Consequently each assembly of the clergy was distinguished by some advantage gained over the Reformed, while each synod, on the contrary, received from the court some mark of disfavour.... The demands of the clergy were in a degree moderate, so long as the Calvinists were to be feared; but they extended to open persecution as soon as the Calvinists had become peaceable citizens."[80]

Lastly, after the Jesuits and the (secular) clergy, swarmed legions of Capuchins, Recollets, Carmelites, Franciscans, and others; an ignorant and reckless horde, who fanned the fanaticism of the populace, and were ever ready to attack heresy.

So much for the spiritual authority! As for the men of the temporal power, the foremost adversaries of the Reformation were the kings themselves, who had received a false and imperfect education. Their preceptors had placed them as much as possible under the yoke of a narrow and intolerant devotion, that was full of little scruples upon certain points, and easy of relaxation upon others. Louis XIII. had neither greatness of mind, nor dignity of character. A weak, hypochondriac prince, putting his kingdom under the protection of the Virgin, after assassinating the favorites of his mother, he possessed no other merit than that of allowing himself to be governed

by Richelieu. Louis XIV., with a proud genius and true kingly qualities, united gallantry to bigotry, and we shall have occasion to see that in his strange compromises with his conscience, the more scandal he occasioned to his court by his licentiousness, the more he made it a point to edify it by his severity against the Reformed.

Each of these kings held the policy of weakening Calvinism as a state maxim, as if men and circumstances were the same as they had been under Charles IX. These princes had been taught that the Reformation was the enemy of thrones, and they thought they could never do enough against this vain phantom of their imagination.

The result was, that the chief employments at court and in the army, of the magistracy and the finances, were systematically refused to the Calvinists, except in extraordinary cases. Turenne and Duquesne broke through this barrier by the splendour of their services; the others were left disregarded, or condemned to grow grey in inferior situations. The Edict of Nantes had, no doubt, made the Reformed admissible to office, but it did not guarantee to them the favours of the court; “and royalty,” to use the expression of Louis XIV. himself, “restricted them to the narrowest limits that justice and a regard for appearances would permit.” Even these conditions, however, were not long respected.

Louis XIV. has, moreover, said, in the memoirs which he dictated for the instruction of the dauphin: “As for the favours that depended upon me alone, I resolved, and I have punctually kept that resolution ever since, not to grant any to the people of that religion, and this out of kindness, and not from hatred, that they might be obliged thereby to

consider from time to time by themselves, and *apart from violence*, whether they were acting wisely in voluntarily depriving themselves of the advantages they might enjoy in common with my other subjects." Nothing can be more *naïf* and instructive than these avowals.

The ministers of state naturally followed the bent of the prince. No favour [was to be allowed] to heretics; ill-will [was to be accorded,] when it was possible [to manifest it] without too open an attack upon acquired rights; and a constant inequality of treatment, that urged the lukewarm and the ambitious to change their religion.

The intendants of the provinces—the new creation of a government, that aspired to a stronger national unity—anxious to make themselves agreeable to the court and the council, did not omit to pronounce for the Jesuits against the pastors, and for the bishops against the provincial synods or the consistories, whenever there was a pretext, however frivolous, that could be made available.

Nearly all the Parliaments pursued the same course, not through religious fanaticism, but through that spirit which in all ages, among the Pagans as in Christendom, has constituted the magistracy the guardians of ancient laws and traditional customs. The advocate-general, Omer Talon, said, in the great days of Poitiers, in 1634, that the pretended Reformed, being only suffered by toleration, the matters regarding them ought not to be counted as *favourable*, and that the most rigorous interpretation ought, on the contrary, to be applied against them.

Thus in the questions brought before the tribunals, they could only count upon the strict right, or rather upon what it was not possible to deny to them

without flagrant injustice. Out of every severe decree, a hostile law immediately arose against them, and by one restriction and another, they successively lost what the Edict of Nantes had conceded to them.

The universities and colleges, where clerical influence was dominant, invented difficulty upon difficulty, against conferring academic degrees upon the *religionists*, and at length these degrees were only granted upon certificates of attendance at mass.

As for the relations between private individuals of the two religions, there is a distinction to be drawn. The men of letters, and the people of the middle class, the *respectable folks*—to use the language of the period—generally lived on good terms with each other. We know that the French Academy was founded by members of both communions. Such was also the origin of many learned societies, at Nismes and elsewhere. “Long before the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes,” says Segrais, “the (Roman) Catholics and Huguenots lived here [at Caen] on good terms; they ate, drank, played, and took their amusements together, and left each other freely, some for the mass, others for the sermon, without any scandal on one side or the other.”

But in the body of the people, more subjected to the teaching of the priesthood, prejudices and hatreds were rife. Whence resulted vexatious interferences with the rights of freedom, local privileges, as the corporations of trades, and in the small appointments in the gift of the municipal councils. Whence also arose acts of violence on the least pretence, against the places of worship, against the property, against the persons; and when it was dared, attacks became more regular and more

general, and were habitually headed by some ignorant parish vicar, or some abject monk.

By what has been said, we may judge of the condition of the Reformed after the Edict of Grace. They had, at intervals, days of repose, which permitted them to apply themselves to theological learning, to develop their ordinary instruction, and to cultivate the industrial arts. But this rest was uncertain, this calm unquiet, so to speak, and persecution soon went on increasing, until the favourable moment appeared for the annihilation of the French Reformation. We shall only relate what is most important.[81]

VIII.

Cardinal de Richelieu, who had written a method of controversies, in the leisure moments of his youth, was bent upon the execution of his plan of reunion. He thereupon sounded the pastors and the provincial synods, by means of his confidant Father Joseph, a mysterious personage, an emissary at once intriguing, active, and unscrupulous; he was seconded in his work by a certain Théophile de la Milletière, an equivocal Calvinist, and a writer of but little learning, who was ambitious to gain a name by promoting designs of which he did not comprehend the object.

Among the persons who were captivated by this project, were the prudent and skilful, who were desirous of abandoning a religion—if they could do so without dishonour—so little agreeable to [those in] power, as well as simple people, who foolishly believed that (Roman) Catholicism was willing to make serious concessions, no less than some other good folks, who treated the whole matter as a question of charity. In the number of these last, a man of merit, Petit, pastor and professor of theology at Nismes, was for some time found.

However, it soon appeared, that under the pompous word reunion, nothing else was dreamed of than an act of repentance on the part of the Calvinists, and of gracious amnesty on that of the (Roman) Catholics—a no more considerable change than that of a few terms, which shocked the ear of the disciples of Calvin. Certain pastors were to be gained beforehand, who, for form's sake, should hold a disputation with (Roman) Catholic doctors in the king's presence, and should oppose no strong

objection. Then they were to demand admittance as penitents, and the Church of Rome, like a good mother, would receive them with open arms. Lastly, a meeting, filled with people of this easy mould, was to be got together in a national synod; and when once the project of reunion was officially announced, material force was to be employed to compel the submission of the recalcitrants, or to expel them from the kingdom.

The plan was skilfully conceived: the only flaw, however, was the omission to take honourable and faithful consciences into the account. It failed. The pastors displayed *obstinacy*, and, what is remarkable, the laity were even more obstinate than their ministers. Not one provincial synod entered into the plot. Petit acknowledged his error; La Milletière was excommunicated, and immediately became a (Roman) Catholic; Richelieu had other matters to attend to, and the idea of the reunion was abandoned, to be again attempted on two or three occasions before the Revocation.

The clergy went a different way to exterminate heresy, namely, by means of missionaries, ambulating controversialists, otherwise called *converters*, or *propagators of the faith*, whom we find at work from the year 1630. Some of them were monks, Capuchins and Recollets, of whom Fénélon somewhere says, that they had drawn universal contempt upon themselves by their ignorance and their fanatical rage. The others were laymen of the lowest condition—cordwainers, brokers, tailors, itinerant grinders, little shopmen—who, without any study, abandoned their trade for the championship of the (Roman) Catholic faith.

These vagabonds received a fixed sum *per* head,

for every proselyte, and the rate varied according to the importance of the convert. They were careful to take certificates duly legalized, of their conquests, so that they might insure the receipt of their money. Fraud soon entered into the transaction, as might have been expected. There were wretches who joined the Reformed communion for the express purpose of deserting it, or feigned to belong to it that they might abjure, and afterwards share [the proceeds of their iniquity] with their accomplices.

The converters had learned a catalogue of ridiculous subtilties and gross quibbles by heart, which they retailed on all occasions. The refutation of what was least ignoble in these polemics, was made with a master's hand by the pastor Drelincourt, in his *Abrégé des Controverses*, whence he was called the scourge of the propagators of the faith.

One of their favourite arguments consisted in putting this question: "Do you believe that the king is idolatrous and damned?" If the answer was "yes," the result became a serious affair, pregnant with grave consequences, particularly for those who held any public appointment. If the reply was in the negative, they then asked how it was that any one could refuse to enter a church that opened the door of salvation. Or, again, if they encountered a strong resistance, they pushed their interlocutor to utter irreverent words against the Virgin and the saints; and as the laws punished what was then styled blasphemy, they denounced the offenders.

As they had the priests and the Jesuits for their protectors, the majority of these "converters" were no less insolent than illiterate. They ran from town to town, knocking at the doors of consistories and synods. They even made their way, by force, into

private houses, sometimes by the assistance of the judges of the district, and commenced a controversy, according to rule. So long as they were civilly invited to withdraw, they held firm. But if in a moment of anger they were thrust out, they sought to excite their unwilling host to some act of violence before witnesses, in the open street, and immediately carried their complaint before a tribunal.

Many carried their impudence to such an extent as to interrupt the pastors in full assembly, and to give them the lie. These unworthy excesses exposed them to no more than murmurs and words of reprehension. People dared not chastise them as they deserved. If an assembly, less enduring than others, thrust them into the street and a tumult resulted, the consequence was the interdiction of religious worship, or even the imprisonment of the pastor.

Stalls were erected at the crossways; and there these new mountebanks, with piles of great books at their sides, of which they had not read a word, blattered away upon points of controversy, parodied the ministers, and diverted or excited the populace by their vociferations.

The most remarkable of these “converters” was one Véron, or Father Véron. He had worn the habit of a Jesuit, and had been presented with the curacy of Charenton, that he might more conveniently importune the Reformed. This Véron frequently attended the sermons of the pastors, and at the end of the service refuted them on a kind of stage he had caused to be erected at the door of his church. He wearied the most learned doctors of the Reformation with his challenges. The celebrated Bochart had on one occasion the complaisance to open a regular disputation with him. But Véron fled before the

questions, which he had himself placed upon the table, were examined, and the pastors ended by opposing him with the silence of contempt.

All these endeavours after conversions had but little success. Not only studious men, but artisans, women, nay even children of the Reformed communion, made themselves masters of controversial subjects, and easily confounded the self-styled propagators of the faith. So also, after the pacific mission came the armed mission—the *booted* mission, of which we shall speak in its place.

From 1631 to 1645 three national synods were held. The court strove to render them less and less frequent, until it might succeed wholly in suppressing them. The first of these assemblies was opened at Charenton, on the 1st of September, 1631. The commissioner Galland took his seat without opposition. Pastors and laity, all were of a sorrowful heart, and [maintained an] humble attitude: they felt they were at the mercy of their opponents.

The king disgraced the general deputies, whose nomination would be agreeable to himself, and the synod obeyed. Later, one single deputy only was required, the formality of whose re-election was even dispensed with. This high office was concentrated in the family of the Marquis de Ruvigny, and the churches vainly sought to join a general deputy from the *Tiers-état* with him. The liberal spirit of the Reformation did not suit Louis XIV.

The synod of Charenton declared itself against any projects of reconciliation with the (Roman) Catholics; but it offered the hand of fellowship to the Lutherans, who until then had not been admitted to the Supper of the Calvinists. “Because the churches

of the Confession of Augsburg," it said, "agree with the other Reformed churches in the fundamental points of true religion, and because there is neither superstition nor idolatry in their worship, the faithful of the said confession, who through a spirit of friendship and peace, shall join the communion of our churches in this kingdom, may, without making any abjuration, be received at the table of the Lord."

The king would vouchsafe no answer to the list of grievances drawn up at Charenton, until after the separation of the synod: "In order," he said, "that he might treat with his subjects more suitably to his sovereign dignity and the sacred authority of his word." We may recognise in this (answer) both the genius and accent of Richelieu.

Another national synod was opened in the month of May, 1637, in the town of Alençon. M. de Saint Marc, a councillor of state and a royal commissioner, addressed it in a high tone: "I am come to your synod to make known to you the will of his majesty. All authority is of God, and consequently, on this immoveable basis, you are bound to obey. Besides that the goodness of his majesty obliges you to obedience, as well as the care he takes of you, his clemency and his power are the firmest supports you can have. I have not the slightest doubt that you have often reflected upon the admirable providence of God, which has so ordered that the royal authority is your preservation." The moderator, Basnage, replied to M. de Saint Marc, that the churches had never had the least thought of departing from that submission, to which the Word of God bound them.

The king (now) forbade the pastors and elders to correspond between synod to synod, or with foreign ecclesiastical bodies; and as many letters had arrived

from Geneva and Holland, they were given up sealed to the commissioner, who, after having ascertained their contents, permitted that they should be read to the meeting. These letters treated upon some points of doctrine raised by Amyrant, a professor of the academy of Saumur. We shall return to them by-and-by.

The synod engaged itself upon the question of negro slavery, a matter little agitated in the seventeenth century, and which did not at all excite the attention of the assemblies of the (Roman) Catholic clergy. If it was of opinion that the Word of God does not prohibit the buying and keeping of slaves, it at least laid down conditions very far in advance of that epoch: “This assembly, confirming the canon framed by the provincial synod of Normandy, exhorted the faithful not to abuse this liberty in a manner contrary to the rules of Christian charity, and not to replace these unbelievers in the power of the barbarians, who might treat them inhumanly, or in that of those who were cruel; but to give them to kind-hearted Christians, who might chiefly be in a condition to take care of their precious and immortal souls, by endeavouring to instruct them in the religion of Christ.”

A third national synod was held at Charenton, at the end of the year 1644, shortly after the death of Cardinal de Richelieu and of Louis XIII. The king’s commissioner took the singular part of being the first to complain of the encroachments and usurpations of the Reformed churches, in order, apparently, to prevent the Reformed from making reclamations against the injustice and indignities which they suffered. He then made known the wishes of the king, among which was the order to exclude any

from the ministry of the Gospel who had studied at Geneva, in Holland, or in England, because of the republican spirit which prevailed in those countries. This was the period of the struggles of Cromwell and the Puritans against Charles I.

There was, on the reports of some deputies from the maritime provinces, a question about the *Independents*, who had come from England and settled in France. They were accused of teaching that each flock ought to be self-governed, without any regard to the authority of conferences and synods. The assembly, considering this opinion to be prejudicial to the interests of the Church of God, and to those of the state, enjoined upon the maritime provinces, that they should prevent this evil from taking root in the kingdom.

IX.

From 1652 to 1656, the situation of the Reformed was satisfactory. Mazarin was pleased with the fidelity they had shown during the troubles of the Fronde. He was also desirous, by treating them well, to conciliate the friendship of Cromwell, who by inclining to the side of France or of Spain, then at war with each other, might throw a decisive weight into the scale.

The free exercise of religion was therefore re-established in many places where it had been suppressed, contrary to the texts of the edicts. The Reformed were restored to municipal offices; some were intrusted with important appointments in the finances and the army. The declaration of 1652, which we have already had occasion to mention, confirmed the Edict of Nantes, and regulations, articles, and patents passed in favour of the Reformed. Never since the reign of Henry IV. had they breathed so freely, or enjoyed greater protection.

This time was to be of short duration. The assembly of the clergy, which met in 1656, pronounced, through their organ, the archbishop of Sens, bitter complaints against what they called the *oppression* of the (Roman) Catholic church. As the priests could not be persecutors, they declared that they were persecuted. They did not, of course, demand the revocation of the edicts; but they required the re-establishment of "*legitimate interpretations, which had been put upon them by the late king*." They grieved to see that heretics "had by new enterprises ruined all the wise precautions with which the great prince (Louis XIII.) had stopped the

restlessness of their minds," and supposed that the declaration of 1652 had been a surprise made upon the piety of Louis XIV. and his prime minister.

As the Reformed had built some places of worship belonging to a commander of Malta and to other ecclesiastical noblemen, the assembly of the Church pretended that "*synagogues of Satan had been erected upon the patrimony of the Son of God.*" These same priests pleaded the examples of Saint Ambrose and Saint Athanasius, who had refused places of worship to the Arian heresy, in order to demand the demolition of the new religious edifices. They insinuated that the presentation of the list of grievances to the king, proved the re-establishment of the political assemblies which were forbidden by the edicts; that the collections made in favour of the Vaudois of Piedmont, concealed a formidable conspiracy, and might be followed by *warlike and dangerous enterprises*; that the fortifications of some of the Huguenot places had been reconstructed, and that the town of Montauban, among others, was furnished with seventeen bastions. They accused the "*apostates from the faith of their fathers*" of aspiring to the most important dignities of the state; and their harangue ended with a pathetic appeal to the protection of the king; as if the (Roman) Catholic church of France had been reduced to the last extremity!

We have analyzed the speech of the orator of the clergy with some care, for it is from this moment that we must date a fresh period of persecutions and cruelty, that lasted until the Revocation [of the Edict of Nantes].

Mazarin did not accede to all that was demanded by the priests; for the war with Spain still continued,

and it was still necessary to conciliate Cromwell. Nevertheless the council published a declaration designed to explain that of 1652, and which in effect annulled it. Things were again placed upon the same footing as in the time of Louis XIII. The exercise of the (Reformed) religion was forbidden in the places where it had been newly established; and to join, as it would appear, chicanery to violence, several decrees prohibited the ministers from taking the name of *pastors*, or of giving that of *churches* to their flocks.

A more important interdiction, already issued in 1631, was reproduced at this epoch, which went to deprive the pastors of the right of preaching in the *quarters or annexed districts*. To appreciate the extreme importance of the question, which threatened to suppress more than half the places of worship at one blow, it must be remembered that, according to the Edicts, the services of the Reformed religion could only be performed in a certain number of spots that had been fixed, commune by commune, name by name, within which it was lawful on the one hand, but criminal on the other [to celebrate divine worship].

But many of these communes comprised flocks either too small [in number] or too poor [in circumstances] to provide for the maintenance of a pastor. The faithful in such cases divided the burden by uniting, and one minister was charged with the care of all. This was the origin of the *annexed districts*.

It was not disputed that the right of preaching belonged to the communes within their respective boundaries, or at least it was not disputed directly; the letter of the Edicts had pronounced [that they

had the right]. But the pastors were attacked. Had they the right of going beyond their place of residence? Were they free to unite two or three distinct flocks together? Called to one district, designated by name, could they serve others with it? As far as justice and common sense were concerned, there could have been no question [on the matter]; but for the intolerance of the priest, for the ill-will of the judge, for the hostile tendencies of the council, there was a question, and good care was taken not to let it drop.

This wretched quarrel for nearly forty years produced vexations upon vexations, suits upon suits, appeals upon appeals, the provincial synods commanding the pastors to maintain themselves in the possession of their *annexed districts*, and the legal authorities forbidding them to do so under pain of fines and imprisonment. For the most part, the evidence of right had to give way to sophisms supported by actual force.

The Parliaments of Toulouse, Rennes, Aix, and Poitiers, made themselves remarkable by the rigour and iniquity of their decrees. In every case of a Reformed and a (Roman) Catholic, of a pastor and a priest, of a place of worship and a church, of a consistory and an episcopal chapter, the heretical party was wrong, unless it had tenfold reason on its side, and its right was absolutely incontestable. These Parliaments interpreted the Edicts in such a manner that scarcely anything of them remained, and in criminal causes, the slightest evidence was sufficient to condemn the Religionists to excessive punishments.

How could the complaints of the Reformed reach the court? They might no more hold political

assemblies. The council year after year refused the authority to hold a national synod, and the voice of a single deputy-general, who might be left to the churches, was disregarded. At length, in 1658, the provincial synods determined to send ten deputies to Paris, commissioned to submit their grievances to the king. Louis XIV. made them wait four months for an audience, and when he condescended to receive them, he said to them drily, “I will examine your statement, and will do you justice.” Cardinal Mazarin was even more formal. “The king will show by his acts,” he told the deputies, “the good-will he bears towards you; be assured that I speak to you sincerely.” Honeyed words, which were not believed!

All that the Reformers obtained, after the most persevering solicitations, was a vague promise that the king would observe the Edict of Nantes, “hoping that those of the pretended Reformed religion *would render themselves worthy of this favour*, by their good conduct, their fidelity, and their affection in his service.” The reply betrayed injurious suspicions, and the deputies did not conceal their chagrin. But the court retracted nothing; it only announced that commissioners from each religion should be sent into the provinces to watch over the execution of the Edicts. These commissioners entered upon their duties two or three years afterwards, and did the churches, as will be seen, much more harm than good.

In 1659, peace having been concluded with Spain, Mazarin conceded to the wishes of the Reformed so far as to grant them permission to convoke a general synod. It was opened at Loudun on the 10th of November, 1659, and was the last of the national synods, at least of such as had the approval of public

authority.

One's heart is filled with grief as the minutes of that assembly are read. Nothing but haughtiness, threats, accusations, and recrimination, appear on the side of the court; whilst on the side of the Reformers, it is all humility, abasement, and expression of gratitude,—gratitude for what? Doubtless for the evil that had not yet been done them!

At the opening of the synod, the royal commissioner, M. de la Magdelaine, addressed it, saying that the Reformed had great reason to admire the benignity of his majesty, who gave them the shelter of his royal authority.

He forbade them to make any complaint. "The king," he continued, "has commanded me to tell you that he has much more reason to complain of the infractions and transgressions of the Edicts committed by his subjects of the pretended Reformed religion, and of the contempt they have manifested for them, for they have reached the *supreme degree of insolence*, even since his majesty has assumed the reins of government, for they recommenced preaching in Languedoc, in spite of its being prohibited, and not only in that province, but everywhere else, which they have done openly and boastingly." It may be remarked that the same grievances based upon the same acts, had already been produced before the national synod of Charenton, fifteen years before, which proves that the court had not found a single new pretext for its reprimands.

The moderator of the assembly, Jean Daillé, thus answered these reproaches, in a submissive tone of voice: "We receive with all possible respect and

humility, everything that is told us on the part of his majesty." Then he showed that so far from having encroached upon the territory of the (Roman) Catholic church, the Reformers had in many places beheld their worship abolished and their places of worship razed.

The commissioner, acting upon the order of the court, pressed the assembly to hasten the close of its sittings, and gave them to understand that this would be the last of the national synods: "His majesty," said he, "having considered that national synods cannot be holden unless at great expense and without causing much inconvenience and trouble to those who are deputed to [attend] them; and as, moreover, many affairs and matters may be settled more easily and at less cost in the provincial synods, the holding of which his majesty permits once every year for the conservation of the discipline of the pretended Reformed religion; for these reasons, gentlemen, his majesty has judged expedient that I should propose to you on his part to confer every power for the future upon these provincial synods."

To have talked of the expense of a few thousand horses and the inconvenience of those who attended the national synods, in order to colour the violation of the Edict of Nantes, was a bitter mockery. Daillé answered, in the name of the assembly, that he hoped the king would not deprive them of his liberality. "Besides, the holding of these synods being," added he, "of absolute necessity to us, we will very willingly bear all the expenses and all the inconveniences that we have to undergo for such an object." The assembly then desired that "*with the good pleasure of his majesty*," a new synod should be held at Nismes, after an interval of three years.

Louis XIV. did not grant that permission, and from the 10th of January, 1660, when the synod of Loudun terminated its session, the presbyterian organization of the French Reformation continued headless. Forcible state reasons had arisen for suppressing political assemblies; none but the most frivolous pretexts could be alleged for prohibiting the convocation of the national synods. But with the maxims of intolerance, the ruin of the former was certain to require the destruction of the latter. Royalty had broken up the Huguenot party, and the priesthood now made it crush the religious community.

The first national synod was held in 1559; the nineteenth and last met a century afterwards. If the Reformers suffered in 1559, they had the hope of conquering the kingdom. In 1659, they still suffered, but they had no longer any hopes of this kind. Descartes had appeared, and the field of the struggle against (Roman) Catholicism, at least in France, had begun to change.

X.

Whilst the French Reformation was a prey to so many harassing troubles, it gained honour before Europe and with posterity, by the learning of its doctors. This was the great epoch of its theology. Germany, so justly proud of its immense labours in this branch of human knowledge, still cites these theologians of the seventeenth century with respect. The majority possessed, indeed, that solidity of judgment, together with a profound and vast erudition, that clearness of view, that skilful connection of proofs, in short, that precision of style, which distinguish the good French writers in every class of literature.

We shall only here name the most eminent of the doctors or pastors of the Reformed churches. The history of their ideas and their writings does not belong to our subject.

The academy of Montauban was at this time celebrated for the orthodoxy of its doctrines, and the reputation of its professors. Among them, may be mentioned Daniel Chamier, Michel Bérault, and Antoine Garissoles.

Chamier had a genius for statesmanship, as well as for the theological sciences. He had a great share in framing the Edict of Nantes. The courtiers, who did not like him, because he was proof against their seductions, ranked him among the "*fools of the synod.*"

He held at Nismes, in 1600, a famous discussion with Father Cotton, the confessor of Henry IV. Nothing could be more opposite than the two antagonists. The one, a rigid dialectician, went from

syllogism to syllogism, straight to the mark; the other abounded in rhetorical figures and brilliant digressions. The Jesuit had the advantage of dazzling his auditors, but the Reformed theologian had the gift of convincing them, and victory remained with him.

The national synods invited him to refute the writings of Bellarmine, which he did in a Latin work of four folio volumes, entitled: *Panstratie Catholique, ou Ordre universel de Bataille*. He intended to publish a fifth volume upon the question of the church, but was prevented by death. This is the most complete controversial book of the French Reformation. "Chamier," says a modern German theologian, "has profoundly penetrated into the examination of the (Roman) Catholic doctrine. He attacks it with considerable force and sagacity, seeking his proofs, by turns, from Scripture, the Fathers, tradition, history, and philosophy. The work is not prolix, in spite of its great length; it is singularly full, rich and abundant."[82]

Chamier was killed by a cannon-ball at the siege of Montauban, on Sunday, the 10th of October, 1621. He had visited the ramparts to address some exhortations to the soldiers, who had not been able to attend divine service.

His grandson, an advocate at Montélimart, was broken on the wheel alive, in 1683, for having been present at a religious assembly, which was called seditious, because it defended itself against the dragoons of Louis XIV.

Michel Bérault was a learned and skilful theologian, on the testimony of Scaliger. He was chosen to dispute against Duperron in the Conference of Nantes, and published, in answer to

the assertions of that bishop, a book upon the "*Vocation of the Ministers of the Gospel*." But his character was more ardent than became a man of his cloth. The royal commissioner demanded his exclusion from the national synod of Charenton, because he had in his writings justified the last resort to arms. Without obeying this injunction, the assembly deemed it incumbent upon them to censure Bérault before admitting him to take his seat.

Garissoles (born in 1587, died in 1650) had as much disinterestedness as piety; and when the professors of Montauban quitted their post, because the suppression of the royal pensions prevented their payment, he alone continued to discharge the duties of his office.

His book, *Imputation du Péché original* ("The Imputation of original Sin"), obtained a great success. The evangelical cantons of Switzerland, to whom Garissoles had dedicated it, rewarded him by the gift of four silver cups of splendid workmanship, with a letter signed by the principal magistrates. He also composed a Latin epic poem, *L'Adolphide*, in which he celebrated the services that Gustavus Adolphus had rendered to the Reformation.

The academy of Montauban subsisted in that town until 1661. It was then transferred elsewhere, and soon ruined, for motives so puerile that they are almost beneath the gravity of history.

The buildings of the theological college, having been erected at the expense of the Reformed population, belonged to them by the most legitimate title. Notwithstanding this, the Jesuits, after the Edict of Grace, succeeded in procuring an award to themselves of a part of it for their own lectures, and not content with half, they sought means of invading

the rest, by ousting the real owners.

One day, therefore, they obstructed the court and principal avenues of the edifice, on the occasion of a theatrical piece appointed to be represented by their scholars. The students of the Reformed communion arrived at the usual hour, and found no passage or outlet by which they could reach their lecture-rooms. The youths being irritated, grew angry, and overturned the scaffoldings of the Jesuits, not without some acts of violence, as may be conceived, between the scholars of the two parties. Great complaints, denunciations, and calumnies were immediately made to the court. This foolish matter was transformed into a state-offence, and a *lettre de cachet*[83] soon commended the delivery of the whole college to the reverend Fathers.

The people of Montauban became displeased in their turn, and crowded tumultuously round the door of one of their places of worship where the Notables had assembled, at the invitation of the consuls, to deliberate upon this affair. Fresh denunciations, more exaggerated and blacker still than the preceding [were uttered, asserting that] it was a vast plot:—the signal of a general revolt of the heretics, of whom the people of Montauban were the advanced guard. Mazarin was then on his death-bed, and Louis XIV. was engaged with his court *fêtes*. The Jesuits had the direction of everything with the queen-mother, Anne d'Autriche, who was devoted to their cause.

In short, for a few broken planks, and a little clamouring at a popular meeting, Montauban was treated as a rebellious city. Some thousands of soldiers were billeted upon the townspeople. The remains of the walls were overthrown. Several

inhabitants were condemned to death, others were banished, and the greater number ruined. Consuls of the religion were no longer [permitted to reside in the town]. The academy was transferred to Puy-Laurens, where it only vegetated; and Montauban, subjected to a government of terror, was speedily depopulated. It was supposed that Louis XIV. consented the more easily to this conduct of the Jesuits, because he was glad [of an opportunity] to avenge the affront which Louis XIII. had suffered before the ramparts of Montauban, at the siege of 1620: he punished the children for the heroic resistance of their fathers.

The academy of Saumur, founded by Mornay, had also a high reputation. It was more open than that of Montauban to the new ideas. Its professors, Cameron, Amyraut, Cappel, and La Place, taught doctrines, which were a sort of compromise or transition between Calvinism and Arminianism.

John Cameron (1579-1625), a Scotchman by birth, belonged to French theology by his studies, his lectures, and his writings. After having been pastor at Bordeaux, he replaced Gomar in the chair of theology at Saumur, and also brought there other opinions. He was a man of learning and judgment, and well acquainted with philosophy; but he was little versed in the study of the Fathers, and given to attack, on all occasions, the books of Theodore de Bèze. He spoke of many things in the received doctrines that required correction; though his lectures, printed in 1626, do not clearly indicate what changes he had in view.

He had, as we have said elsewhere, some differences with the court, and sought refuge in England; but he was permitted to return to the

country of his adoption. The national synod of Castres, granted a pension of seven hundred livres to his children, “in testimony of the honour in which his memory [was held].”

Moïse Amyraut (1596-1664), the most illustrious of the disciples of Cameron, was accused before the national synod of Alençon, of teaching opinions contrary to the confession of faith. Numerous letters from Holland and Geneva taxed him with a disguised plagiarism.

It is not our duty to relate these theological debates. It may suffice to mention that the learned professor of Saumur had enunciated a system, to which the name of *hypothetical universalism* was given, by way of opposition to the doctrine of the *particularists*. Amyraut taught that Jesus Christ’s death was sufficient for all men, but that he died *efficaciously* for the elect alone. He propounded also a *universal* predestination in a certain sense; nevertheless, he defended himself from the reproach of having adopted the principles of the Arminians, and even published a profession of faith against them.

The moderator of the synod, Benjamin Basnage, on hearing his apology, offered him the hand of fellowship, as well as to Testard, a pastor of Blois, who was accused of having adopted the same sentiments. The dispute was nevertheless renewed in the third synod of Charenton; but the assembly imposed silence on both parties, and forbade any further differences upon these questions, which it declared to be useless for the work of salvation.

Amyraut was charged by the last national synod with the compilation of the decisions concerning ecclesiastical discipline, and received from that

assembly the most honourable marks of confidence. He had been long before reconciled to most of his adversaries.

Nearly forty works of his are extant upon matters of theology and edification. His paraphrases on the Bible were much approved. His *Morale Chrétienne*, dedicated to M. Villarnoul, of the family of Duplessis-Mornay, is the work of a man who had made himself thoroughly acquainted with the Bible, the human heart, and the world. “My purpose,” he says, “is to construct a code of Christian morality, in which I may build, upon the foundations of nature, the teachings which have been given us by Revelation.”

Amyraut did not simply possess the knowledge of the theologian; he had a cultivated mind, a lively and engaging conversation, agreeable manners, and a character which begot universal good-will. The cardinals Richelieu and Mazarin always showed him marks of great regard. He was exceedingly charitable, and during the last ten years of his life, distributed the revenues of his appointment of pastor to the poor of both communions.

His colleague, Louis Cappel (1585-1658), was one of the first Hebraïsts of his age. He propounded a system upon the use of the vowel-points in the original Hebrew, which excited great opposition, and his *Critique Sacrée*, published after his death, still more increased the number of his opponents, because he was accused of raising doubts upon the universally received text of the Old Testament.

Another colleague of Amyraut, Josué de la Place (1596-1655), drew up a great portion of the *Thèses de Saumur*, which were an object of considerable attention in the theological discussions of his times. He held peculiar opinions upon the imputation of the

sin of Adam. Man, according to this doctor, while bearing the burden of original sin, is not responsible for it before God, as if he had himself fallen in the first transgression.

Etienne Gaussen, who died in 1675, filled the chair of philosophy at Saumur. One of his books treats of the *use of philosophy in theology*. There is also a judicious treatise of his upon the *Art of Professorship*, and an interesting dissertation upon the way to direct theological studies. His works, written in Latin, have been well received in Germany and Holland. A sixth edition was printed at Halle, in 1727, and they have since been republished. Burmann, Franke, Staeudlin, and other theologians, speak of him with much commendation.

At the academy of Sedan, Pierre Dumoulin professed a severe orthodoxy to his last day. He died at the age of ninety years (1568-1658).

Dumoulin had been saved, when scarcely four years old, from the massacre of Saint Bartholomew, through the devotion of a servant. Nominated to a pastorship at Charenton, in 1599, he edified the faithful of Paris under the reign of Henry IV. But the Jesuits took advantage of a letter that he had written to the king of England, in 1621, to obtain a warrant for his arrest, and he fled to Sedan, a town independent of France at that time. His universally revered character procured a joyful welcome for him. The national synod of Castres in vain solicited Louis XIII. for his recall; the Jesuits determinately opposed it. He had maintained a sharp controversy against them, on the occasion of a sermon, in which the Father Arnoux pretended that the confession of faith of the Reformed, was in no way sanctioned by the Scriptural texts indicated at the conclusion of the

articles, This accusation having attracted considerable attention, Dumoulin, in concert with the pastors of Charenton, published a *Defence of the Reformed Churches of France*. The dedicatory epistle, addressed to Louis XIII., did not spare the disciples of Loyola. “They cannot suffer,” said Dumoulin, “a king, although Roman Catholic, if he be not a persecutor of his subjects, and if he do not set fire to his kingdom.”

The Jesuits laid an information against the book, against the author, against the printer, and even against the readers. The sentence pronounced severe penalties against all who should read the work, or have it in their houses.

Pierre Dumoulin laboured much during his long career. We count no less than seventy-three works from his pen, amongst which the most popular were *Le Boucher de la Foi*, *L’Anatomie de la Messe*, and *Les Décades des Sermons*. His style of preaching was, at the same time, grave and familiar; if he was deficient in classic elegance, he bore the impress of a vigorous originality, which reveals the intimate life of the preacher.

When his approaching death was announced to that venerable pastor: “Oh! how good of you,” he exclaimed, “to impart such news to me! Welcome, death, I rejoice at thy coming! At length my aspirations will be fulfilled; I shall be happy in the sight of my God!”

Another professor of Sedan, Louis Leblanc de Beaulieu, (1615-1675), maintained the renown of that academy, without entertaining doctrines so strictly Calvinist as those of Dumoulin. His mind, to use the expression of his adversary Nicole, was extraordinarily clear and well adapted for

unravelling complicated questions.

Leblanc endeavoured, not to unite the two communions, but to approximate them to each other, by demonstrating that many of their differences only rose upon verbal disputes. He also tried to establish a solid peace between the Calvinists, the Arminians, and the Lutherans. These efforts brought upon him the charge of latitudinarianism. Pious men, nevertheless, did full justice to the sincerity of his convictions and to the rectitude of his character, and the severe Jurieu defended him after his death against inconsiderate attacks.

His knowledge and his modesty were equally great. The collection of his *Thèses* forms an almost complete treatise of dogmatic science: four editions were published in the course of a few years.

Without being so celebrated as the others, the academy of Nismes reckoned several meritorious professors. We have already cited Samuel Petit (1594-1643), who was appointed in 1627 to the three chairs of Theology, Greek, and Hebrew, at the same time.

Petit had a profound acquaintance with the Oriental languages. Having one day entered the synagogue of Avignon, he heard the Rabbi pronounce in Hebrew injurious expressions against Christians. The learned professor immediately answered him in the same tongue, and without expressing the least resentment, exhorted the Jewish doctor to become better acquainted with the faith he attacked. The disconcerted Rabbi apologised.

A cardinal had conceived so much esteem for Samuel Petit, that he offered to throw open the doors of the library of the Vatican to him, and to procure

for him the appointment of revising the manuscripts. The professor refused. He might have found learning in the archives of Rome; but he would have lost what he esteemed still more—liberty of conscience.

Petit has left divers works upon chronology and philosophy. He also laboured to elucidate the antiquities of the Old and New Testament. His character was kind, and he was more bent upon doing good, than upon raising questions of controversy.

XI.

Beside the professors of the universities, the French Reformation owned, in the seventeenth century, learned and hard-working pastors, who equally claim a short notice.

André Rivet (1572-1651) exercised the pastoral functions in France to the age of forty-seven, presided over the national synod of Vitré, in 1617, and was then a professor of theology in Holland. His *Introduction to the Study of the Bible* lays down the true basis of sacred criticism. The author insists that we must seek, not an allegorical or convenient sense in the Scriptures, but the exact and real sense—that which results naturally from the terms of the original text.

Rivet was extremely severe in his doctrines, and sometimes violent in his polemics; but he preserved a constant moderation in his private life. "Adverse events, whether public or otherwise," says the author of his *Last Hours*, never surprised him, or disturbed his serenity. He was accustomed to say: "*Everything is possible; I wonder at nothing.*" Thus he never burst into laughter; for he looked upon all mundane things as mutable and transitory.

Edme Aubertin (1595-1652) had particularly studied the Fathers. He published a book in 1633, upon the *Eucharist of the Ancient Church*, in which he sought to prove that the doctrine of the Real Presence was unknown during the first six centuries of the Christian era. This work was denounced to the privy council; but it was more easy to condemn than to refute it. "That great and incomparable work *L'Eucharistie*" says the son of Jean Daillé, "has

outlived all the attacks of the other communion, no one of whom has ventured into open war with it, or, so to speak, dared to meet it *tête-à-tête*" (face to face).

In his last moments, the door of his apartment was forced by the curate of Saint Sulpice, escorted by a commissary of police and the mob. Edme Aubertin awakened by the tumult, and gathering his presence of mind, declared with a firm voice that he died in the Reformed faith.

Benjamin Basnage (1580-1652) was commissioned, both by the political assemblies and the national synods, with missions as important as they were delicate. The court, which feared his credit, would have prevented him from taking his place at the national synod of Charenton in 1630. He has written, besides several controversial treatises, an approved work upon the *Visible and Invisible State of the Church*. We shall have to speak in the following book of his illustrious grandson, Jacques Basnage.

David Blondel (1591-1655) was more conversant with ecclesiastical history than any other man of his time. Prodigies are related of his memory: he had read everything, and had forgotten nothing. Having become blind, he dictated two volumes in folio upon difficult points of chronology and antiquity. The national synods conferred the title of honorary professor upon him, without attaching him to any academy, and all the provinces subscribed an annual pension for his maintenance at Paris.

Blondel combatted the pretension of the Roman See to the primacy, the false Decretals, and the Sybilline oracles. His good faith equalled his erudition; he was blamed by some of the older Huguenots for having contradicted the legend of

Pope Joan, to which they clung with great prejudice.

Samuel Bochart (1599-1667) was a pastor at Caen, and enjoyed there the respect of all the people of worth. “He was,” says Bayle, “one of the most learned men the world has seen. But his knowledge, however vast it might be, was not his principal quality; his modesty is infinitely more to be esteemed than all his learning. Hence the ease with which he has worn his glory.”

Bochart has won an imperishable name by his *Phaleg*, the *Canaan*, and the *Hierozoïcon*—three works which treat, one of the dispersion of the primitive tribes, the two others of the topography, and of the animals mentioned in the Bible. They are still standard books upon these subjects. The German doctor Michaëlis, who followed a century after, profited considerably by the labours of Bochart, and the *Hierozoïcon* was reprinted, in 1793, by Professor Rosenmüller.

Nearly all the pastors of Charenton or of Paris (for they resided at the last city) were learned theologians, as well as distinguished preachers.

Michel Le Faucheur, who died in 1657, has left some volumes of sermons, which still deserve our study. We owe to him also a treatise on the *Action of the Orator*, which was attributed to Conrart, secretary to the French academy. The second national synod of Charenton returned express thanks to Le Faucheur for his reply to Cardinal Duperron, concerning the doctrine of the Eucharist, and had it printed at the cost of the churches.

Jean Mestrezat (1592-1657) was but eighteen years old when he was offered a professorship of philosophy: he had scarcely completed his

theological studies, when he was appointed pastor at Charenton—a remarkable distinction which was awarded to no one else.

He defeated a Jesuit before the regent Anne d'Autriche, and the princess was so astonished and dismayed by the force of his arguments, that she ordered that the report of this disputation should not be printed.

In an audience he had with Louis XIII., Cardinal de Richelieu asked him, among other things, why the Reformed called foreigners to their ministry? "It is to be wished," replied Mestrezat, "that so many Italian monks, who are in France had the same zeal for his majesty as these stranger pastors, who recognize no other sovereign than the king." At these words Cardinal de Richelieu exclaimed, tapping him on the shoulder: "This is the boldest minister in all France."

The treatises of Mestrezat upon the Scriptures and upon the Church, show him to have been one of the most skilful doctors of the Reformed. His sermons, which may be always read with advantage, are above all remarkable for their correctness and depth of reasoning.

Charles Drelincourt (1595-1669) was the model of a true pastor. He lived a life of faith and prayer, of charity and devotion, employing the day in visiting his flock, and his evenings in meditation and composition. On the 27th of October, 1669, he was still preaching in the places of worship at Charenton —the following Sunday he had ceased to live. To him might be applied the words which he has put into the mouth of a pastor at the end of his *Visites Charitables*: "I have long lived; I have long preached; I am not weary of serving so good a Master, so liberal a Lord."

The contemporaries of Drelincourt agree in saying that no other minister at Charenton knew better how to lead the erring back, to strengthen the weak, to exhort the lukewarm, to comfort the poor, and to console the unhappy.

His works of edification and polemics have a popular character, which made them welcome to every house in his age, and has prolonged the life of some of them even till now. It has been already seen that no adversary was more dreaded by the converters than he, and that he had armed in the most solid manner the simple and the illiterate against their sophisms by his *Abrégé des Controverses*. The other works of Drelincourt, which have been most frequently reprinted, are his *Préparation à la Sainte Cène*, his *Visites Charitables*, and his *Consolations contre la Mort*. This last book has been translated into all the languages of Europe, and has been reproduced in more than fifty editions.

Drelincourt addressed these consolations to himself: “I pray God,” said one of his friends to him in his last illness, “that He may change your bed of infirmity into a bed of health.” “My bed of health and of rest,” he answered, “will be in heaven.”

Jean Daillé (1595-1670), of the same age as Drelincourt, was long his colleague at Paris, and followed him quickly to the grave. Prudent and reserved as well as pious, he acquired general esteem, without ever swerving in his convictions or his duties.

Educated from an early age, in the house of Duplessis-Mornay, and having afterwards travelled through the principal European states, he quickly displayed a mature intelligence. Daillé’s first essay in authorship, was a master-piece, *L Usage des Pères*.[84]

He ascribes to these venerable doctors all that they are entitled to, without surrendering the sovereign authority which he accords to the Bible in anything. His *Apologie des Eglises Réformées* is (also) firm without being offensive. Truth is apparent throughout, [combined] with charity. The author's purpose was to answer those who accused the Reformed of having sundered Catholic unity, and while he acknowledged that division is a great evil, he proves there are cases where it is the first of duties.

The biographer of Jean Daillé has (many) interesting details of his mode of life and study. "His books and his studies," says he, "constituted his chief recreation and delight. They afforded him recreation from his work, and at the same time pleasure and profit; and it was in them that he sought rest after the wearisome occupations of the day. His industry was very great; and as he rose early, he gained five or six clear hours. It is not astonishing, therefore, that he found leisure to produce so much, for he was a man who profited by everything, and who never read a book, however contemptible it might be, without making extracts from it, which he well knew how to use at the proper time and place."

About the year 1660, some younger pastors of no less merit began to appear, such as Dubosc, Larroque, Ancillon, and Claude.

Pierre Dubosc, born at Bayeux, in 1623, has been pronounced as the greatest preacher of the Reformed in the seventeenth century. "It may be said without flattery," writes Elie Benoit, "that he had all the gifts necessary to constitute a Christian preacher. He had a mind enlightened by the knowledge of literature. He was a good philosopher, a sound theologian, and

a judicious critic. His personal appearance also was favourable; his voice was both powerful and sweet, and his action pleasing."[85]

The church of Charenton made many urgent requests, in 1658, to draw him to Paris. Marshal Turenne, the Marquis de la Force, and other illustrious persons, joined their solicitations [for this purpose]. But Dubosc refused to leave the church of Caen, his maxim being, that a minister cannot quit his flock with a good conscience, until he has obtained their express consent.

When this appeal was renewed in 1670, the archbishop of Paris went so far as to implore the king three times in the same week, to prevent the nomination of Dubosc, as if he dared not trust the cause of (Roman) Catholicism to the eloquence of Bourdaloue and Bossuet.

The Jesuits of Normandy, jealous of his fame, accused Dubosc of having spoken of confession in derogatory terms, and procured his banishment to Châlons in 1664. He did not remain there many months, thanks to the good offices of some powerful protectors.

Dubosc was often deputed by the oppressed churches to Louis XIV. He was commissioned in 1668 to seek from him the maintenance of the edicts. On first hearing him, Louis was inattentive and absorbed with other thoughts. But gradually he listened, and evinced signs of satisfaction. The demeanour, the voice, the grave, yet easy air, the eloquent words of the orator completely triumphed over the repugnance with which Louis had been inspired against all the heretic ministers. "Madam," he said to the queen after the audience, "I have just heard the best speaker in my kingdom." And turning to his

courtiers [he added], “It is certain that I have never heard any one speak so well.”

Pierre Dubosc was banished by the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and died in a land of exile in 1692.

Matthieu de Larroque (1619-1684) had the happiness of closing his eyes amidst his flock, on the eve of his sentence of banishment. He had also been called by the church of Charenton in 1669, but the king forbade the prosecution of the summons, notwithstanding the representations of the general deputy Ruvigny. Other churches, Vitré, Saumur, Montauban, and Bordeaux, disputed the privilege of possessing a man of so much merit and learning. Larroque wrote a *History of the Eucharist*, which disturbed the imaginary triumph of the controversialists of Port Royal on this subject.

David Ancillon (1617-1692) possessed great theological knowledge; unhappily, he has written but little. Called, in the first instance, to minister to the church of Meaux, he won universal good-will. “What gained him the affection of all,” says his son, “were his life without reproach and his deep and simple piety. The humblest of his friends were always sure of his exertions in their behalf; and while his good offices were open to all, no difference of religion made any [change] in his behaviour to any one. He softened and tamed the Roman ecclesiastics of the diocese, and lived upon friendly terms with them; by which means he preserved peace and concord among all the inhabitants.”

His preaching appears to have possessed singular attraction. He meditated and composed his sermons with great care, although he published but one—*The Tears of Saint Paul*. Ancillon was in the habit of

saying, “that it was showing too little esteem for the public, to take no pains in preparation, and that a man, who should appear on a ceremonial day in his night-cap and dressing-gown, would not commit a greater breach of civility.”

He was a pastor at Metz at the time of the Revocation; and when he embarked, with his three colleagues, in the vessel which was to bear him from his native land, all the faithful assembled on the shore, and watched his departure with tears and sobs. Many followed him into exile. David Ancillon met with a favourable reception at Berlin from the elector of Brandenburg, and became the head of the illustrious family which has done so much honour to the French name in Germany.

Jean Claude, the last of the eminent pastors of Charenton, was born in 1619, at La Salvetat, in Rouergue. Claude was a pious man, a learned theologian, a skilful preacher, a wise and cautious writer, and being, moreover, endowed with a judgment and presence of mind that never failed, he was more capable than any one of opposing the champions of the (Roman) Catholic church; and without pretending that his genius was equal to that of Bossuet, it may be doubted whether he has not excelled him in soundness of learning and force of reasoning.

His name will reappear more than once in the course of this history. After exercising the pastoral function in Languedoc, where he displayed considerable energy, he was called to Charenton in 1666. He there took the first place after the death of Drelincourt and Daillé, without contest. “M. Claude,” says his biographer, Ladevèze, “particularly shone as president of an assembly. He appeared in this

position for several years in the Consistory of Charenton; as well as in more than one synod of the Isle of France, where he was moderator. However complicated might be the matters submitted to the synod, and however disguised by ignorance or party manœuvres, M. Claude had so exact a spirit of discernment, that he unravelled all this chaos in a moment."

It would be easy to extend the list of doctors and pastors, who have acquired a name in the French Reformation during the seventeenth century. They generally preceded the great defenders of the (Roman) Catholic communion,—Arnauld, Nicole, Bossuet,—and in a degree, compelled their appearance. Why were such flourishing studies arrested by persecution? Why were men, who bore with so firm a hand the glorious burden of Calvin and Theodore de Bèze, driven to waste their pens upon their miserably dispersed places of worship and academies? This was indeed a disgrace to the Church of Rome and a misfortune for France.

XII.

We now resume the chain of events, of which the picture will be both sad and sorrowful. We will soften the outlines, but not efface them; for we are writing history. We may collect the lesson, that intolerance stands upon a slippery precipice, from which, the moment she has made a slip, she is dragged from iniquity to iniquity, and from violence to violence, until she reaches the most atrocious excesses—a moral which perhaps is not absolutely useless, even at this day.

Mazarin died in 1661; his death was a loss to the Reformed. Although he inspired them with little confidence, and was not friendly to them, this cardinal preferred the use of stratagem to that of force; and as he sought to support his foreign policy by the Protestant power, he dared not impose too hard a yoke upon the French Calvinists.

After his decease, Louis XIV. resolved to govern alone, and persecution increased. Not that this prince was naturally cruel; had he been so, he would have restrained himself out of respect for his own greatness; but he had been educated in hatred of the Huguenots. Other motives, which we shall explain, intervened later to strengthen the prejudices of his childhood, and the obliteration of heresy was one of the fixed ideas of his reign. He may have varied as to the means, have faltered between the course of persuasion and that of persecution, have even seemed to retrace his steps, and to defer until more favourable opportunities the execution of this great undertaking; but through all these fluctuations and adjournments, his object never changed.

In 1661 commissioners were nominated in each province to examine into the real or pretended violation of the Edict of Nantes, and to re-establish peace between the two communions. One of these commissioners was a (Roman) Catholic, the other a Calvinist. This measure would have been excellent, if the agents for carrying it out had enjoyed the same rights, and the authority whose duty it was to decide ultimately, had been impartial between them. It was however quite otherwise, and that which was intended as a guarantee to the Reformed, became a fresh source of troubles and iniquities.

The (Roman) Catholic commissioner appointed to each general district, was generally a man of consideration, holding a seat in Parliament, or even in the king's council, and was known for his entire devotion to the interests of the Romish church. The Calvinist commissioner, on the contrary, with very rare exceptions, was either some poor gentleman ignorant of business, or some ambitious individual secretly sold to the court, and nominated by the intendants, sometimes even by the bishops, expressly to betray his duty. The first had all the power that accompanies a state religion; the second, all the weakness of a religion scarcely tolerated. One spoke with authority, invoking the name of the king; the other spoke with humility, in the name of the poor oppressed, whose fears he shared.

The commissioners were instructed to ascertain the rights of exercising worship in the contested districts. But as many churches had no authentic titles, either because they had never supposed that these documents would become necessary, or because they had been lost during the religious wars, they could only maintain their right by actual possession and

traditional notoriety. Constant quibbling was the consequence of this—in order to defeat the claims of the churches. The syndics of the (Roman) Catholic clergy were admitted to interfere in these disputes, and sought to invade everything; and when there was any disagreement between the two commissioners, the matter was decided by the council, whose aim was to restrict the Huguenots to the narrowest limits; or by the intendants, who had no other object than that of paying their court to Louis XIV.

It is impossible to count in how many districts the exercise of the Reformed religion was interdicted, how many places of worship were razed, schools suppressed, charitable establishments confiscated for the benefit of the (Roman) Catholics, and how many individuals also experienced crying injustice, however incontestable might be their rights. This would fill volumes.

Some Jesuits and others published lengthy writings, in which, under pretence of interpreting the Edict of Nantes, they demolished it piecemeal. The more skilful they showed themselves in the invention of new sophisms against the execution of the law, the more they thought they deserved from their church. The priest Soulier, author of an *Explanation of the Edict of Nantes*, unintentionally confesses this in his dedicatory epistle to the bishops: “I shall esteem myself too fortunate, sirs,” says he, “if I can second the zeal of your daily labours, after the example of the greatest of kings, for the extinction of heresy.” The explanation was at all events designed, right or wrong, to extinguish heresy.

These writings were sent to the council, to the parliaments, to the procurators-general, and the

intendants, who, without approving the whole of their contents, furnished themselves with weapons out of these great arsenals of the Jesuit school, and never failed to use them when they could do so with any decency.

In 1663 the clergy obtained, at the instance of their General Assembly, a declaration against those who *relapsed*, that is to say, against those who returned to the Reformed communion, after having abjured. “These people could no longer pretend,” the preamble stated, “to the benefit of the Edict of Nantes, since they had renounced, and by returning to the heresy, had incurred the guilt of the enormous crime of profanation against the sacred mysteries of the (Roman) Catholic religion.” The ordinance consequently pronounced against them the penalty of perpetual banishment. This declaration is regarded by Rulhières, and other historians, as the first direct attack upon the Edict of Nantes, and the first decisive step in the path of revocation.

There were at that time a certain number of individuals, who went from the Reformed to the (Roman) Catholic communion, without well knowing why, and without any serious intention of remaining. Some gave way to threats, others to momentary seductions, others to weakness, or the natural inconstancy of their minds. It was, in the first place, a great error, to admit them so lightly into the Church of Rome, and some Jansenist bishops, more scrupulous than the others, complained of it. It was a still greater error to seek to retain them there by terror.

But the clergy went farther; they set themselves to invent, and to create backsliders. Attendance at mass for three or four Sundays, the blessing of a priest in a

mixed marriage, a confidential avowal to a (Roman) Catholic of a leaning towards his religion, a conjecture, an appearance, a hearsay, or some mention of abjuring fifteen or twenty years before—all these were transformed into acts of (Roman) Catholicism, and if the pretended convert placed foot again within a heretic place of worship, he was dragged before the tribunals as a relapsed person.

So many abuses, and such grave troubles resulted from this, that a new declaration, published in 1664, decreed the nullity of all the procedures begun upon the subject. Yet the law was only suspended; and it was afterwards resumed with the addition of cruel aggravations.

In the month of May, 1665, an ordinance of the council authorized the curates, and all the ecclesiastics of the Romish church generally, to present themselves with a magistrate at the domicile of sick persons, to ask if they were willing to die in their heresy, or to be converted to the true religion. It is easy to imagine the double scenes of grief and scandal that would ensue, whenever the priest was a fanatic and the magistrate compliant. It was no longer possible to live or to die in peace, out of the Roman communion.

Paternal authority was also destined to be severely attacked. Without speaking of the crimes of abduction that were committed in many places, frequently with the most complete impunity, children were declared, by a decree of the 24th of October, 1665, to be capable of embracing (Roman) Catholicism; boys at fourteen years of age, girls at twelve, and parents were under the obligation of providing them with an alimentary allowance to maintain them out of their houses.

The Reformed complained bitterly of this law, and what was more strange, the bishops and commissioners-general of the clergy complained of it also. They told the chancellor that their conscience did not permit them to allow so much power to the hands of heretic fathers, and that children, being responsible for their acts before the age of fourteen or of twelve years, it ought to be permitted to receive them into the true church as soon as they desired it. The chancellor discussed the matter with them for form's sake; and at the conclusion of the audience said to them: "The king has done his duty, you will do yours."

The abjurations of many children were in fact received before the specified age; and when the parents had recourse to legal proceedings, the advocates-general decided that there was a great difference between exciting by "inducing" children to change religion, and receiving them with open arms, when they presented themselves by a sort of inspiration from heaven. Some years after, a new law, of which we shall speak, sanctioned these attacks against the most sacred rights of families.

The ordinances against blasphemers, and in particular against those accused of outraging the honour, the purity, and the holiness of the Virgin Mary, were confirmed. This gave rise to a host of prosecutions as extravagant as they were barbarous.

The sermons of the pastors were collected by spies in the pay of the Jesuits, and if there were found any terms, however slight, against the teachings of (Roman) Catholicism, these pastors were cited before the tribunals under the accusation of blasphemy. Many individuals were exposed to the same treatment, and (Roman) Catholics who were at law

with the Reformed, were often found to tax them with some blasphemy, for the purpose of gaining an undue advantage over the adverse party.

It daily became more difficult for the Reformed to obtain admission to public offices. They had been at first kept out of high employments; access to the less important places was next closed, and by degrees they were debarred from the very smallest, unless in the towns and cantons where they still retained the majority. In many provinces, a profession of the (Roman) Catholic faith was exacted from simple artisans before they could obtain a license to pursue their calling.

Even the corporation of laundresses at Paris laid a remonstrance before the council, that their community having been instituted by Saint Louis, could not admit heretics, and this reclamation was gravely confirmed (singular monument of folly!) by a decree of the 21st of August, 1665. It was thereupon remarked that these washerwomen had in their corporation many abandoned women, of whom they did not complain, and that they disturbed themselves much more about heresy than about evil manners. The example had been set them, it is true, by the priests, by the court, and particularly by Louis XIV.

Colbert, however, persisted in employing the Reformed in financial employments. A Protestant from Germany, Bartholomew Herward, had been appointed intendant of the finances under the ministry of Mazarin, notwithstanding the opposition of the commissioners of the clergy, authentically signified to the chancellor. Herward next became comptroller-general. “He favoured those of his religion,” says Elie Benoit; “the finances became the refuge of the Reformed, to whom all other

employments were refused. They entered into the farms and commissions, and made themselves so necessary in affairs of this nature, that even Fouquet and Colbert could not dispense with them, and were forced to retain them as people of proved fidelity, and of acknowledged capacity."[86]

Colbert, in fact, relied upon their spirit of order, economy, and probity, and cared very little about their religion, provided the people in his service were but honest. Rulhières has a curious remark upon this subject in his *Eclaircissements historiques*: "The fact is, that the financiers then enjoyed general esteem for the first time; they were not attacked either by Molière, Lafontaine, or Boileau. This silence of the satirists about the financiers, during the period, in which the greatest number of these offices were filled by Protestants," Rulhières adds, "is it not infinitely honourable to them?"[87]

Others of them being excluded from offices of state, and even of the municipal magistracy, had betaken themselves to arts and manufactures, agriculture and industry, a new title of recommendation to the protection of Colbert. But this great minister of state soon succumbed before the will of his master, for under Louis XIV. genius did not relieve any one from the duty of being a courtier.

Together with the violence of the council and of the tribunals, the Reformed had to endure those puerile vexations and petty annoyances from which intolerance can never free itself. They were prohibited, among other things, from singing psalms either on land or water, in their workshops or at their house-doors. If a procession happened to pass while they were singing in their places of worship,

they had to stop. Their burials could take place only at break of day, or at nightfall, and not more than ten persons were permitted to participate in the funeral, except at Castres, Montauban, Nismes, and in towns of the same order, where the presence of thirty persons was authorized. It was not lawful for the Reformed to marry unless at the times fixed by the canons of the (Roman) Catholic church; and the nuptial procession might not exceed, parents included, the number of twelve persons.

The rich churches were interdicted from contributing to the support of ministers for the poor churches. It was considered a crime in the consistories to pronounce censures against those, who placed their children in the colleges of the Jesuits. The pastors lost the right of taking the title of doctors of theology, and the king forbade them, under penalty of a fine of three hundred livres, to wear the cassock and long robe elsewhere than in their places of worship. They might speak and pray in the hospitals only in whispers, lest they should offend the ears of the (Roman) Catholics.

Notwithstanding all this, the bishop of Uzès, the orator of the general assembly of the clergy, declared to the king, in 1665, that "it behoved him to labour with greater ardour *for the entire extirpation* (such were his words) *of the redoubtable monster of heresy*." He asked, besides, that liberty of conscience should be taken away from the (Roman) Catholics, that is to say, that it should be no longer permissible for them to leave the Roman church, adding that twenty-two dioceses of Languedoc had demanded this from the provincial estates, and that all the dioceses of the kingdom were ready to seal that declaration with their blood.

The council could not yet proceed to extremities, [and] refused [to do so]. But in the following year it passed a most comprehensive act, by sanctioning, under the form of a general law, all the decrees that had been made upon particular cases by the courts of justice. The preamble stated that this law had been accorded on the demand of the assembly of the clergy. It comprised fifty-nine articles, which all tended to restrict the liberties that the Edict of Nantes had declared perpetual and irrevocable.

The first emigration dates from this epoch. The Reformed hoped no longer to meet with either justice or repose in their native land, and preferred the sufferings of exile to those of persecution.

The Protestant powers of Europe began to be moved. The elector of Brandenburg, one of the most faithful and useful allies of Louis XIV., wrote to him in favour of the Reformed. The king replied that he permitted them to live on an equality with his other subjects. “I am bound to do so,” said he, “by my royal word, and by the gratitude I feel for the proofs they have given of their fidelity during the late disturbances (of the Fronde), in which they bore arms in my service.”

These were but diplomatic phrases, that deceived no one. England and Sweden, whose neutrality was necessary to Louis XIV. after the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, expressed also their solicitude for the fate of the Reformed of France. Emigration continued; and all these circumstances induced the council to publish, in 1669, a kind of retractation of the preceding decrees. Nine articles of the declaration of 1666 were suppressed and twenty-one softened. Although this was but half-justice, the poor oppressed people esteemed themselves fortunate [in

obtaining it].

Shortly afterwards the celebrated edict was published, which prohibited the king's subjects, under pain of confiscation of liberty and property, from going to establish themselves in foreign countries without express permission, and particularly from taking service in the quality of ship-builders or sailors. This law struck all Frenchmen in their ancient liberties; but it was enforced only against those who emigrated on account of their religion.

The Marshal de Turenne had just abjured (1669). This conversion had all the importance of a general act. Turenne had resisted the invitations of Mazarin and Louis XIV., and had not even been dazzled by the offer of the constable's sword. He changed all at once, when no one any longer expected it, and why, has never been made known.

Some (Roman) Catholic writers say that he had become enlightened by Bossuet's *Exposition of the Doctrines of the Catholic Church*,—a book, indeed, well arranged, soberly penned, and of wonderful skill, in which the author hides the greatest errors of doctrine and practice of (Roman) Catholicism under the artifices of deeply-studied diction. It is possible that the old soldier did not investigate very narrowly, and that his limited information upon controversial questions might have failed to protect him against the subtilties of the theologian.

The Reformed historians explain the matter otherwise. They relate that Turenne, who was at all times lax in his religion, had only been retained in it by his wife and his sisters, Mesdames de Duras and de la Trémoille, both very zealous for the Reformed belief. When he was left alone, and had surrendered

himself to gallantries little compatible with the faith, he accepted the reasoning of Bossuet.

This is the place to observe that the greater part of the court nobility,—the families of Bouillon, Châtillon, Rohan, Sully, La Trémoille,—regulating themselves by the will of the monarch, had one by one re-entered the (Roman) Catholic church. Their licentious manners had also prepared them for abjuration; these were not less inordinate than those of the rest of the courtiers, according to the testimony of Tallemant des Réaux, who was himself a Calvinist by birth.

Among the people of importance, who had remained faithful to the Reformation, we may cite the Count de Schomberg, who had been commander-in-chief of the armies; the Duke de la Force and his house; a younger branch of the family of La Rochefoucault; several descendants of Duplessis-Mornay; the Marquises de Ruvigny, of whom one was minister-plenipotentiary at London, and the other deputy-general of the churches. The lesser nobility in the provinces had been more firm than the great noblemen. Languedoc, Guienne, Quercy, Saintonge, Poitou, Normandy, still reckoned thousands of gentlemen devoted to the faith of their fathers, and who, in return for the good services they rendered to the king in his armies and his fleets, asked only for a little justice and protection.

XIII.

The abjuration of Turenne renewed the projects of reunion, which had never been entirely abandoned since the attempt of Cardinal de Richelieu. The Prince de Conti, governor of Bas-Languedoc, desirous of making himself agreeable to Louis XIV., had already renewed the endeavour in 1661. The provincial synod of Nismes answered him, in the rude language of the period, by the mouth of their moderator Claude, that the Reformed would be guilty of unpardonable cowardice if they consented to "*unite light with darkness, Christ with Belial.*"

The project assumed a more serious turn from 1670 to 1673. The Marshal de Turenne took it up with the approbation of the king, and tried to obtain the adhesion of the pastors. An agent of the court visited one after another those who were dependent upon the national synod of Charenton; and partly by threats of the king's displeasure, and partly by the promise of accomplishing the reunion upon an equitable basis, this emissary succeeded in extorting from several ministers the verbal or written promise of supporting the plan in the next synodal assembly.

It was stated that the king was disposed to extirpate the abuses in the Romish church, which most shocked the Reformed; that the worship of images, purgatory, prayers for the dead, the invocation of saints, would be either suppressed or at least sensibly corrected; that theologians freely chosen from both sides, would have the mission of contriving a mutual understanding upon the doctrine of the Lord's Supper; that the use of the cup would be restored to the laity, and the religious service would be celebrated in the vernacular; finally, that if

the pope sought to oppose these changes, the king would go further, having the word of forty-two bishops upon these articles, and knowing the means of bringing the others to the same opinion.

This was evidently a falsehood. Louis XIV. could not execute what the subaltern agents promised in his name; and if the bishops had refused to make this concession at the colloquy of Poissy, when the Reformation was widely extended throughout the whole kingdom, how could one among them have made such concessions to a small minority, shut up in its places of worship, without political authority, shorn of all power of religious expansion, and well-nigh extirpated?

Nor did the wisest of the Reformed fall into the snare; for they knew that Rome uses two very different languages: the first, when she wishes to gain over heretics; the second, when she has them under her hoof. They knew, moreover, that the accord would, in the end, be limited to an entire submission on their part, followed by a merciful pardon on the other. For this reason, the provincial synod convoked at Charenton, in the month of May, 1673, opposed the new project of reunion with an energetic refusal, and the five pastors, who had promised to support it, solemnly declared their determination against it.

The same attempts produced the like results in Saintonge, Languedoc, and the Vivarais. The court and the clergy at length recognised that there was no rational hope of reducing the Reformed in this direction, and were driven to seek other means for the extermination of heresy.

Two methods, very different in their principle and line of action, were indicated by the adversaries of

the Huguenots. The Jansenists, and the most enlightened and most pious of the (Roman) Catholics generally, proposed to convert them by persuasion, fair treatment, and good examples, thinking that it was better to leave the erring without the pale of the Church than to force hypocrites to enter it. The Jesuits and their friends said, on the contrary, that it was incumbent to use both the authority of the king and the Parliaments without reserve, to exact acts of Catholicity at any price, and then to retain folks by the fear of executions, upon the fundamental maxim, that if the new (Roman) Catholics had little faith, their children would have more, and their grandchildren still more. The court balanced a long time between these two systems, which serves to explain its alternatives of mildness and rigour. But in the end, the advice of the Jesuits prevailed.

Ordinances, declarations, decrees, and other acts of the council followed, striking the heretics blow upon blow. Their number was so great that it is impossible to indicate even the substance of them. The Reformed were successively forbidden to raise supplies for the maintenance of their ministers, and the expense of sending them to the synods; to except against suspected judges, although this right was preserved to other Frenchmen; to print religious books without the authorization of the magistrates of the Romish communion; to suborn and corrupt, that is to say, to seek to convert (Roman) Catholics, under pain of a fine of a thousand livres; to celebrate their worship in the places and on the days when the bishops made their tours; to have more than one school and one master in each of the districts where they exercised their religion; to teach by this master anything else than writing, reading, and the elements of arithmetic; and so on. The Reformed were

oppressed in their religious faith, their civil person, their political rights, their domestic condition, the education of their children, and each iniquity necessarily produced others. Thus evil ever begets evil.

Some pastors, having held unlawful meetings upon the ruins of their places of worship, which had been unjustly pulled down, were condemned to do penance with a rope round their neck, and were then banished the kingdom. The demolitions spread, and were multiplied for the most trivial motives, upon the denunciations of a bishop, or of some other member of the clergy, upon the quibbles of a (Roman) Catholic commissioner, or simply, as the faithful of Saint Hippolyte experienced, upon the accusation of having manifested disrespect for a curate bearing the holy sacrament along the street.

There were in Béarn ninety-six places of worship, and forty-six churches of residence. A lawsuit, which lasted seven years, reduced the number of places of worship to twenty, and fettered these in every possible way. It was nearly the same in all the provinces of the kingdom. If the council sometimes used precaution, and imposed upon the intendants some reserve, the pastor Claude presumes, in his *Plaintes des Protestants de France*, that it was to induce the belief that justice was regarded, and that the condemned churches had not good titles.

The mind feels some relief, amidst these persecutions, in dwelling upon the paper wars which were fought at the same epoch between the most eminent pastors of the two religions. Here at least material violence did not intervene; here the contest was equal; and when men of great powers attacked the Reformation, it did not want solid and skilful

champions for its defence.

The Jansenists were so accustomed to the strife, that they could not desist from it; and peace having been concluded between them and the Jesuits, through the intermission of Clement IX., they turned their arms against the Huguenots. They imported into the conflict all the greater zeal, that they were themselves taxed with being no more than disguised Calvinists.

Arnault and Nicole therefore published their famous *Perpétuité de la Foi sur l'Eucharistie* (1664-1676), in which they endeavoured to establish, from the text of the Fathers of the Church, and by certificates brought from the East, that the dogma of the real presence has been at all times admitted in Christianity. Claude replied that they had wrongly interpreted the sense of the Fathers, and certificates procured from poor Greek popes by the ambassador of France, who was their protector against the Turks, were but of little value. His answer had extraordinary success; and the Jesuits themselves did their best to disseminate it, as Arnault complains in one of his letters, because they were quite as much interested in humiliating the Jansenists as in destroying the Reformed.

Nicole re-entered the lists with his *Préjugés légitimes contre les Calvinistes*. His argumentation was sadly wanting in caution. He maintained that before quitting the Church of Rome, the meanest artisan is bound to assure himself of the authenticity of the holy writings, to compare the translations with the original, to examine all the various readings, to weigh all the interpretations of the texts, to compare them with the decisions of the councils, to perform in a word an immense labour that the most erudite

dare hardly undertake. These arguments, every one knows, have been turned by Rousseau against (Roman) Catholicism and even against the Gospel. Claude, Jurieu, and Pajon answered Nicole.

Arnault came to the succour of his friend in a book upon the *Renversement de la Morale de Jesus Christ par les Erreurs des Calvinistes*. It astonished every one that a doctor who agreed with Calvin upon the dogma of predestination, had constructed all the scaffolding of his polemics upon this consequence, that *grace cannot be lost*; and this was judiciously objected to him, not only by Bruguier, pastor of Nismes, but by theologians of his own communion.

Bossuet's *Exposition* also provoked numerous replies. La Bastide, a member of the consistory of Charenton, and David Noguier, a pastor of Languedoc, proved that this work was wanting in truth, and that the author has constructed an ideal Catholicism totally unlike the real. Pierre Jurieu proved it better than any one in his *Preservatif contre le Changement de Religion*, and resumed the same question in his *Politique du Clergé de France*. "Here is a man," he says, "who transports us into another country. There is no worship of images, no invocation of saints in this new religion; they are only implored just as we beg the faithful on earth to pray to God for us. Until now, I had thought that the devotions to the Virgin and to the other saints was an important thing; I see that the majority of devotees think them of great consequence; and these people say they are nothing, they may be dispensed with, and that it is sufficient to invoke God and Jesus Christ!"

Claude had a celebrated conference with Bossuet in 1678, upon the invitation of Mademoiselle de

Duras. The two adversaries have published the report of their debate. Bossuet had pledged himself to make Claude avow that it may happen that a simple individual, however ignorant he may be, understands the Scriptures better than all the councils and all the rest of the Church together—a proposition which he styled as absurd. Claude answered that the question was not so simple, and that before asking if an artisan may be right in spite of all the councils and the Church, it should be shown that there is a single article, upon which the Church and all the councils have constantly agreed.

Ten years afterwards, the bishop of Meaux (Bossuet) re-entered the arena with his *Histoire des Variations des Eglises Protestantes*. His attacks were made upon the absentees and the proscribed, whose books of refutation were not permitted to pass from Holland into France.

To speak alone was a privilege a man like Bossuet ought to have repudiated.

XIV.

The jubilee of the year 1676 brought about what certain historians call the *conversion* of Louis XIV. This prince experienced deep remorse that he had caused so much scandal at court and in his kingdom by his public adulteries. He resolved, so he promised his spiritual directors, not to revisit Mademoiselle de Montespan. But he had not the firmness to keep his word. His conscience became thereupon disturbed, and he had troubles of mind and of heart, which were skilfully turned against the heretics by Father La Chaise, who had been promoted about a year before to the office of the king's confessor. The Reformed were made to atone for the faults of the monarch, and to reconcile him with his offended God by their abjuration, or their ruin.

The religion of Louis XIV. was of this kind. If he had not sufficient piety to conquer his passions, he had enough bigotry to imagine that he could expiate his errors by the reduction of heretics to the Roman unity. Louis XIV. received his first religious ideas from a Spanish mother, who, very ignorant herself, had impressed his mind with many petty scruples, and but little enlightenment on faith and Christian morality. The Jesuits had continued her work, by inspiring their pupil with sentiments, which might subserve for the accomplishment of their designs.

Having understood at a later period how badly he had been educated, he remodelled his education as to those matters which most interested the dignity and authority of his crown. Unhappily, he remained just where he was in respect of religious matters, and his habits were no better than his spiritual convictions. "He never had a proper idea of his

duties," says M. de Sismondi. It was not only his amours which deserve censure, although the scandal of their publicity, the dignities to which he raised the children of his adultery, and the constant humiliation to which he subjected his wife, add greatly to his offence against public morality. He made himself besides deeply guilty by the merciless cruelty with which he shed blood, at one time by such executions as those he inflicted upon the Bretons to punish them for having defended their privileges, at another by the ruin of entire populations. No respect for engagements, no notion of right or wrong, regulated either his public or his private conduct. He violated treaties just as he violated his domestic engagements; he seized the property of his subjects, as well as that of his cousin, Mademoiselle de Montpensier. He acknowledged in his judgments, and in his rigour towards his people, no rule but his own will. At the very moment that his subjects were dying of famine, he retrenched nothing from his prodigalities. Those, who boasted of having converted him, had never represented to him more than two duties, that of renouncing his incontinence, and that of extirpating heresy in his dominions.[88]

Rulhières confesses these errors of mind and conduct, while he strives to elevate the character of Louis XIV. in a memoir, which was intended for the perusal of Louis XVI.: "During these alternatives of dissoluteness and scruples," says he, "while he passed from error to remorse, and from remorse to error, he hoped to redeem his transgressions and merit more decisive grace from heaven, by labouring with greater fervour for these conversions."[89]

One of the means that Louis XIV. employed with this view, was the purchase of consciences for

money; a fresh proof of the detestable religious education he had received from his mother and the Jesuits.

He consecrated to this vile traffic the third of the *économats* or benefices, which fell to the crown during vacancy. The amount was not large; but it was increased afterwards by leaving benefices vacant expressly to pay for the abjurations of the heretics.

Pellisson had the administration of this fund. Although born in the Reformed communion, he had embraced (Roman) Catholicism very opportunely for his fortune, and from a convert had become a converter. Doubly an object of suspicion to the king from his Huguenot origin, and his connection with the superintendent Fouquet, he perceived that he must do much to gain the favour of Louis. Nor did he spare his efforts.

The establishment opened by Pellisson was a bank, or commercial house, organized according to the rules of [establishments of] the kind, with its correspondents, who were generally priests or bishops, its tariff, its letters of change, its provincial agents, and its regular balance-sheets of expenditure; and it was made necessary to send certificates of abjuration duly signed, and acquittances in proper form, indicating the sum disbursed for each person, or for each family of proselytes.

The object of this bank was naturally to procure conversions at the lowest figure: they cost from five to six livres, sometimes one or two pistoles, and, in extraordinary cases, from eighty to one hundred francs. There is a curious letter on this subject from Pellisson extant, which is the circular of a consummate merchant. “Although you may go to the extent of a hundred francs,” [he writes,] “you are not

thereby to understand that this sum is to be always given, since it is requisite that the utmost economy should be observed; first, in order that this beneficent dew may be dispersed over the greatest number of persons; and secondly, because, if a hundred francs is given to persons of low rank without any family following them, those who have ever so little position, or draw after them a number of children, will demand much larger sums. This will not, however, prevent, where important strokes may be effected, on my being first advised thereof, larger remittances to be furnished, accordingly as his majesty shall, on representation made to him, think proper." (June 12th, 1677.)

Pellisson regularly presented lists of six and eight hundred converts with the certificates to the king, and caused his miracles to be inserted in the *Gazette*. He took care, however, not to publish that they were nearly all folks belonging to the dregs of the people, or rogues who made a trade of their consciences, or wretches who took the money that they might have the wherewithal to buy a piece of bread, without any intention of renouncing their religion. The king was greatly astonished at his conquests; the prelates applauded; the Jesuits triumphed; but sensible people put no faith in them.

In effect, frauds multiplied to such an extent, that it could no longer be concealed from the king. Instead, however, of giving up this unworthy traffic, he published, through his council, in the month of March, 1679, a law of greater severity against those who relapsed. "We have been informed," he says in the preamble, "that in several provinces of our kingdom, there are many persons, who, after having abjured the pretended Reformed religion, in the hope

of participating in the sums that we have caused to be distributed to the new converts, return to it again." And the law pronounced against them, besides the former penalty of banishment for life, was that of public recantation and forfeiture of property.

What a mass of injustice and contradictions! In buying souls it could not but be supposed that they believed in nothing, and after having bought them, they were punished for changing anew,—as if they had believed in anything. What should so degraded a devotion inspire in the minds of all respectable people? Is it pity or contempt? It is both the one and the other.

The peace of Nimeguen, concluded with all the powers of Europe in 1679, was the apogee of the fortunes of Louis XIV. He [then] received the surname of "the Great." Courtiers and men of letters were profuse in [offering] the most humble adulations, and treated him as a demigod. This incense completed his intoxication—he regarded himself really as the sole and rightful owner of all the territory of his kingdom, the sole legislator and supreme judge, the living impersonation of the whole state! He ended by thinking that the minds of his subjects were as much his slaves as their bodies, and considered every conscientious opposition to his sovereign will to be a crime of high treason. Unfortunate prince! He never so debased himself as when he carried the excess of his pretensions so high.

Madame de Maintenon [now] began to assume a stronger dominion over him. The grand-daughter of Agrippa d'Aubigné, one of the firmest defenders of the Calvinist faith, and herself deeply devoted to her religion in childhood, she had abandoned it in 1651,

when sixteen years of age. When the Reformed saw her growing in the confidence and intimacy of Louis XIV., they imagined that she would remember the communion of her grandfather, and use her influence to protect it. But having been "*born ambitious*," as she confesses in one of her letters, she felt, even more than Pellisson, the necessity of causing her heretic origin to be forgotten, and hoped to retain the king's heart by fostering in him a strict devotion.

Gifted with much cleverness and still more tact, she had easily discovered Louis XIV.'s profound repugnance for the heretics, and tried to conform herself to it. It appears, nevertheless, that she had some compunctions of pity for the oppressed. We read in the *Memorial of Saint Cyr*, that the king said to her one day: "I fear, madam, that the moderation you would have me display for the heretics arises from some remains of affection for your old religion." And she writes elsewhere: "Ruvigny is intractable; he has told the king that I was born a Calvinist, and that I was one until my coming to court. This compels me to approve of things quite opposite to my sentiments."

This avowal is the clue to her conduct. Madame de Maintenon, if left to herself, would have employed only mildness and charity, as she recommended to her brother; but being desirous above all things of pleasing Louis XIV., she joined with Father La Chaise in devising every means for the ruin of heresy.

The plan of destruction became systematic and invariable after the peace of Nimeguen. Governors, commandants, intendants, soldiers, lawyers, finding that Louis had finally decided upon the extirpation of the Huguenots, became animated with a great desire for proselytism, and undertook in their turn to

become missionaries and converters. Their chief care was to despatch long lists of abjurations to the court, or at least reports of worship interdicted, of places of worship razed, and of flocks dispersed. The privy council was sometimes alarmed at so much zeal; notwithstanding which it dared not arrest it, lest the victims might be encouraged in their resistance; and soon, itself drawn along by the force of circumstances, it transformed into a general declaration what it had blamed at first.

Whenever a councillor or a magistrate more humane than the others, deplored these extreme measures, the only answer was, “God uses all means for His ends.”

The populace, as might have been expected, acted its part in these persecutions. In the towns of Blois, Alençon, and in other places, bands of wretches invaded the places of worship, tore the holy books, broke the pulpits and the benches, and set fire to the buildings: the authorities, instead of suppressing these riots, sanctioned them by the interdiction of worship and the exile of the pastors.

Louis XIV. persisted, nevertheless, in talking to the Protestant powers of Europe of his respect for the Edict of Nantes. We read in a declaration so late even as 1682, that he was resolved upon doing nothing contrary to the edicts, by virtue of which the pretended Reformed religion was tolerated in his kingdom! Under the Valois, persecution was cruel, but freely avowed; under Louis XIV. it cloaked itself for a long time in hypocrisy: the Jesuits were the moving power.

XV.

As we gradually approach [the period of] the revocation, the ordinances already so numerous, as we have seen, multiplied with striking features of aggravation. We will class the most important under distinct heads.

Public Offices.—The exclusions were extended by degrees to all employments without exception. The Reformed were disabled from being councillors, judges, assessors, treasurers, clerks in the financial departments, consuls, municipal magistrates, advocates, notaries, procurators, serjeants, ushers, physicians, apothecaries, librarians, printers, *employés* in the post [offices], and public conveyances, members of corporations, &c. &c. Even midwives of the religion were no longer permitted, "because they did not believe," said the ordinance of 1680, "baptism to be necessary, and could not christen children on emergency."

In certain cantons it was physically impossible to execute these edicts; for how could the Reformed be excluded from all employments and every office in those places where they formed nearly the whole of the population? It was necessary to select consuls and municipal councillors from adventurers living in the suburbs, and from people of no character, which caused inexpressible disorder.

Civil Rights.—There were no longer any guarantees in the courts of justice. The chambers of the Edict, at Paris and Rouen, had been abolished in 1669. The mixed chambers of the Parliaments of Toulouse, Grenoble, and Bordeaux were abolished in 1679; "seeing," said the preamble, "that all animosity was

extinct!" Derision was added to the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes!

It was not an unfrequent occurrence to hear the (Roman) Catholic party invoke this argument, in affairs purely civil: "I plead against a heretic;" and when a member of the Reformed faith complained of an unjust sentence, he was coolly answered: "You have your remedy in your hands; why do you not become a Catholic?"

Marriage and Paternal Authority.—Alliances were no longer permitted between the Reformed and (Roman) Catholics, even in the case of former relations that marriage had legitimized. The Reformed were not allowed to have (Roman) Catholic valets, for fear the latter should be seduced; and soon, by an inverse excess, they were prohibited from having any other than (Roman) Catholics, because such could be employed as spies. The nearest relations were prohibited from being guardians or curators. Fathers and mothers were forbidden to send their children into foreign countries before the age of sixteen. It was ordered that all illegitimate children, of every age and condition, should be held as (Roman) Catholics, and educated in that religion: and as this ordinance was made to act retrospectively, results flowed from it as ridiculous as they were odious. Persons of sixty and eighty years of age were summoned to enter the church of Rome, because their illegitimate condition had legally rendered them (Roman) Catholics.

Matters even went further than this. An edict of the 17th of June, 1681, declared that the children of the Reformed might abjure at the age of *seven*. "We will, and it pleaseth us," said the ordinance, "that our said subjects of the pretended Reformed religion,

as well male as female, having attained the age of seven years, may, and it shall be lawful for them to, embrace the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman religion, and, for this end, that they be received to make abjuration, without their fathers and mothers and other relatives offering *the least impediment*, under any pretext whatsoever!" These children were free to withdraw themselves whenever they liked, and the parents were bound to provide them with a pension for their maintenance.

Fearful consequences attended [the passing of] this law. Every family was disturbed. Friends, (Roman) Catholic neighbours, servants, the slightest mark of kindness to their children on the part of a stranger, were mistrusted. A priest, an envious acquaintance, an enemy, a discontented talebearer, might declare before a justice that such and such a child had made the sign of the cross, or kissed an image of the Virgin, or desired to enter a (Roman) Catholic church; and this was often sufficient to justify their abduction, particularly of those who were rich enough to pay an allowance, and to shut them up in some convent under the direction of monks, nuns, and the [secular] clergy.

Even Madame Maintenon made use of this abominable law. Having vainly endeavoured to convert her relation, the Marquis de Villette, who had replied to her: "It would take me a hundred years to believe in infallibility, twenty years to believe in the real presence," and so on, she deprived him of his children; among others of a little girl, who afterwards became the Marchioness de Caylus. We read in the Memoirs of this lady: "I cried a great deal, but I found next day the royal mass so beautiful that I consented to be a (Roman) Catholic, on

condition that I should hear it every day, and that I should be insured from all whipping. This was all the controversy employed, and the only abjuration I made."

Contracts and Imposts.—The newly-converted were permitted to delay the payment of their debts for the space of three years, which attracted all involved or dishonest debtors to (Roman) Catholicism. These same converts were also exempt for two years from imposts and military quarterings; while a double imposition of billets, taxes, or arbitrary contributions, called *office taxes*, were inflicted upon the refractory, so that the treasury might not suffer by its liberality. Colbert complained in vain of the disorder and confusion which this caused; religion, however, took the precedence of financial regularity.

Attacks upon Property.—All the funds, rents, and other property of every kind which belonged to the condemned churches, were confiscated in favour of the (Roman) Catholic hospitals: so likewise were all those destined to the poor of the religion, even in the places where its exercise had not been interdicted; and testamentary dispositions containing charitable legacies for the consistories were annulled. We shall see, as we proceed, to what point the attack upon private property was (also) carried.

Liberty of Conscience and of Worship.—Physicians, surgeons, and others, who should assist the sick of the Reformed religion, were commanded to give notice thereof to the magistrates of the locality, under penalty of a fine of five hundred livres; and the latter—consuls, judges, or magistrates—were required to visit the sick, willingly or by force, with or without a priest, to ask them if they would abjure.

The pastors were forbidden to speak of the

misfortune of the times in their sermons, to attack the Romish church directly or indirectly, to reside at a distance of less than six leagues from the places of interdicted worship, and of less than three leagues from the places of contested worship. The people were forbidden to assemble in their places of worship under pretence of prayer and singing psalms, except at the usual hours. The conferences were definitively interdicted; and the consistories were obliged to admit a (Roman) Catholic commissioner. It was prohibited to contribute alms for the maintenance of the sick of the Reformed religion, or to take care of them in private houses; the order was to transfer them to the hospitals, where they fell under the action of Roman proselytism.

The crowning measure of oppression was the prohibition to receive any new converts in the places of worship, under pain of banishment and forfeiture of property, as regarded the pastors, and of privation of religious exercises, as regarded the flocks. At this last blow the Reformed were ready to abandon themselves to despair. Many deliberated whether they ought not to renounce all public service, and confine themselves to the adoration of God within their own houses. What refinement of barbarity! To force them themselves to watch the door of their places of worship, and to drive away the brethren, who had doubtless quitted them, but who returned perhaps with tears of repentance! Besides, by what signs was a new convert distinguished? How was it possible to know all those who had abjured? Might not one traitor procure the condemnation of an entire church? The places of worship at Bergerac, Montpellier, Saint Quentin, and Montauban, were demolished in this way: the same fate threatened all

the others.

It appeared as if the condition of the Reformed could not become worse. It did so, however, by the intervention of the Marquis de Louvois, who wanted, according to the expression of Madame de Caylus, to mix up the soldiery with the affair. He was annoyed that he was, after the peace of Nimeguen, no longer necessary to his master, and saw with displeasure devotion replacing gallantry in the heart of Louis. He tried long and fruitlessly to bring the king back to Madame de Montespan; but when he was convinced that his intrigues were useless, and that the sole means of pleasing Louis was to second his efforts for the conversion of the Huguenots, he entered into them with all the violence of his character, being only too happy to play the first part with the help of the troops at his disposal. What miseries, what shameful calculations in that court, so renowned, and all under the mask of Catholic piety!

Louvois wrote to Marillac, intendant at Poitou, in the month of March, 1681, that he was about to send a regiment of horse into that province. “His majesty,” he said, “has heard with much joy of the great number of persons, who continue to be converted in your department. He wishes you to persist in your endeavours, and desires that the greater number of horsemen and officers should be billeted upon the Protestants. If, according to a just distribution, ten would be quartered upon the members of the Reformed religion, you may order them to accommodate twenty.” Louvois also enjoined that the communication of his orders should be made to the mayors and authorities, not by writing, but by word of mouth, so that it might not be said that the king used violence towards the Huguenots.

Such was the origin of those *dragonnades*, which have left an indelible stain of disgrace upon the reign of Louis XIV., and of horror in the mind of the inhabitants. The march of Marillac's troops was ordered, as if they were in an enemy's country, exacting arrears of taxes, exempting those who became converts, and throwing all the burden upon the obstinate. From four to ten dragoons were billeted in the houses, with directions not to kill the inhabitants, but with authority to do anything short of that, in order to extort an abjuration. Curates followed the soldiers in the towns and villages, shouting: "Courage, gentlemen, it is the will of the king."

Without a check upon their passions, the military committed horrible excesses: a horde of brigands had penetrated into the heart of the kingdom. The *Journal of Jean Migault*, published in these later times, will give an idea of their barbarities. Devastations, pillages, tortures, cruelties [prevailed; in fact,] they hesitated at nothing.

Elie Bénoit has filled page after page of his *History of the Edict of Nantes* [with a narrative of these cruelties]; we will only extract one or two passages: "The horsemen," he writes, "fastened crosses to the mouth of their musquetoons to compel the people to kiss them by force, and when they met with any resistance, they thrust their crosses into the face and stomach of their unhappy victims. They spared children as little as persons of more advanced age, and without the slightest regard for their years; they loaded them with blows with the flat of their swords, or with the butt-end of their musquetoons; such was their violence that in many instances many were crippled for life. These infamous wretches took a

pleasure in maltreating women. They beat them with whips; they struck them in the face with canes in order to disfigure them; they dragged them by their hair in the mud and over the stones. Sometimes the soldiers, meeting labourers on the road, or with their carts, drove them to the (Roman) Catholic churches, pricking them like cattle with their own spurs, to hasten their unwilling march...."[90]

Crowds of unfortunates fled to the woods; others hid themselves in the houses of their friends; many determined to fly the kingdom at all hazards; and there might be seen men, women, and children, half-dead, stretched upon the stones or rugged rocks. Many at length consented to abjure under the sabre of the soldier; but what an abjuration! Numbers went mad, or died of grief, or put an end to their days in paroxysms of remorse and despair. There were some who, flinging themselves upon the road, beat their breasts and filled the air with wailings. "When any two of these unfortunate converts met," still further relates Bénoit, "when one beheld the other at the foot of an image, or in any other act of Catholic devotion, their cries redoubled, and their grief burst out anew. The labourer, abandoned to his reflections during his work, felt the sharp stimulus of remorse, and quitting his waggon in the midst of his fields, threw himself upon his knees, and while prostrate on the earth, sought for pardon, and took all nature to witness that it was violence alone that he had obeyed."[91]

Madame de Maintenon wrote to her brother, who was about to receive a gratuity of eight hundred thousand francs: "I beg of you carefully to use the money you are about to receive. Estates in Poitou may be got for nothing; the desolation of the

Huguenots will drive them to sell more. You may easily acquire extensive possessions in Poitou." (September 2nd, 1681.)

The emigration, suspended in 1669, recommenced upon a vaster scale, and thousands of families quitted France. The Protestant countries, England, Switzerland, Holland, and Denmark, offered them shelter by official declarations. The court became alarmed, above all when the heads of the administration of the navy complained of the desertion of a great number of sailors, who, having readier means of flight, escaped *en masse*. Marillac was recalled, and the other intendants received orders to act with less severity.

The ordinances, which interdicted departure from the kingdom, were again put in force, with the addition of the penalty of perpetual imprisonment at the galleys against the heads of families, a fine of three thousand livres for those who should encourage them to fly, and the nullification of all contracts of sale made by the Reformed one year before their emigration. This last article overturned all private transactions, and it became necessary to supply a remedy on its execution.

The laws against emigrants and those who relapsed, placed a double-edged sword in the hands of the persecutors. If the new converts re-entered a place of worship, they were stricken with a terrible punishment, and they were equally so if they endeavoured to quit the kingdom. The government would consider them only as (Roman) Catholics in France; on the frontier they were seized as heretics. Rulhières, always led by a desire to justify the memory of Louis XIV., says that "the misfortunes of the Reformed were principally due to the

combination of these two laws, of which their originator, Father La Chaise, boasted, as master-pieces of genius."

The assembly of the clergy, who had to secure the pardon of the Roman See for the temerity of the four propositions of 1682, sent a *pastoral notice* to all the consistories of France, in which it was said that the bishops looked upon the Huguenots as strayed sheep, and would welcome them with open arms, but that they would be discharged from the care of their souls, if the heretics were not convinced by these charitable words. "This last error," the prelates wrote, "will be more criminal in you than all the others, and you must expect misfortunes incomparably more dreadful and disastrous than all those your revolt and schism have drawn upon you at present."

This notice of the clergy was read in the consistories by the express command of the king. It converted nobody; but every one foresaw fresh sufferings; for those who uttered the prediction had influence enough to work its accomplishment.

XVI.

It is evident how intolerable the condition of the Reformed must have become. They had no longer rights of any kind, guarantees or safety; their persons, their children, their property, were all at the mercy of the oppressor; the sword of proscription hung incessantly suspended over their heads. What race in the Christian world was ever more unhappy than this?

A multitude of fugitives already filled Europe with their complaints and their wailings. Jurieu, who had found an asylum in Holland, wrote in 1682, in his book upon the *Politique du Clergé de France*, "We are treated as if we were enemies of the Christian name. In places where the Jews are tolerated, they have all kinds of privileges; they encourage the arts and commerce; they are physicians; they are consulted; they are intrusted with the health and lives of Christians. And we, as if we were infamous, are forbidden to approach newborn children; we are banished from the bar and the faculties; we are kept from the presence of the king; we are despoiled of our offices; we are forbidden the use of all the means of providing against perishing of hunger; we are abandoned to the hatred of the populace; we are deprived of that precious liberty that we have bought with so many services; our children, who are a part of ourselves, are torn from us.... Are we Turks? Are we infidels? We believe in Jesus Christ; we believe Him to be the eternal Son of God, the Redeemer of the world; the maxims of our morality are so pure that none dare gainsay them; we respect kings; we are good subjects, good citizens; we are as much Frenchmen as Reformed Christians."[92]

Jurieu spoke in vain. The books of heretics could not pass the frontier. It was even attempted in the interior of the kingdom to destroy the ancient works which attacked (Roman) Catholicism. The archbishop of Paris drew up a catalogue comprising the names of five hundred authors, and domiciliary visits were paid in the houses of the ministers and the elders, in order to burn all the condemned books that might be found in their libraries.

The Reformed transmitted petition after petition to the court, the council, and to the king himself. Their cause was pleaded by the deputy-general, or by special delegates. Sometimes they recapitulated their grievances in general requests, conjoining the most humble protestations of obedience and respect.

All was useless. The ministers of state disputed the best-supported facts, and threatened the petitioners with still direr treatment. The king closed his palace, or when, after long remonstrance, they were admitted, his words were cold and constrained. The deputy-general Ruvigny, having represented to him the great misery of more than two millions of Frenchmen, Louis XIV., it is said, answered him that to “bring all his subjects back to the Catholic unity, he would give one of his arms, or would cut off one of his hands with the other.” This saying filled the Reformed with the darkest presentiments.

Nevertheless, they persisted in believing that Louis XIV., the grandson of the Béarnese, would have compassion upon them, if he knew the extent of their sufferings, and filled with this idea, they resolved to make a last effort.

Sixteen deputies from Languedoc, Cevennes, Vivarais, and Dauphiny, met secretly at Toulouse, in the spring of 1683, and drew up a draft in eighteen

articles, destined to restore their liberty of conscience and of worship, without, however, doing the slightest act which could bear the appearance of rebellion. After enjoining repentance, prayer, and union among the faithful, they decided that on the 27th of June following, all the interdicted assemblies should recommence at the same time, without ostentation, but also without mystery, with open doors, or upon the ruins of the razed places of worship. Those who had performed a forced abjuration were to assemble separately, for fear of furnishing the pretext for fresh persecutions. On the 4th of July, a solemn fast was to be celebrated in all the churches. The pastors were exhorted to remain courageously in the midst of their flocks, and not to quit them, but with the leave of a conference, or in the most imminent peril. Lastly, the deputies framed a petition to the chancellor and all the ministers of state, in which they pledged their obedience to the king in everything that was not absolutely contrary to their duty to God. “What is our situation?” they said; “if we obey, it is pretended that we are converted, and our very submission is made use of to deceive the king.”

The chief object of this bold measure was to prove to Louis XIV. that the abjurations *en masse*, which were recounted to him, were unworthy fabrications. Unhappily, there was not sufficient unanimity among the oppressed. The prudent, the timid, those who had not suffered so much as others, those who saw danger only when it was upon them, determined to abstain from the enterprise, and stood apart.

On the appointed day, however, a great many houses of worship were reopened, the assemblies were reconstituted, and religious service was again

performed in many places where it had been interdicted. The military governors and the intendants immediately took alarm; they believed, or feigned to believe, that a general insurrection was taking place, and troops were sent against these poor peasants, who, pleading the solemn promises of the Edict of Nantes, had met together to read the Bible and to pray.

The Marquis d'Aguesseau, the father of the illustrious chancellor of the same name, and intendant of Languedoc, advised that a stop should be put to the barbarities of the soldiers; but Louvois refused, and ordered frightful executions. The peasants were tracked in the woods, and slaughtered by hundreds. "*It was a butchery without a combat*," says Rulhières. "Their places of worship were thrown down, and their houses razed. Pardon was offered to the prisoners on condition that they should abjure: they would not comply, and were hanged!"

The Reformers of Vivarais and Dauphiny, reduced to despair, sought to defend themselves by force. Louvois promised them an amnesty, but his promise was derisive. All the ministers and fifty other prisoners were exempted from it, without counting those that were sent to the galleys. The pastor, Isaac Hornel, an old man of seventy-two, who was accused of having fomented the disturbances, was condemned to be broken alive on the wheel, although the most inveterate criminals were never subjected to so terrible a punishment in those times. The executioner, who made himself drunk for the task, inflicted more than thirty blows upon him before he killed him, accompanying the torture with dastardly insults. Hornel died with the constancy of a martyr (16th of October, 1683).

In several provinces there were left no more than one or two places of worship, and these were interdicted under the least pretext. The church of Marennes, in Saintonge, for instance, which still remained, was soon suppressed in its turn, with accompanying circumstances of an odious nature. This church comprised from thirteen to fourteen thousand persons; but because, as was pretended, some who had relapsed, and some children of new converts had entered the places of worship, their services were prohibited by a decree notified at the very last moment, on the night before Sunday (1684).

On the sabbath, more than ten thousand of the faithful arrived before the doors of their place of worship, and among them were twenty-three children, who had been brought a distance of seven leagues for baptism. As the weather was extremely inclement, several died on the way. “The people, as they withdrew,” says Elie Bénoit, “loudly expressed their grief. Nothing was heard but cries, and weeping, and wailing. There was no restraint either in the streets or in the country. Parents and friends embraced in tears and without uttering a word. Men and women, with clasped hands, and eyes raised to heaven, clung to the holy place whither they had come, regardless of the severity of the season, to find consolation in praying to God; and yet, amidst so sad a scene, it was necessary that they should be watchful to give no new hold to their persecutors, by remaining in such numbers upon a spot where the decree against the pastors rendered such meetings unlawful.”[93]

It is gratifying to add, that if the persecution was great, the very sufferings of the people strengthened

their piety. There were provinces where the faithful made a journey of fifty and even sixty leagues to be present at the religious service; and not only did men in the vigour of manhood, but old men of eighty took the road, on foot, with staff in hand, enduring all the fatigues and dangers of the journey, in order that they might have the consolation of praying together with their brethren for the last time. The first-comers found an asylum in the place of worship, while the others halted around it, singing psalms or reading prayers. And as these assemblies would have been esteemed unlawful without the presence of a minister, the preacher passed the night with them, exhorting them by his tears as much as by his discourses, to remain steadfast in the faith.

Elsewhere, as all the ministers had been exiled or imprisoned, the intendants were under the necessity of summoning pastors from other places, to baptize the children, and to celebrate marriages, “without the addition of any sermon, exhortation, or service of the pretended Reformed religion.” These pastors were kept under guard, as if they were pest-smitten, and they were taken back as soon as they had given to the acts of the heretics the civil sanction, which in those times was confounded with the religious blessing.

The court was not yet satisfied. Louis XIV., who had just contracted a secret marriage with Madame de Maintenon, had passed from ignorant devotion to outrageous bigotry. He was irritated by the obstacles that delayed the general conversion of the Reformers, and, governed by the triumvirate of Father La Chaise, Madame de Maintenon, and the Marquis de Louvois, his mind gradually familiarized itself with the idea of altogether abrogating the Edict

of Nantes.

The Marquis de Châteauneuf, who had the charge of ecclesiastical affairs, was opposed to precipitating matters, saying, that “it was unwise to put too much fuel upon the fire.” Louvois himself seemed for a moment to incline towards moderation. The other secretaries of state were of the contrary opinion; and the aged chancellor Letellier,—a false and unfeeling man, of whom the Count de Grammont said, when he saw him come from an interview with the king, “I see a ferret licking his muzzle, bloody with the slaughter of fowls,”—wanted the work to be accomplished before his death.

Madame de Maintenon thus wrote on the 13th of August, 1684: “The king is prepared to do everything that shall be judged useful for the welfare of religion. This undertaking will cover him with glory before God and man.” Glory! She did not foresee that, far from increasing the glory of Louis, the Edict of Revocation would impress an indelible stain upon his reign, and that posterity would inquire whether he had not, by this single act, more injured the material power and the policy of France than he had benefited it by his conquest of Flanders, Alsatia, and Franche-Comté.

In the month of May, 1685, the clergy held a general assembly, and complimented the king upon the admirable success, which had attended his efforts to extirpate heresy. Louis was extolled above the greatest princes of Christian antiquity. The bishop of Valence and the coadjutor of Rouen said, “he had found the (Roman) Catholic church cast down and enslaved; but he had re-established it by his zeal; he had *without violence and without arms* induced all rational persons to abandon heresy, had subdued

their minds by winning their hearts with his favours, and had led back wanderers, who *would perchance never have returned to the bosom of the Church, had it not been for the flowery path he had thrown open to them*." We copy these words as they were actually spoken, and will add nothing to them!

Rulhières, who was permitted to search the state papers, when speaking of the intervention of the priests in the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, says, "I hold in my hands a collection of the letters of the clergy, some of which cause me to shudder."

XVII.

Troops had been encamped in Béarn, in 1685, to watch the movements of the Spanish army; and as Spain had sought a truce, Louvois, mindful of the plan adopted by Marillac in Poitou, obtained the king's permission to despatch some regiments to the districts inhabited by the Huguenots.

The Marquis de Boufflers, commander of the troops, and the intendant Foucault received, in July, the order to complete the conversion of the Béarnese. The latter brought a refined and systematic cruelty to his task, and perfected more than one species of torture. This was the recommencement of the *dragonnades*, which were soon to spread over all France.

Foucault announced that the king commanded all the Huguenots to return to the (Roman) Catholic unity, and to make a beginning of the business, drove some hundreds of Béarnese into a church by force, where the bishop of Lescar officiated. The doors were closed, and the unfortunate people were made to kneel by the force of blows, in order to receive the bishop's absolution from heresy: they were then admonished that if they returned to the Protestant church, they would be punished for relapsing.

The Reformed fled to the fields, the forests, the wildernesses, and the caverns of the Pyrenees. Foucault ordered them to be pursued like wild beasts; and when they were brought back to their dwellings, he loaded them with military billetings. The horrors committed in Poitou were renewed and even surpassed.

The dragoons or other soldiers (for troops of all kinds were employed), entered the houses of the Reformers with drawn swords, shouting: "*Kill! kill!* or let them become *Catholics*!" They wasted provisions, spoiled furniture, and destroyed or sold everything that fell into their hands to the peasants of the neighbourhood. Nor were the persons of the Calvinists spared. "Among other secrets taught them by Foucault," says the historian of the Edict of Nantes, "he ordered them to keep strict guard over those, who would not succumb to other tortures. The faithful executioners of these furious orders watched in relays, that they might not themselves sink under the torments they inflicted upon others. The sound of drums, blasphemies, shouts; the crashing of furniture, or throwing them one upon another; the agitation in which they kept these poor folks, to compel them to remain standing, and to keep their eyes open, were the means they employed to deprive them of repose. Pinching, pricking, buffeting, and suspending them with ropes, blowing tobacco smoke into their nostrils and mouths, and a hundred other cruelties, were the sport of these ruffians, who by such means reduced their hosts to a condition of not knowing what they did, and of promising everything to rid themselves of such barbarians. The women were forced to suffer indescribable indignities.... The monsters never showed signs of pity until they saw some one ready to die, and fainting with exhaustion. Then, with cruel compassion, they restored the sufferer to sense, in order that renewed strength might preserve their victim for fresh violence. Their whole study and endeavour was to invent torments which should be painful without being mortal, and to afflict these unhappy objects of their fury with every [suffering], which the human body could

endure without dying."[94]

They had been forbidden to kill [their victims]. Alas! how often was even this limit outstepped! How many unfortunates perished under this frightful treatment, not slain, it is true, but more cruelly immolated, than if they had fallen by the blade of the dagger!

Impelled by their fears, the Béarnese hastened to the priests in crowds to abjure. Of twenty-five thousand Reformers that had been counted in this province up to that time, not a thirtieth part remained. The clergy celebrated their triumph by a high mass, at which the Parliament were present in a body, and by general processions, in which the new converts were dragged along.

This success encouraged the court to employ the same means of conversion elsewhere; and in less than four months, Languedoc, Guienne, Saintonge, Aunis, Poitou, Vivarais, Dauphiny, Cevennes, Provence, and Gex, were scoured by similar *dragonnades*. A little later, the system was extended to the centre of the north of France, but with more precaution, lest the cries of the victims should trouble Versailles, where, as Madame de Sévigné relates, brilliant carousals, with promotions of the knights of the Holy Ghost, were held that year.

The most creditable historians are agreed respecting the excesses that accompanied these *dragonnades*. It was almost the same scene everywhere as at Béarn. Neither sex, age, nor degree was spared. Aged cavaliers, who had shed their blood for their country, had to suffer the same outrages. Even those, who were of high birth, and hoped to find a refuge in Paris or at the court, were maltreated or thrown into prison by *lettres de cachet*.

If any Huguenots held out against all this torture, they were, after being despoiled and ruined, flung into dungeons, whilst the women were immured in convents! Missionaries for the former, and Sisters of Mercy for the latter, who left their prisoners no single moment of peace until they had promised to abjure, followed upon the heels of the soldiers.

If, sinking under these persecutions, they fell into a state of stupor, imbecility, or insanity, they were made to sign mechanically a piece of paper containing an abjuration, or to pronounce words, of which they no longer knew the meaning, and then they were reputed to be (Roman) Catholics. Or again, they were drawn into an ambush, as happened to the barons de Montbeton, de Meauzac, and de Vicose, and people, posted for the purpose, forced them down upon their knees, that the bishop might give them absolution.

The abjuration of the head of the house was not sufficient; he was not exempt from the billeting of soldiers until he had induced his wife, children, and servants to follow his example; and if any fled, the father of the family was responsible for them until they were recaptured.

The Reformers were summoned to a general meeting, before the arrival of the soldiers; at which, according to the time and the intention, the commanding officer of the troops, the bishop or some other authority, announced that the king would no longer suffer heretics in his dominions, and that all must, willingly or unwillingly, embrace (Roman) Catholicism immediately. Care was always taken to gain over some persons beforehand, who by their station or advice, might help to influence the rest.

When the poor folks answered that they were

ready to sacrifice their property and even their life for the king, but not their conscience, then the dragoons were brought on the scene. After a few days, there was a new convocation, a new appeal, and generally all resistance ceased. The terror became at length so great that the mere announcement of the approach of the military, was sufficient to drive the Reformed people, conscious of their helplessness, to pronounce the formula of abjuration. It was the opinion of many that it might be lawful to bend before violence, provided their internal faith remained intact; many also abjured, to secure the opportunity of flight.

It is also to be remarked that the formulas of recantation were often drawn up in such a way that they did not bind the conscience very strictly. What the public officers and the priests were most desirous of, was a large number of proselytes. Many of the Reformers simply said: “I rejoin.” Others were even authorized to frame their act of abjuration in these terms: “I acknowledge and confess the Catholic and Apostolic church of Rome, as it was in the time of the apostles;” or, “conformably to the doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ;” or, again, “while loving God and Jesus Christ, and adoring Him only with the fitting worship.”

But this was, at least on the part of the priesthood, only a concession for the moment. “They were soon revisited after a few days,” says the pastor Claude in his *Plaintes des Protestants de France*, “and did not escape until they had signed another formulary, whereby they were entirely committed; and what was most impudent, is, that they were obliged at the same time to acknowledge that they embraced the Romish religion of their own free will, and without

any inducement through fear, or other extraneous cause. If, after that, they made any difficulty about going to mass, if they did not communicate, if they were not present at processions, if they did not confess, if they did not tell their beads, if they allowed a sigh or a murmur of complaint to escape them, they were chastised with fines, and with a recommencement of the billeting of soldiers upon them."[95]

What made a particular impression upon the population was the material fact of the *dragonnades*. The spiritual circumstance of the compulsory communions could but strike the thinking and the pious man much more forcibly. To open, one may say, the mouths of the heretics with the point of the bayonet, and to thrust the host into them,—that sacred host of which the (Roman) Catholic church teaches that he who receives it unworthily is guilty in the highest degree—[could but do so]; and thus was a crime enjoined even by those who proclaimed [an unworthy communion] to be the greatest of crimes! Is there at this day a bishop, or a priest, who does not recoil with horror from the bottom of his heart from the thought? The Spanish Inquisition had at least the decency to prevent its prisoners from receiving the communion, and being present at mass. There were, indeed, some noble and pious protests [offered] in the era of Louis XIV., in particular by those of the Jansenist party, to whom we shall have to refer; but the majority of the clergy, led on by the Jesuits, compelled the unfortunate beings to take the host, "whose pallor and tremblings," writes Basnage, "showed that their whole soul revolted from the act."

The king's council, which cared only for external acts, were no less astonished than rejoiced at the

innumerable abjurations. Louvois wrote to his father, the chancellor, about the beginning of September, 1685: “Sixty thousand conversions have been made in the district of Bordeaux, and twenty thousand in that of Montauban. So rapid is the progress, that before the end of the month ten thousand Reformers will not be left in the district of Bordeaux, where there were one hundred and fifty thousand on the 15th of last month.”

The Duke de Noailles informed Louvois, at the same time, of the conversions at Nismes, Uzès, Alais, Villeneuve, &c. “The most influential people of Nismes,” said he, “abjured in the church, the day following my arrival. There was a slackening afterwards, but matters soon assumed a proper face, with the help of some billetings upon the dwellings of the most obstinate.... The number of Reformers in this province is about two hundred and forty thousand; I believe that all this will be expedited before the termination of the month.”

It was thought necessary to make these abjurations more secure by a legal measure; Louis XIV.—surrounded and besieged by his chancellor and his minister of war; ill-informed, perhaps, of what was passing in his kingdom—for he lived in the midst of favourites, like an Asiatic sultan in the seclusion of his palace—Louis XIV., to whom Louvois and La Chaise had promised that the work should not cost one drop of blood; having also consulted, it is said, the archbishops Harlay and Bossuet—Louis XIV. signed the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes on the 18th of October, 1685. God still permitted him to sit thirty years longer upon the throne, that he might bear the burden of the crime he had committed.

The preamble of the act of Revocation bears

testimony to the monstrous lie, with which the king's mind had been abused: "We now see," it says, "with that just gratitude we owe to God, that our endeavours have terminated as we proposed, since the better and the greater portion of our subjects of the pretended Reformed religion have embraced Catholicism, and the Edict of Nantes therefore remaineth useless."

Here is a recapitulation of the Revocatory Edict: Prohibition for the future of all lawful exercise of the Reformed worship in the kingdom. Exile of the pastors after the lapse of fifteen days, and, in the interim, prohibition to perform their functions, under penalty of the galleys. The promise to the pastors who recanted, of a pension greater by one-third than that they before enjoyed, with a reversion of one-half to their widows. Dispensation from academic studies for those of the pastors, who were desirous of entering the profession of the law. Parents were prohibited from instructing their children in the Reformed religion, and were enjoined to have them baptized and sent to (Roman) Catholic churches, under penalty of a fine of five hundred livres. All the refugees were ordered to return to France within four months, or to suffer confiscation of their property. The Reformers were forbidden to emigrate, under pain of the galleys for the men, and imprisonment for life for the women. Finally, the laws against those who relapsed, were confirmed.

The last article gave rise to a cruel mistake. It ran in these words: "At the most is it lawful for the said persons of the pretended Reformed religion, pending the pleasure of God to enlighten them, to dwell in the towns and places of our kingdom ... without being molested or troubled, under pretext of the said

Reformed religion, on condition, as aforesaid, that there shall be no exercise of worship." It would, therefore, appear that liberty of conscience at home, within the bosom of a family, was respected. The Reformed rejoiced at this relief amidst their misfortunes, and some even suspended their preparations for departure; but never was hope more bitterly disappointed.

The event showed, that these words, "*pending the pleasure of God to enlighten them*," signified, pending their conversion by the dragoons, like their co-religionists. Louvois wrote to the provinces: "His majesty desires that the severest rigour should be shown to those who will not conform to his religion, and those who seek the foolish glory of wishing to be the last, must be pushed to the utmost extremity."

The 18th of October, 1685, must be counted among the darkest days of France. It brought trouble, poverty, and humiliation upon many a generation.

The policy of Henry IV., of Richelieu, Mazarin, and even of Louis XIV. himself, was struck to the core. It was no longer possible to preserve the natural allies of France in Protestant Europe, when the world resounded with the piteous cries of the Reformed. All Protestantism rose against Louis XIV.: it found a leader in the prince of Orange, and the Parliamentary revolution of 1688 was the answer to the royal attempt of 1685.

Less powerful abroad, the country was weakened within. Emigration, of which we shall speak in the next book, assumed immense proportions. The wise Vauban wrote, only a year after the Revocation, that "France had lost a hundred thousand inhabitants, sixty millions of money, nine thousand sailors, twelve thousand tried soldiers, six hundred officers,

and its more flourishing manufactures." The Duke de Saint-Simon says in his memoirs, that "commerce was ruined in every branch, and a quarter of the kingdom was sensibly depopulated."

From this moment (as all historians have remarked), the fortunes of Louis XIV. declined; and some years after, beaten at Blenheim, Ramilies, and Malplaquet, this king, so fortunate and so superb in the beginning of his reign, humbly sued to Europe for peace: and hard, indeed, were the conditions which he obtained at Utrecht.[96] Throughout the whole of the eighteenth century, the kingdom bore the pain of this humiliation; and even down to our own times, at the Congress of Vienna.

The prestige of royalty was deeply wounded by the same blow. If there still remained the appearance of submission and respect, the mind began to revolt against the omnipotence of the monarch. It was asked, whether nations ought to confide every right and every power to a single man, who might be governed by a female favourite, by a confessor, by a foolish or a senseless passion for personal glory. In England, and in Holland, popular liberty had vehement apologists. In France, the pious Fénélon took the initiative, and was followed by Massillon, Montesquieu, Rousseau, the Abbés Mablay and Raynal, the Protestant Necker, and Mirabeau. These men, although of such different origin, ideas, and objects, all belong to the same family.

This was the political side of the question. In a social and moral point of view, the edicts promulgated from 1660 to 1685, the *dragonnades*, the Revocation, and the acts which were its inevitable consequence, attacked the very foundations, as it concerned two or three millions of

Frenchmen, of the sacred and inviolable principles of all human society, religion, family, and property. The Socialists of modern times have never carried their theories to such an extent, as did Louis XIV., the Jesuits, the (Roman) Catholic priesthood, and the magistracy against the Reformed. Let every one of these, then, take their share of the responsibility.

Finally, in a religious point of view, properly speaking, M. de Châteaubriand's sentence respecting the massacre of Saint Bartholomew,[97] which we have already mentioned elsewhere, has at this point a new and striking application. Beholding the narrow and pernicious bigotry of the king, the hideous profanations sanctioned by the body of the [Roman Catholic] clergy, the military transformed into missionaries, mourning and blood mingled with religion, all laws, human and divine, trodden underfoot by those, whose especial duty it was to defend them, beholding all this, the upper classes of the nation threw themselves into the wildest scepticism. On the death of Louis XIV. the court was full of unbelievers, and Voltaire sprung ready armed from the bosom of that generation.

It has been pretended that the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes was popular. If this were true, it would be the most overwhelming accusation against the Church of Rome, that it had thus educated and fashioned France. But it is only half true. The Revocation was popular among the priests, who, by the mouths of Fléchier and Bossuet, exhorted their hearers to make the heavens resound with their thanksgivings and their acclamations. It was popular with courtiers, the Marquis Dangeau and Madame de Sévigné, who worshipped the very footsteps of the monarch. It was popular with the lowest classes of

the country, particularly in the southern provinces, who blindly obeyed the inspirations of their spiritual guides. Perhaps, at the furthest, it was popular with some ministers and government officials, who saw no hope for civil and political unity, but through religious unity. But was the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes popular among the officers of the army and navy, among the provincial nobility, even among the court nobility, who had not entirely sacrificed their independence of mind, or even among the middle classes, destined to rise in influence in the eighteenth century, and to govern in the nineteenth? Good reason for doubting it may be gathered from what we have stated above; and if we can now perceive but few traces of their opposition, it is because it was difficult to utter a single word freely under Louis XIV.

To sum up all in one word—everything suffered by the Revocation; royalty suffered; the political strength of France suffered; national wealth, industry, and morality suffered; the spirit of religion suffered; nay, even the (Roman) Catholic clergy suffered. Thus evil begets nothing but misfortune!

BOOK IV.

FROM THE REVOCATION OF THE EDICT OF NANTES UNTIL THE EDICT OF TOLERATION. (1685-1787.)

I.

Two opposite influences divided this period: the traditional spirit of persecution, which still excited cruel violence and frightful executions during the latter half of the eighteenth century; and the new spirit of toleration, which, passing from the conscience of men of worth into the writings of philosophers, from these writings into the convictions of the intelligent classes, from these classes into the legislature and councils of the king, at length acquired an irresistible authority, and compelled even the priesthood to bow before maxims more true, more moral, more Christian than their own.

When he affixed the seal of the state to the Edict of Revocation, the Chancellor Letellier pronounced, with accents of joy and triumph, the *Nunc dimittis* of Simeon. He, and Louis XIV. with him, believed that the Edict would be a final stroke [of policy]. It was then, on the contrary, that the whole strife again began.

So long as the Reformed had had anything to lose, were it only a shadow of their ancient liberty, were it only the empty name of the Edict of Henry IV., the majority had confined themselves to the limit of petitions and complaints. They always trusted that the sacredness of the law, justice, and humanity, would reappear in the heart of the monarch, and they carried their resignation to such an extent, as to originate the proverbial saying: “a Huguenot’s patience.” But everything—absolutely everything, was lost; they consulted no longer aught than what they owed to their conscience and their outraged faith; and by the persevering resolution to brave the

most barbarous edicts at the cost of exile, the galleys, and death, they ended by wearying the very ferocity of their executioners.

A solemn lesson springs out of the epoch on which we are about to enter. It is easier to make martyrs than apostates; and the violence of the sword, unless there be total extermination (an impossibility in the reign of Louis XIV.), is broken by the power of thought.

The act of Revocation was rigorously executed against the pastors. The letter of the edict, which accorded fifteen days' delay for departure, was overstepped. Claude received an order to quit [the country] within twenty-four hours, and "*the man of sedition*," as Madame de Maintenon called him, was accompanied by one of the king's servants, who never lost sight of him for an instant. The other pastors of Paris obtained two days for their preparations. Those of the provinces had a little more time extended to them, but by a complete denial of human and social rights, their children, under the age of seven years, were taken away from them. Some were even forced to abandon infants, which their mothers were nursing, and started on the road of banishment with wives, whose grievous woe scarcely left them strength to accept their support.

It had been calculated that many of the pastors would abjure; there were, however, but very few recantations; for even those ministers, who had yielded in the first movement of stupor and fear, almost all returned to their ancient faith. Old men of eighty and ninety years of age were seen bent on devoting the few remaining days of their life to distant journeys, and more than one died before he could reach an asylum where he might rest his

wayworn feet and aching head.

The arrival of these pastors produced an inexpressible sensation in the foreign countries to which they went. On all sides people hastened, with indignant and pitying hearts, and tearful eyes, to salute these venerable confessors of the Gospel, who, leaning on their traveller's staff, came ahungered and in rags, weeping for their children and their flocks, left in the hands of the persecutors, to sit beside the hearth of hospitality. A loud and fearful cry rose throughout all Protestant Christendom against Louis XIV., and even the (Roman) Catholics of those lands felt the flush of burning shame mantle upon their foreheads as they thought of their dishonoured church.

The faithful followed their leaders in crowds. It was in vain that laws, increasing in cruelty, condemned the men who tried to flee from their native soil, to perpetual imprisonment at the galleys, the women to seclusion for life, and both to forfeiture of goods; it was in vain they sentenced those to the same penalties, and shortly afterwards to death, who gave them assistance; it was in vain that a part of the victims' spoils were promised to the informer. Emigration spread from province to province, and foiled the despotism of Louis.

We cannot in our times form any conception of such cruel laws; for, in short, if the king would endure but one religion in France, he ought at least to have sanctioned the departure from the realm, of those who were not, or refused to be, of it. This is so elementary a principle of natural justice, that even the Spanish Inquisition and the League had always permitted a choice between banishment and abjuration. Louis XIV. by an unheard-of abuse of

power, would not permit it. He regarded his compromised *glory* alone, and did not see that no one compromised it so much as he did himself.

The language of these ordinances is as inconceivable as their grounds. Words assumed a monstrous meaning. Thus, we read that flight to foreign parts became "*criminal disobedience*," as if it were a crime to abandon everything rather than deny one's faith! Again, we read that the fugitives were guilty of ingratitude for not having profited by the permission to return to France, as if there had not been imposed as the absolute condition of their return, the necessity of rebelling against the God of their conscience. To such a depth did Louis descend under the twofold prompting of his pride and Father La Chaise!

Guards were placed at the entrance of the towns, at river-ferries, in the ports, on the bridges, the highways, at every avenue leading to the frontiers, and thousands of peasants joined the troops posted from distance to distance, that they might earn the reward promised to those who stopped the fugitives. Everything failed. The emigrants purchased passports, which were sold to them by the very secretaries of the governors, or by the clerks of the ministers of state. They bought over the sentinels with money, giving as much as six thousand and even eight thousand livres as the price of escape. Some, more daring, fought their way across the frontiers, sword in hand.

The majority marched at night, by remote and solitary paths, concealing themselves in caverns during the day. They had *itineraries* prepared expressly for this kind of travelling. They went down precipices, or climbed mountain-heights, and

assumed all sorts of disguises. Shepherds, pilgrims, soldiers, huntsmen, valets, merchants, mendicants: they were always fugitives. Many, to avoid suspicion, pretended to sell chaplets and rosaries.

The eyewitness Bénoit has given us a minute account:—"Women of quality, even sixty and seventy years of age, who had, so to speak, never placed a foot upon the ground except to cross their apartments, or to stroll in an avenue, travelled a hundred leagues to some village, which had been indicated by a guide. Girls of fifteen, of every rank, exposed themselves to the same hazard. They drew wheelbarrows, they bore manure, panniers, and other burdens. They disfigured their faces with dyes, to embrown their complexion, with ointments or juices that blistered their skin, and gave them a wrinkled aspect. Women and girls were seen to counterfeit sickness, dumbness, and even insanity. Some went disguised as men; and some, too delicate and small to pass as grown men, donned the dress of lackeys, and followed on foot, through the mud, a guide on horseback, who assumed the character of a man of importance. Many of these females reached Rotterdam in their borrowed garments, and hastening to the foot of the pulpit, before they had time to assume a more decent garb, published their repentance of their compulsory signature."[98]

The sea facilitated the evasion of a host of the Reformed. They hid themselves in bales of merchandise, in casks, under heaps of charcoal. They huddled together in holes in the ship's hold, and there were children who passed whole weeks in these insupportable hiding-places without uttering a cry that might betray them. Sometimes the peril of an open boat was hazarded without a mouthful of

provisions, the preparation of which might have prevented the flight of the fugitives, who thus put to sea with only a little water or snow, with which mothers moistened the lips of their babes.

Thousands of emigrants perished of fatigue, cold, hunger, or shipwreck, and by the bullets of the soldiery. Thousands of others were captured, chained to murderers, dragged across the kingdom to inspire their brethren with greater fear, and were condemned to labour at the oar on board convict vessels. The galleys of Marseilles were filled with these unfortunates, among whom were ancient magistrates, officers, people of gentle blood, and old men. The women were crowded into the convents and the tower of Constance, at Aigues-Mortes. But neither threats, nor dangers, nor executions, could prevail against the energy and heroic perseverance of an oppressed conscience.

The court became alarmed at the depopulation of the country and the ruin of industry. It thought that it was less a matter of faith that excited the French to flee from France, than the attraction of danger, and one day it therefore threw open all the outlets from the country. The next day, finding that the emigration had only multiplied, it closed them.

Touched by so great and so noble a misfortune, foreign nations rivalled each other in the display of their sympathy for the refugees. England, Switzerland, Holland, Prussia, Denmark, Sweden, generously met their first wants, and it never appeared more clearly, according to the remark of a contemporary, that the fountain of charity is inexhaustible. The more there was given, the more it seemed necessary to give. Private individuals contended with their governments in the distribution

of relief. The fugitives were received with open arms: they were furnished with the means of work, with houses, and even churches; and they repaid this liberal hospitality by the example of their faith, a life of probity, and an industrious activity that enriched their adopted countries. “The French Protestants carried to England,” says Lemontey, “the secret and use of the valuable machinery which has been the foundation of her prodigious fortune, while the just complaint of these exiles cemented the avenging league of Augsburg.”[99]

It is difficult to fix the number of the refugees precisely. The figures indicated by Vauban have been already noticed. An intendant of Saintonge wrote, in 1698, that his province had lost a hundred thousand Reformers. Languedoc had lost from forty to fifty thousand before the war of the Camisards,[100] and Guienne at least as many. The emigration was proportion ably greater still in the Lyonnese and Dauphiny, on account of their proximity to the frontiers. Whole villages were abandoned, and many towns were half deserted. Manufactories were closed by hundreds; certain branches of industry entirely disappeared, and a vast extent of land went altogether out of cultivation.

Voltaire says, that in the space of three years, nearly fifty thousand families quitted the kingdom, and were followed by hosts of others. A pastor of the wilderness, Antoine Court, estimates the number at eight hundred thousand persons. Sismondi reckons that if the lowest numbers be taken, there remained in France somewhat more than a million of Reformed, and that from three to four hundred thousand established themselves in other countries. M. Capefigue, a writer hostile to the Reformation,

who consulted the population tables of the general districts, calculates the emigration at two hundred and twenty-five or two hundred and thirty thousand souls, namely, one thousand five hundred and eighty ministers, two thousand three hundred elders, fifteen thousand gentlemen, and the remainder consisting almost entirely of traders and artisans. It is worthy of remark that the intendants made these returns in the first years of the Revocation, and that they were interested in showing the number of the emigrants to be as small as possible, in order to avoid the reproach of negligence.[101]

It appears probable that from the years 1669 to 1760, emigration, which was more than once renewed and suspended, according to the alternatives of persecution and repose, drove out of France, without counting those who returned at the end of a few years, four or five hundred thousand persons, who generally belonged to the most enlightened, the most industrious, and the most moral portion of the nation.

Thirteen hundred refugees passed through Geneva in one week. England formed eleven regiments of French volunteers, and twenty-two French churches rose in London. An entire suburb of that metropolis was peopled by refugees. Holland won back by the emigration more than she had been deprived of by the invasions of Louis XIV., and colonies of Huguenots were founded even in North America, and at the Cape of Good Hope. The name of these and their children has survived everywhere with honour.

This emigration has been sometimes compared with that of the year 1792; but the difference is much greater than the resemblance. The emigrants of the Revolution had only lost aristocratic privileges;

the refugees of the Revocation had been despoiled of their very means of religious and civil existence. The first, at least those who emigrated at the beginning, left their country, because they would not accept the common law of equal rights; the latter, because they were deprived of that common law. The emigration of 1792 was composed of only one class of individuals, who had no other profession than that of arms; the emigration of 1685 comprised all the constituent elements of a people—merchants, manufacturers, mechanics, labourers. Moreover, the refugees founded numerous and useful establishments, of which many yet still remain, while the later emigrants have nowhere left enduring traces of their passage.

It is equally difficult to calculate the number of emigrants, who perished in the attempts to escape, in party fights, in prison, on the scaffold, and at the galleys, from the Edict of Revocation to the Edict of Toleration of Louis XVI. Sismondi thinks that the number of those who perished is equal to that of the emigrants; that is to say, according to his calculations, three or four hundred thousand. This amount would seem to be too high. Yet Boulainvillers assures us that, under the intendancy of Lamoignon de Bâville, in the single province of Languedoc, a hundred thousand persons fell victims to a premature death, and that a tenth perished by fire, strangulation, or the wheel. Probably a hundred thousand should be added for the rest of the kingdom in the eighteenth century. Thus two hundred thousand Frenchmen were sacrificed after an edict of pacification, which had lasted nearly ninety years! Such were the new and bloody hecatombs, that were immolated upon the altars of intolerance!

II.

The Protestants—we may now employ this name, as its use became general even in ecclesiastical documents—the Protestants, who had remained in the kingdom, were still the prey of the *dragonnades*, after the Edict of Revocation, each time they endeavoured to raise themselves. Those of the principality of Orange and the Messin country, who had hoped to find in their privileged position a guarantee against violence, were compelled to submit to that [which had been inflicted upon others]. The Lutherans of Alsace alone were spared, on account of their numbers and the recent diplomatic conventions, which protected them.

At Paris, some little moderation was observed, for fear of disturbing, as we have already remarked, the *fêtes* and the repose of Louis. Nevertheless, four days after the Revocation, the place of worship at Charenton was demolished to the last stone, and the members of the flock were ordered to join the religion of the king without delay.

As they showed no alacrity in obeying, the principal elders were imprisoned by means of *lettres de cachet*. Next, the Marquis de Seignelay summoned a hundred of the Notables to his mansion, and desired them, in the presence of the procurator-general and the lieutenant of police La Reynie, immediately to sign an act of union. On several exclaiming against this brutal conduct, the doors were immediately shut, and they were told with vehement threats that they would not be permitted to return until they had signed—an unworthy ambush, an act of violence and extortion more characteristic of a bandit of Calabria, than of a

secretary of state, and the grandson of the great Colbert.

All the Protestants of France were required, according to the terms of the edict, to send their children to (Roman) Catholic schools, and to have them taught the (Roman) Catholic catechism. A new ordinance directed that the children, from five to six years old, of those who were suspected of still adhering to the Reformed religion, should be taken away from them and confided to (Roman) Catholic relations, or be placed elsewhere. But this measure overstepped the possibility of execution. There were not sufficient colleges, convents, or hospitals in France to hold so many victims. The administrators of the laws were obliged to confine themselves to the children of the rich, who could afford to pay an alimentary pension, and in particular to girls of tender age. This detestable kidnapping continued during a great part of the century, and many families still preserve a painful remembrance of the losses they experienced by such abductions.

War was declared against books as well as individuals. The district commanders received orders to visit the houses of the Reformed with the index of the archbishop of Paris, already mentioned, and to seize all suspected writings. These domiciliary visits, which were repeated at intervals, have destroyed to the very last copy, a great number of previous works. The Bible even, was especially confiscated and burned with implacable hatred.

The priests were not able to give regular instruction to this multitude of pretended converts. Capuchin friars and the like were employed, who were gross, impudent, unlettered, and, in many cases, most immoral men. They filled the Protestants

with disgust and contempt. Children stopped their mouths with their objections, and persons of mature age imbibed a deeper aversion for a church that employed ministers of such a character.

Recourse was had to new measures of rigour to drag from the reluctant acts of Catholicity. The curates made a roll-call of "*the re-united brethren*" who were placed upon benches apart from the true Catholics; and those who were so unfortunate as not to be present at the service, or the communion, were exposed to severe punishment. The military supported this inquisition to the utmost, and some intendants, who were desirous of avoiding restitution of the property of which the Reformers had been deprived, established an inspector in each parish, whose business it was to examine whether the new converts went regularly to mass, how they behaved there, whether they attended the Paschal communion, and faithfully observed the commandments of the Church. The *régime*, in fine, of the ninth and tenth centuries was restored, and Frenchmen were treated in the same manner as the savages of Paraguay had been by the Jesuits. The king perceived that matters had been carried too far, and secretly wrote to the intendants not to interfere any further to such an extent in the transactions of private life.

In spite of the rigour of the laws, and in some manner owing to that very rigour, Protestants reappeared on all sides. Full of horror with respect to (Roman) Catholicism, they had feigned to embrace it under the sabres of the dragoons, and cursing the law which, by an infamous sacrilege, compelled them to receive the communion in the Church of Rome, although they did not believe in its dogmas,—

shame, remorse, the desire of expiating the error they had committed, all served to reanimate their energy. They held meetings in the wilds, on the summit of mountains, in deep ravines, and vowed, in the name of God, to live and die in the Reformed faith.

This opposition particularly manifested itself in Lower Languedoc, Vivarais, and Cevennes, which abounded in retreats almost inaccessible to the soldier. The principal events of our history are henceforth concentrated in those provinces. At the commencement of the French Reformation, the provinces around Paris took the first rank. Then came the turn of Béarn, Poitou, Guienne, and Saintonge. Next the Reformation was apparent only in the mountain-heights of Languedoc. The other provinces of the south followed the movement, but at a later period and with less lustre. The centre, the west, and the north long confined themselves to the silence of domestic worship.

It will be observed also that the meetings of the Protestants at the end of the seventeenth century, and the opening of the eighteenth, presented a striking feature of resemblance to those of the first days of Farel and Calvin; for they comprised scarcely any but the poor, and people of low degree. The peasantry of Cevennes united with the artisans of Meaux; but the nobles, and the rich inhabitants, had abjured, or sought an asylum in foreign lands, and nearly all those who had neither fallen nor fled, secluded themselves from the rest. From 1559 to 1685 the French Reformation reckoned great families, who perhaps brought with them less religious vitality than political passions; after the Revocation, it again recruited itself from the popular

masses, and gathered there a strength, a devotion, and a constancy, to which it had for some time been a stranger.

Upon the news of these meetings, some of the pastors returned to France; and as they were not numerous enough for the task, they took assistants with them, who received the name of *preachers*. These were labourers, workmen, and shepherds, who without other preparation than their fervid zeal, rose in the meetings, and addressed pious exhortations to the audience, out of the abundance of their hearts. Some disorder of belief and conduct flowed from this, of which we shall have to speak.

Learning that the pretended converts were again beginning to celebrate their worship, the anger of the king, of his ministers, and of the Jesuits, was kindled to an excess of fury that knew no bounds. It was a phrenzy. The punishment of death was pronounced, in the month of July, 1686, against the pastors who had returned to France; the infliction of perpetual confinement in the galleys, against those who afforded them help, an asylum, or assistance of any kind; a reward of five thousand five hundred livres was promised to whoever should take a minister, or cause him to be taken; lastly, the punishment of death was pronounced against those who were discovered at a meeting. One is tempted to ask if such laws could have issued from the polished court of Louis XIV., that would have disgraced a race of cannibals.

On all sides the soldiers flew to the occupation of tracking the Reformers. It was, according to Voltaire's expression, "a hunt in a great enclosure." The Marquis de la Trousse, nephew of Madame de Sévigné, who commanded in Cevennes, scoured and

beat the country continually with his troops. When he heard the Protestants praying, or chanting psalms, he made his soldiers fire upon them, as if they were wild beasts. Yet these poor people were unarmed; they did not defend themselves; and if they could not escape by flight, they awaited death upon their knees, raising their hands to heaven, or embracing each other. The veracious and honest pastor, Antoine Court, says that "he was furnished with an exact list of the meetings massacred in different places, and that there were encounters in which three or four hundred persons, old men, women, and children, remained dead on the spot."

In the times of the Albigenses, or of the slaughters of Mérindol, an end would have been put to these meetings by an universal butchery, in which not even the infant at the domestic hearth would have been spared.

In the time of Louis XIV. manners had already become less barbarous than the laws; the arm of the smiter was partially arrested, and after sanguinary effusions, compelled to stay.

This was not the only retrograde step. When the Reformers were on their death-bed, fearing no longer the punishments of men, and awaiting the judgment of God, they refused to receive the sacraments of the [Roman Catholic] church. The result of this was [the promulgation of] a fresh law, not less atrocious than the preceding, but which it was impossible to carry into execution for any great length of time. Perpetual confinement at the galleys, or imprisonment for life, with confiscation of property, was decreed against the sick, who should recover after having rejected the *viaticum*; and against those who should die, in the same refusal, vengeance upon their corpses, which

were doomed to be drawn upon hurdles, and then flung into the common sewers.

Rulhières says that to obtain the signature of Louis to this law, he was persuaded that it was simply one of commination. However, it was applied in some places by the priests and the dregs of the populace, and the soil of France was polluted by these hideous sights.

Some moribund Protestants themselves caused the priests to be summoned to their bedside, in order that they might declare their rejection of the sacraments of the Church, because they saw in this an act of reparation before God and man. Then their corpses, or their mangled members, were dragged through the streets along the gutters, amidst the execrations of a drunken mob; so horrible was such a spectacle at Calais, that an executioner fled to avoid participating in it, and nothing but the fear of death could induce him to return. Elsewhere, the Protestants themselves were forced to drag the bodies of their brethren. When one of them fell fainting to the ground, and was killed by the soldiers, he was thrown upon the same hurdle. Guards were placed about the corpses to prevent their being carried off by relations and buried in secret.

This was outstepping anew the limit of possibility in the reign of Louis XIV. All respectable people, (Roman) Catholics as well as Reformed, raised a shout of horror; and although the law was not formally repealed, the intendants were ordered not to execute it except in extreme cases. The secretary of state for ecclesiastical affairs wrote to them, on the 6th of February, 1687, that his majesty released them in some degree from the execution of this ordinance. “With regard to those,” he said, “who,

when dying, make similar declarations (the refusal of the sacraments) through a mere motive of obstinacy, and whose relations disapprove of such rejection, it will be well not to raise the question and not to prosecute. Therefore, his majesty thinks fit that you should inform the ecclesiastics that they are, on these occasions, enjoined not to summon so readily judges as witnesses, in order that it may not be necessary to execute the declaration in its fullest extent." This applied to the curates, who, *viaticum* in hand, went to the houses of the heretics, escorted by judges and ushers, in order to inflame the passions of the populace.

Thus difficulties sprang up at the very moment when it was expected that they had all been overcome. There was only one course to take, since it was no longer possible to butcher a million of Frenchmen: this was to retrace the steps that had been taken; but the court had not the courage to do this, in spite of the advice of Vauban, who, from the year 1686, had dared to pronounce the word *retractation*, and it floated between the impossibility of overcoming and the shame of acknowledging its error.

The prisons were overflowed; the galleys choked; and as there were no means of lodging so many convicts, a great number were transported to America, where they nearly all miserably perished. Among those who remained in the convict vessels, or were condemned to capital punishment, many displayed great examples of fidelity and resolution. Jurieu enumerated these instances in his *Pastoral Letters*, published every fortnight, immediately after the Revocation. We will extract only one or two.

A retired captain of the merchant service, Elie

Neau, had been sent to the hulks of Marseilles for having attempted to fly his country. There he became a missionary and preacher. He exhorted his brethren, consoled them, and set them an example of patience and virtue. “I do not,” he wrote to his pastor, a refugee in Holland, “I do not wish any evil to those who have placed me in fetters. On the contrary, while they thought they did me harm, they have in reality done me much good; for I understand now that true freedom consists in being liberated from sin.”

The (Roman) Catholic almoner, seeing that he strengthened his companions in misery, styled him a plague-spot and a poisoner, and even protested that he would not say mass while this man remained on the galley. Elie Neau was therefore shut up in a dungeon of the citadel in 1694.

He remained there for several years, deprived of light, air, and frequently of food, covered with a sack, a convict cap placed upon his head, and deprived of all books, even (Roman) Catholic books, and yet he wrote to his pastor: “If I told you that in place of the sun, the light of nature, the sun of grace shines with its divine rays in our hearts (he had two companions in his dungeon)!... It is true that we have many sad moments, which are terrible to the flesh; but God is always near, to impose silence upon us, and to soften the bitterness by His infinite goodness.”

Elie Neau was restored to liberty with other victims of the Protestant faith, through the intervention of the king of England. It will be remembered that France had already suffered a like disgrace in the reign of Henry II.[102]

The preachers and the pastors were doomed to certain death. There was no chance of pardon or pity

for them. The first who was led to the gallows was a young man of Nismes, named Fulcran Rey. He had just completed his theological studies, and had not yet received pastoral ordination. He began, however, to preach, “convinced,” says Jurieu, “that when the house is on fire, it is the duty of every one to aid in extinguishing the flames.” Rey had taken the precaution to write a farewell letter to his father, knowing that he would not long escape the persecutors. He was, in effect, sold by some wretch, and arrested in the town of Anduze.

Promises and threats were simultaneously used to induce him to change his religion. The priests, the judges, and the intendants, held out to him the most signal favours if he would abjure, and a frightful death if he refused. His steadfastness was unbroken; Rey had welcomed martyrdom beforehand. He only asked one thing, and that was that he might not see his father and mother, the sight of whom he feared would unnerve him.

When the sentence was read to him that condemned him to be hanged, after the torture, he said, “I am treated more mildly than my Saviour, by being sentenced to so mild a death. I had prepared myself to be broken upon the wheel or burned.” Then raising his eyes to heaven, he thanked the Almighty.

On his way to the gallows, he met many who had abjured, and seeing them bathed in tears, he addressed fraternal exhortations to them. He would also have confessed his faith from the scaffold: “But a sermon,” says Jurieu, “from such a pulpit and by such a preacher, was too formidable, and a number of drummers had been placed round the gibbet, who were ordered to commence beating their drums all

together." Fulcran Rey perished at Beaucaire, the 7th of July, 1686, at the age of twenty-four years.

Astonishing vicissitude of human affairs! Who would have said to Louis XIV. that the grandson of his child, a king of France, would also have his voice drowned by drummers in like manner around his scaffold? O princes, be mindful how you accustom your subjects to the sight of sanguinary executions! You are but men yourselves, and the day of misfortune may overtake you likewise!

Claude Brousson was the most renowned of the martyrs of this era, and has left the deepest traces of admiration and commiseration in the memory of the Protestant people. He was born at Nismes in 1647, and practised at the bar of Castres and Toulouse. So long as he could defend the cause of the oppressed churches before the tribunal, he was desirous of no other avocation; but when he was no longer permitted to plead, he devoted his oratorical powers to preaching. He had been offered in vain the place of a counsellor of Parliament, if he would change his religion; but the conscience of Claude Brousson was one of those that could not be bought.

He was ordained to the ministry at Cevennes, amidst the sound of grape-shot, that spread death amongst the ranks of his brethren; and thenceforth, with no other shelter than savage rocks, the woods, or some isolated hut, he unceasingly preached the word of the Gospel. When he was too closely surrounded, he quitted France; but he afterwards returned, at the call of his soul and the wailings of the people. His wife and friends constantly besought him not to hazard his life, but they could not restrain him.

In 1693 a price was set upon his head, and five

hundred livres were promised to whoever should deliver him up dead or alive. Brousson's only reply to this atrocious proclamation was a calm and simple apology, addressed to the intendant of the province.

His sermons, which appeared at Amsterdam, in 1695, under the title of *The Mystic Manna of the Desert*, are replete with the same feeling. It might be expected that discourses composed under a forest oak, or upon the rock beside a torrent, by one proscribed, and pronounced in meetings that ofttimes terminated in fearful massacres, would be impressed with a dark and vehement exaggerated. Yet there is nothing of this in the *Mystic Manna*. The language of this preacher was more moderate and more gladsome than that of Saurin in the peaceful church of the Hague; he only saw in persecution the hand of God, and his words were only burning when he censured his hearers.

Claude Brousson was at length captured at Oléron, in Béarn, in the year 1698, and transferred to Montpellier. He might have escaped at the passage of the canal of Languedoc; but believing that his hour was come, he did not. In his interrogatory he accepted, without any opposition, the accusations respecting his exercising the ministerial office, but he denied in the most energetic terms a reproach which was absolutely false, that he had ever conspired to introduce Marshal Schomberg into France at the head of a foreign army.

On the 4th of November he was led to the scaffold, and his voice was stifled by the rolling of eighteen drums. "I have executed more than two hundred condemned," said the hangman some days after, "but no one made me tremble so much as M. Brousson. When he was put to the torture, the commissioner

and the judges turned pale and trembled more than he did, who raising his eyes, prayed to God. I would have fled, had I been able, rather than have put so honest a man to death. If I dared speak, I could say many things about him; certainly, he died like a saint."

III.

Generous protestations were speedily raised as soon as it became generally known what evils had followed upon the Revocation of the edict, and to what extremities the council was reduced in order to maintain the delusive fiction of the unity of faith in the kingdom.

The Jansenists must be first mentioned. They declared that their blood curdled at the thought of the sacrilegious communions forced upon the heretics, and rejected as a monstrous offence against the Deity himself, a proselytism only successful under the terror of dragoons, the galleys, and gibbets.

The bishops of Grenoble and Saint-Pons deserve an honourable mention. The former addressed a letter condemnatory of the forced communions to the curates of his diocese. The latter wrote to the commander of the troops, that all compulsion in such a matter was impious. “It is,” he said, “veritable sacrilege. And it could be wished that the unhappy wretches who are guilty of these abominations, and the ministers of the altar who are the instruments of them, were cast into the sea, according to the words of the Scripture, with a millstone about their necks; for they not only confirm the Huguenots in their unbelief, but they also shake the thereby wavering faith of the Catholics.”

Many honest and pious curates, moreover, refused to discharge the office of informers, and to torture until the actual moment of death, the souls that declined their ministry. But the Jesuits and the great body of the clergy persisted in urging and employing

measures of severity. Fénélon wrote from Saintonge in 1686, “The Jesuits here are a set of obstinates, who have no other words for the Protestants than fines and imprisonment in this world, and the devil and hell in the next. We have had infinite trouble to stop these good fathers from bursting into violent exclamations against our mildness.”

It is at first sight a singular thing, to see on one side the Jesuits so notorious for their equivocal piety, for their accommodative morality, the inventors of *easy devotion*, soliciting the most violent measures against the Protestants; and, on the other side, the Jansenists, so rigid in their articles of faith, and so austere in their practice, insisting upon a moderate course. But surprise ceases when we reflect that the former sought only for power, the latter were chiefly solicitous for sincerity. The first were contented with (Roman) Catholics of any kind, provided they bent their necks to the yoke of the Church; the second wanted none but true Catholics, and would not take them at the hands of soldiers and hangmen.

The nomination of M. de Noailles (afterwards a cardinal), to the see of Paris, gave some strength to the Jansenist party, who had never been completely banished from the court or the councils. The archbishop presented a memorial to the king, in which he exhorted him to adopt measures more conformable with Christianity. He was seconded by many persons of importance, who had studied the political side of the question with attention. The superintendent Pontchartrain regretted the loss of so many artisans and industrious citizens. The Marquis d’Aguesseau, the Duke de Beauvilliers, the Marquis de Pompone, and the Marshal Catinat, avowed the same opinions. They were above all struck with the

progress of public poverty. They saw with affright that the force of destruction had at that epoch infinitely surpassed the power of production, and that the finances of the state were in a deplorable condition.

Vauban wrote the following lines to Louvois, which prove that the Revocation was not so popular with the enlightened classes as was pretended. “The forced conversions have inspired a general horror of the conduct of the ecclesiastics. If it is to be pursued, the necessity arises of exterminating the pretended new converts as rebels, or of banishing them as relapsed, or of confining them as madmen;—execrable projects, contrary to all the Christian virtues, moral and civil!”

Even the timid Racine himself raised his voice, in the tragedy of Esther, represented in 1689. “The choice of the subject,” says one of the commentators of this great poet, “permitted the strongest allusions. At the very moment when the Protestants were persecuted, the poet dared to make known the true maxims of the Gospel. He defended the oppressed in the presence of the royal oppressor. Lastly, he painted Louvois in the most odious light; and that there might be no possibility of his not being recognised, he put in the mouth of Haman the very words which had escaped from the minister in the delirium of his pride.”[103]

Fénélon prepared a memoir of remarkable boldness for the perusal of Louis XIV. This composition, which was for a long time unknown, was first published in 1825. In it the archbishop of Cambray represents Father La Chaise as a man of a gross and limited mind, afraid of sound virtue, loving only profane and libertine people, nourishing the

king's ignorance, and as *a blind man leading another*. He reproaches Louis himself in terms more severe than any we have used towards him in this history: "You do not love God," Fénélon thus addresses him; "you only fear Him with the fear of a slave; it is hell, and not God, whom you dread. Your religion only consists of superstition, and petty superficial practices. You are scrupulous about trifles, and callous with regard to terrible evils. You care for nought but your own glory and pleasure. You centre everything in yourself, as if you were the God of the earth, and all the rest had been created only to be sacrificed to you!"

Madame de Maintenon, having quarrelled with Father La Chaise, and being, moreover, no longer anxious about her future [condition], also seemed to side with the Archbishop de Noailles, Fénélon, and the Jansenists. She wrote [to this effect] to one of her relations: "You have been converted; do not meddle with the conversion of others. I avow to you that I do not wish to be responsible to God nor the king for all these conversions."

But the unbounded pride of Louis XIV., which revolted from the idea of confessing to his people and Europe that he had been mistaken, the remembrance of the praises that had been bestowed upon him for this measure, the influence of Father La Chaise, who treated as prevarication every project of milder proceedings, and the negative answers of the majority of the bishops to M. de Noaille's letter of consultation, as to the steps it would be advisable to take,—all prevented the plan of the Jansenists from succeeding.

These laborious negotiations only elicited the Edict of the 13th of April, 1698, which solemnly confirmed

the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. Not one of the laws of torture and blood was abolished: only it was commanded that new means should be employed for the better instruction of the united subjects.

The conduct of the governors and the intendants was not changed in the least by it. They acted towards the Reformers like proconsuls, possessed of the enormous privilege of imprisoning, condemning to the galleys, dragging to the scaffold, shooting, abducting children, and confiscating property, without a single judicial form. Intolerance had subjected the Protestant population to the *régime* of Turkey.

Of all these intendants, the most notorious was Lamoignon de Bâville, who for thirty-three years had been the supreme administrator, or, as he was called, the King of Languedoc. His motto was: "*Ever ready, never hurried.*" He was a calm, methodical, hard man, without a passion but that of power, coolly ordering the most frightful executions, hanging, beheading, quartering sixty or eighty persons at a time, devastating whole cantons, burning towns and villages, not out of religious zeal, but for state reasons. His character was a compound of Louis XI., Richelieu, and Robespierre, and he would subordinate to his policy the sufferings, tortures, and murder of a whole people without compunction. Bâville was, indeed, to use the phrase of a contemporary, "the terror and the horror of Languedoc."

He did not approve of the Revocation; but from the moment it was pronounced, his advice was to carry it into extreme execution against the obstinate. "It is requisite, in order to insure the tranquillity of the state," he wrote, "to change their will, to regulate

ourselves upon what we have already done, to reduce them to a full submission, by tearing the prejudices of birth from their hearts, and by compelling them, authoritatively, to adopt the religion of the state." It was of little importance to him whether the religion were false or true, accepted or rejected by the conscience of the new converts; it was the *religion of the state*, and submission must be made thereto. "*Let them be damned, provided they obey*," was the saying of a military commander of the same epoch. Supreme and vilest expression of the moral degradation of being a persecutor without being even a fanatic!

This ferocious proconsul was exasperated at the obstinacy of the Protestants in holding their meetings. He surrounded them with troops, and charged them with the bayonet and the sword. The most notable of the prisoners were hanged upon the first trees, the others were sent to the galleys, and there were numbered, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, two thousand of these unfortunate convicts, who were worse treated than highway robbers.

The priests of these parts, receiving nothing but marks of aversion and contempt from those whom they regarded as their flocks, partook, for the most part, of Bâville's anger, and helped him to assuage it. They spied out the delinquents, denounced them to the authorities, put themselves at the head of the soldiers, and displayed all the more barbarity, in that it was not in their calling to be cruel.

The most bloodthirsty of all was one Chayla, an inspector of missions, and arch-priest. He had turned his presbytery into a stronghold, or a cavern of bandits, and seemed to feel an exquisite delight in

the torments of his victims. “Sometimes,” says Count de Gébelin, “he tore out their beards or their eyebrows with pincers, sometimes he put hot coals into their hands, which were then forcibly clenched, so long as the coals could burn; sometimes he enveloped their fingers with cotton steeped in oil or tallow, and then setting fire to it, would sear their hands until they cracked, or were consumed to the bone.”[104]

Having arrested a band of fugitives, and shut them up in pens like animals, among whom were two ladies, related to the most important families of the country, a band of forty or fifty determined men presented themselves before the door of his house at Pont-de-Montvert, singing a psalm. These avengers of blood first broke open the dungeons, and delivered the prisoners, whose swollen bodies and fractured limbs were scarcely able to bear the motion that restored them to liberty.

The Abbé du Chayla ordered his servants to repel these persons with fire-arms, and one of the assailants fell. The others set fire to the presbytery, seized the arch-priest, made him gaze upon his victims, their mangled limbs and lacerated bodies, and then all, after this frightful act of accusation, stabbed him with their weapons. He received fifty-two wounds. Such was the beginning of the war of the Camisards.

IV.

This last struggle of the French Reformation bears no comparison with any that preceded it. Admiral Coligny and Henry of Navarre were backed by entire provinces, and half the nobility of the kingdom. The Duke de Rohan also was a redoubtable chief, and a skilful leader, who with his followers fought pitched battles. In this instance there were only poor peasants, without weapons but those which they wrenched from [the hands of] their enemies, ignorant of the art of war, and reduced to sell their lives dearly, behind the copses and rocks of their mountains. They were led on by no nobles; they were not even supported by the Reformed *bourgeoisie* of the plains and towns; this time it was the meanest of the people who spilled their blood, and died around the standard on which they had inscribed: "Freedom of religion!"

The Camisards were led by men, whom they regarded as inspired, or prophets. A new convert, half abbé, half playwright, who curiously mingled comedy with controversy,—Bruyëis, has attacked these prophets with irony and gall in his *History of Fanaticism*. Other (Roman) Catholic writers have followed him. Even the Bishop Fléchier pursues the prophets of Languedoc with his cold and harsh antitheses.

Rulhières was more just: he had the good faith to accuse the persecutors of the Cévenoles of these mental aberrations. "Can we forget then," he asks, "that their places of worship had been cast down; their country delivered up to military pillage; their children carried off; the houses of those styled

obstinate, razed; that the most zealous of their pastors had been broken upon the wheel, while no one had instructed them in our religion?"[105]

Such, in effect, were the causes of these wild ecstasies, or inspirations—the want of spiritual leaders and of schools, spoliations, sufferings, threatened executions, the continual fear of the hulks and the gibbet. The minds of these unfortunates became excited; and finding no support on earth, they easily believed that they had supernatural communications from on high.

This religious exaltation began in the province of Vivarais, from the time of the *dragonnades* and the Revocation [of the Edict of Nantes]. The fourth pastoral letter of Jurieu, dated the 15th of October, 1686, mentions that a man belonging to Codognan, imagined that he had seen a vision and heard a voice, which said to him, "Go, and console my people." In Béarn and elsewhere, simple people fancied they had heard the singing of psalms in the air, and had witnessed miraculous apparitions.

Shortly afterwards, Isabeau Vincent appeared, *the Shepherdess of Dauphiny*, a young girl of sixteen or seventeen years of age, who could neither read nor write. She had ecstasies. "For the first five weeks," says Jurieu, "she spoke during her ecstasies no language but that of her country, because her only auditors were the peasantry of her village. The noise of this miracle having spread, people came to see her who understood and spoke French. She then began to speak French, and with a diction as correct as if she had been brought up in the first houses of Paris. She composed admirable and excellent prayers. Her action had no violence. Her lips moved slightly, and without the least appearance of convulsion."[106]

It was then as if a moral contagion had spread over the whole of Vivarais and Languedoc. Prophets were counted by hundreds. They were people of the lower classes, who had read nothing but the Bible; they quoted passage after passage, which they continually applied on every occasion. They particularly invoked the texts of the books of prophecies in the Old Testament and Apocrypha. Even children felt these inspirations, and persisted in them, notwithstanding the severe corrections of their parents, who were held responsible for these strange phenomena.

This ecstasy had four degrees: the calling, the inspiration, the prophecy, and the gift, or the inspiration in its highest degree. It cannot be doubted that the ecstasies were sincere. They were the first to believe in the spirit, which they said filled them, and obeyed it without reservation, hesitation, or delay, although they went to a certain death.

This spirit, they would say, made them better people. “The persons, who had received the inspiration,” they said, “directly abandoned every kind of licentiousness and vanity. Some who had led a debauched life, first became steady and pious, and every one who frequented their society also became better-behaved, and led an exemplary life. This spirit begot in us a horror of idolatry, a contempt for the world, charity, internal consolation, hope, and an unleavened joy of heart.”[107]

The Camisard chiefs were designated by the spirit. They believed themselves to be filled with it, and this was the source of their courage, their triumphs, and their constancy in the greatest extremities. Whether the necessity of the moment was to collect their scattered bands, to fix the point of attack, to choose the day of combat, to retreat, to advance, to

discover traitors and spies, to spare prisoners, or to put them to death, it was the spirit they consulted: everywhere and in all things their persuasion was that they acted under the immediate and sovereign direction of heaven.

One of these Camisards, Elie Marion, thus tells this with great simplicity in his *Théâtre Sacré des Cevennes*: “We were without strength and without counsel, but our inspirations were our succour and our support. They elected our leaders, and conducted them; they were our military discipline. It is they who raised us, even weakness itself, to put a strong bridle upon an army of more than twenty thousand picked soldiers. It is they who banished sorrow from our hearts in the midst of the greatest peril, as well as in the deserts and the mountain fastnesses, when cold and famine oppressed us. Our heaviest crosses were but lightsome burdens, for this intimate communion that God allowed us to have with Him, bore up and consoled us; it was our safety and our happiness.”[108]

Upon what does the judgment of enlightened, as well as of ignorant men depend? These inspirations, those inner voices recall, trait for trait, the language and the history of Joan of Arc. The religious phenomenon is absolutely the same. But the Maid of Orleans delivered France, and the people of Cevennes were vanquished. The first has been almost worshipped: the others have been for the most part treated as madmen and fanatics. If the English had triumphed in the fifteenth century, the shepherdess of Vaucouleurs would also have been regarded by historians as a poor peasant girl, crazed by silly delusions!

Roland and Cavalier were the two principal

leaders of the Cévenoles: the former, more resolute, firm, and inaccessible to seduction, remained to the very last sword in hand, and was the true type of the Camisards, although he has obtained less celebrity; the latter was more skilful, adventurous, and brilliant, brave amongst the brave, [no less than] an epic hero. Both trusted, like Oliver Cromwell, in the authority of inspiration, and never were military commanders better obeyed.

The soldiers called themselves children of God, people of God, the flock of the Lord, and bestowed upon their chieftains the names of brother Roland, brother Cavalier. Thus was equality and fraternity joined to the most rigorous discipline.

They made stern and bloody reprisals upon their persecutors, the priests and the soldiers; yet the spirit they consulted, habitually induced them to set their prisoners free who had not injured them. They punished with the utmost severity those of their number who were guilty of unnecessary slaughter or acts of depredation. There was no quarrelling, swearing, or drunkenness in their ranks. All their provisions were held in common. They have been accused by their enemies of having led a licentious life, because they had women in their camp: these women were the wives, mothers, and daughters of the Camisards, who attended them to prepare their food and to tend the wounded.

Their magazines and hospitals were caverns. They clothed themselves with the spoils of the soldiers of the royal army, and supplied themselves with balls from the church bells and utensils of the presbyteries. They had no money except such as was furnished them by villagers almost as poor as themselves, or such as they picked up on the fields of

battle; but they needed it not.

Every band had its preacher, and like the Puritans of England, they consecrated long hours to religious services. “Although the camp was often in the week called to pray in common, Sunday was the Lord’s day, appointed for public assemblies and general prayer. Two days beforehand, the prophets announced to the neighbouring townships the place of meeting.... At break of day the people arrived, and mingled with the children of God. A prophet ascended a rock, which served instead of pulpit; a second preacher followed, then a third, and from homily to homily, from prayer to prayer, from canticle to canticle, the insatiable multitude remained unwearied until evening insensibly crept upon them. Then the people resumed the road to their villages, and the Camisards that to their camp.”[109]

Their number never exceeded ten thousand. But they maintained a secret intelligence with all the population of the new converts. The herdsmen and labourers gave them notice, by recognised signs, of the approach of the troops, and when they were obliged to fly, the Camisards had secure retreats. Theirs was a guerilla warfare, composed of surprises or encounters of a few hundreds of men on either side. When they were victorious, they took advantage of their success, to hold assemblies, at which all the Huguenots of the neighbourhood attended; if they were overpowered, they fled to the impenetrable gorges of the hills. They received the first fire of their enemies on one knee, singing the sixty-eighth Psalm: “*Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered*;” then, precipitating themselves upon the foe, they fought with all the fury of despair, aware

that they would receive no quarter or mercy, and preferring the death of the soldier to the gallows or the wheel.

The war of the Camisards lasted from 1702 to 1704. The Count de Broglie, brother-in-law of Bâville, and the king's lieutenant-general in Languedoc, ordered horrible devastations, without succeeding in stifling the insurrection. His want of success led to his recall in 1703, and the court replaced him by the Marshal de Montrevel, a brave but ignorant and presumptuous soldier, who also imagined that he should put an end to the revolt by the terror of his executions.

Louis XIV. was deceived concerning this war, as he had been about the conversion of the Protestants. Those who had promised that the Revocation would not cost a drop of blood, were afraid to apprize him of the extent of the evil. Montrevel was sent into Languedoc by a subterfuge, the young Duke du Maine, who had been instructed beforehand, having asked as a mark of honour, that a marshal of France might command the troops in the province where he governed. Madame de Maintenon said on this occasion: "It is useless for the king to occupy himself with the details of this war; this would not cure the evil, and would do him much harm." And a secretary of state wrote to the intendant of the province: "Take care not to give this war the appearance of a serious matter."

As soon as he had arrived in Languedoc, the Marshal de Montrevel published two ordinances, in which the penalty of death was pronounced, not only against those who had recourse to arms, but also against all persons, who gave the Camisards food, or retreat, or any assistance whatever. He announced

that for every (Roman) Catholic killed, he would hang two or three religionists, and that the villages of the new converts, in which a priest or soldier perished, should be immediately burned.

Massacres were now no longer counted. Gibbets, scaffolds, even stakes were kept in permanent readiness. All the suspected were arrested. Every population was put under restraint. The parents of the rebels were carried off for punishment, the notables of each place were kept as hostages, the young people were confined lest they should fly to swell the bands of the Camisards, and when the prisoners were too numerous, the executioner was put in play to thin them.

The (Roman) Catholics were invited to take refuge in the towns, and the country was pitilessly laid waste, and as the work of destruction did not make sufficient progress to satisfy Montrevel, he caused the dwellings of the peasantry to be burned. Thus the land, so flourishing before the Revocation, became a vast and mournful desert.

On the 1st of April, 1703, being Palm-Sunday, about three hundred persons assembled in a mill near Nismes, for the purpose of religious worship. Information of the meeting having been given to Montrevel, he rose from table, and hastening to the place of meeting with a troop of soldiers, ordered the doors to be burst open and the slaughter of all present; the slowness of the carnage irritated his impatience, and he gave the mill to the flames. Every one perished; not a single person escaped, excepting a young girl, who was saved by the humanity of a lackey of the marshal. She was hanged next day, and her liberator only escaped the same fate through the earnest intercession of some nuns.

The Bishop Fléchier, relating this atrocious butchery, says, with the utmost coolness: “This example was necessary to arrest the pride of these folks.” Priests and nobles, you complain of the executions of 1793, and with reason; but you yourselves set the example, and the cruelties of the men of the Reign of Terror have never surpassed yours!

As an auxiliary to the regular troops, Montrevel formed companies of (Roman) Catholic volunteers, under the name of Cadets of the Cross, or White Camisards, in contrast to the Huguenots, who were called Black Camisards. These new Crusaders were encouraged by a bull of Clement XI., who granted them a general and absolute remission of their sins, on the condition of exterminating the heretics of Cevennes, “*a cursed brood issuing from the execrable race of Albigenses*.”

The Cadets of the Cross were soon dissolved by their own party. They were rogues, who, rejecting all discipline and not even respecting the Church whose defenders they styled themselves, attacked indiscriminately (Roman) Catholics and Huguenots, so that there was spoil to be obtained.

Far from triumphing by his system of terror, Montrevel only increased the number of his opponents. The Cévenoles, reduced to despair, with nothing left to lose, and as ill used when they stayed at home as when they took arms, fled in crowds to the ranks of the Camisards. The detachments of Montrevel were defeated on every side, in the winter of 1703-1704, at Nayes, by the rocks of Aubais, at Martignargues, at the bridge of Salindres; and the marshal was recalled.

The war began to excite serious uneasiness at

Versailles. Holland and England had put themselves in communication with the insurgents, and had promised to send them succours. If a foreign fleet had appeared upon the shores of the southern provinces, it might have decided a general rising of the religionists of Languedoc, Vivarais, Dauphiny, and Guienne, and might have thrown into the heart of the kingdom fifty thousand combatants, and have struck a terrible blow at the already sunken fortune of Louis XIV. The court comprehended the danger, and the Marshal de Villars, who was sent to replace Montrevel, received orders to try milder means.

Some of the Camisard leaders, having encountered great losses, showed a disposition, soon after the new commander's appointment, to enter into an arrangement. They required, as the foremost condition, liberty of conscience and worship: Villars answered this point with equivocal phrases. Protestant historians affirm that the marshal accepted the condition; the historians of the (Roman) Catholics, with Fléchier at their head, deny it. It is difficult to unravel the truth from such contradictory assertions.

This, however, is incontestable; during the negotiations between the Duke de Villars and Cavalier, the Camisards held public assemblies at Calvisson, singing psalms, praying, and preaching, in the midst of an innumerable concourse of Protestants.

The interview of the marshal with the once baker's boy took place in the garden of the Récolets monks, at the gates of Nismes, on the 16th of May, 1704. "He is," writes Villars to the minister of war, "a peasant of the lowest rank, not yet twenty-two years of age, and scarcely seeming eighteen, small and

with no imposing mien, but possessing firmness and good sense that are altogether surprising. He has great talent in arranging for the subsistence of his men, and disposes his troops as well as the best-trained officers could do it. From the moment Cavalier began to treat, up to the conclusion, he has always acted in good faith."

Cavalier received a colonel's commission, and went to Versailles, where finding a cold reception, and suspecting that he was not safe, he entered into a foreign service. He died governor of the island of Jersey, with the reputation of a good general, and a worthy man.

The other leader of the Camisards, Roland, essayed to prolong the struggle. To every proposition for an arrangement, he replied: "I will not trust myself in the lion's mouth." A traitor sold him to the intendant for a hundred louis, and he fell after a desperate resistance. Some of his lieutenants still endeavoured to reinflame the insurrection; and until as late as 1715 daring partisans agitated Cevennes; but their attempts, which were not without courage, had no success.

Such was the termination of the Protestant La Vendée. Its analogy with the (Roman) Catholic La Vendée is striking. On both sides oppressed conscience, and religion trodden underfoot, placed arms in the hands of the people. Cathelineau, the driver, was the chief of the Vendéans, as the baker's boy, Cavalier, was of the Cévenoles. Marshal de Villars and General Hoche could succeed in pacifying either revolt by moderation alone. But the camp of the Vendéans reckoned amongst its numbers the nobility and clergy; the Camisards had with them neither gentlemen nor pastors. The first maintained,

without desiring it, the cause of ancient privileges, together with the great principle of religious freedom; the latter fought for their religion alone, and their blood was not spilled in vain.

The war of the Camisards, respecting which there may be different opinions, which it is not our province to examine here, had a double result; it reassured the Protestants, who nearly all returned to their former faith, and it inspired the court of Versailles with salutary apprehensions. The men, whom justice and respect for conscience did not restrain, were arrested by fear, during the remainder of the eighteenth century, from pushing the intrepid mountaineers to extremities, who had once risen from beneath the axe of the executioner.

V.

There cannot be a more painful subject for consideration than the reign of Louis XIV. This aged king, nearly alone, outliving all the great men of his era; the irreparable void left in his court by the death of his children and his grandchildren; an unhappy war, exposing the frontiers of his kingdom to the enemy; three millions of debt; the people overwhelmed with imposts which they could no longer pay; commerce destroyed, industry extinguished, a part of the country lying fallow; the monarch hated by the nation, of which he had once been the idol, consuming his days in the duties of a puerile etiquette, or of a devotion more puerile still, and supporting with difficulty a royalty, whose splendour and *prestige*, were decaying with him. What an expiation was this for his despotic and insatiable pride!

The quarrels of religion pursued him unceasingly, and left him no repose. His court and council were divided upon the controversies of Jansenism and Quietism. When he thought he had appeased them on one side, they reappeared on the other, and his death-bed was also troubled by the disputes of theologians concerning the bull *Unigenitus*.

The Protestants were seldom, and then unwillingly, alluded to before him, and he himself also avoided mentioning them. [Their repression] was an undertaking that had failed, and he sought a refuge in oblivion from his humiliating miscalculations.

The Reformed of Paris were treated more than ever with caution, in order to spare the king painful

reflections. The celebrated lieutenant of police, Voyer-d'Argenson, expressly recommended toleration. "The Inquisition, which is sought to be established in Paris against the Protestants, whose conversion is very doubtful," he said, in a memorial addressed to the council, "would be attended with great difficulties. It would force them to purchase certificates, either for money or by sacrilege. It would drive away from this city those who are born subjects of neutral princes, would alienate more and more the unfriendly Protestants, blast the peace of families, excite relations to become denouncers of each other, and cause perhaps an universal murmur in the capital of the kingdom." The council took the hint, and declined to interfere with the Protestants.

In the provinces everything depended more or less upon the humour of the governors and intendants. Bâville renewed from time to time his sanguinary expeditions, although he had ceased to conceal from himself their impotency. "There are districts of twenty and thirty parishes," he wrote, "where the curate is the most unhappy and the most useless of all the inhabitants, and where, whatever care may have been taken, not a single Catholic has been made, nor even one established from without."

The Protestants bore the burdens of the state, as soldiers, sailors, and tax-payers, without enjoying any of the benefits which should have belonged to all, of common right. The gentlemen served in the army, where they were less scrupulous than elsewhere about acts of Catholicity. The men of the middle class applied themselves to agriculture and commerce; and they prospered, in spite of the oppression of the laws, through that spirit of individuality and activity which so eminently

distinguishes Protestantism. The Marquis d'Aguesseau avowed this, when new measures of severity were proposed against them in 1713. "By an unfortunate fatality," he said, "in nearly every kind of art, the most skilful workmen, as well as the richest merchants, belong to the pretended Reformed religion; it would therefore be very dangerous to exact that they should become Catholics."

Things would probably have been allowed to continue under this semi-toleration, but that the Jesuit Letellier, who had succeeded in 1709 to Father La Chaise in the office of confessor to the king, would not permit it. "He was," says the Duke de Saint-Simon, "a man of hard and obstinate temper, of incessant application, and of only one idea—the triumph of his order and the overthrow of every other school. His nature was cruel and ferocious; his personal appearance no less unpromising; he would have excited fear, if met with in a wood. His physiognomy was dark, gloomy, false, and terrible, and his eyes were fierce, evil, and extremely sinister: one was struck on seeing him."[110]

Letellier extorted from the king, then verging on decrepitude and death, the declaration of the 8th March, 1715. The title alone of this law "*makes one's blood curdle*," to use the expression of the Baron du Breteuil to Louis XVI. It is as follows: "It shall be a law, that those who shall have declared that they will persist and die in the pretended Reformed religion, whether they have abjured or not, *shall be reputed as having relapsed*." It therefore acted upon the monstrous fiction that there were no longer any Protestants in France, and that there could never be any more! All were held to be legally (Roman) Catholics, since the refusal of the sacraments exposed

them to suffer the frightful penalties pronounced against those who relapsed! It is with reason that Lamontey says in his book upon the monarchical establishment of Louis XIV.: “The annals of the world do not offer another example of a code wholly based upon a lie.”[111]

The authors of this declaration relied upon the following reason: “The sojourn that those who were of the pretended Reformed religion, or who have been born of Calvinist parents, have made in our kingdom, since we have abolished all exercise of the said religion, is a sufficient proof that they have embraced the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman religion, *without which they would have been neither suffered nor tolerated*.”—Neither suffered nor tolerated!—Had the law commanded the killing of all the recusants to the very last? No! Or had they been all banished from the kingdom? No! on the contrary, they had been prohibited from quitting it, and this interdiction had been renewed two years previously. Thus, on one side, they were prevented from quitting France, and on the other, it was concluded that they were (Roman) Catholics because they remained in it!

The Parliament of Paris, so complaisant up to this time where laws of intolerance were concerned, delayed the registration of the declaration of 1715 for a month. “The king,” said the procurator-general, “has indeed abolished the exercise of the pretended Reformed religion by his edicts, but he has not precisely ordained that the religionists should abjure, and embrace the Catholic religion. It is difficult to understand how a man who does not appear to have been ever converted, should nevertheless have fallen back into heresy, and that he should be condemned as if the fact were proved.”

Louis XIV. died five months afterwards, declaring to the Cardinals de Rohan and de Bissy, and to Father Letellier, that he was wholly ignorant of the affairs of the Church, that he had acted according to their desire, and that he threw upon them the responsibility before God. At this last hour, when pride is silent, and all illusions fall away, did he not find himself confronted face to face with grievous errors and deep remorse?

Under the regency of Philippe d'Orléans, who hated the Jesuits and drove Letellier from the court, the Reformed again entertained some hope. This hope was increased, too, when the regent allied himself with the Protestant powers against Spain. Far from being blinded by bigotry, this prince was even wanting in any religious conviction at all. His indifference, in the absence of a superior and more praiseworthy principle, would probably dispose him to lend a favourable ear to the complaints of the Reformed.

He did, in fact, debate whether he should retrace the step of the Edict of Revocation. But besides that his libertine life hindered him from long engaging upon important affairs, two things turned him from his project. One was the fear of raising the great majority of the clergy against him, the other was the recollection of the old wars of religion. The Duke de Saint-Simon represented to him the renewal of these wars as imminent, if he abolished the ordinances of Louis XIV. This was at once a gross anachronism and contradiction; for the Reformed would have been so much the more peaceable, as they would have been better guaranteed in the free exercise of their religion; however, the Duke d'Orléans, who understood and cared nothing about these matters,

thought it expedient to leave the ecclesiastical laws as they were.

The idea was also conceived of founding a colony of refugees, who by obtaining freedom of worship, might enrich the state by their industry. The council of the interior inclined to this; but the council of conscience refused, and the regent spoke no more about it. It would in reality have been too evidently illogical to have permitted the exercise of the Protestant religion in one part of the kingdom, while continuing to exclude it in every other.

The Duke d'Orléans replied to the numerous petitions of the religionists, that he hoped to find in their good conduct the opportunity of showing them a treatment conformable to his prudence. Several convicts, on account of religion, were liberated; departure from the kingdom became unrestricted, and the intendants of Dauphiny, Guienne, and Languedoc, who would have continued the system of the *dragonnades*, received commands to be more moderate. Although this was not toleration, yet persecution began to flag.

VI.

The misfortune of the times produced, as we have already seen, great disorder in the bosom of the Reformed communion. There were no pastors or regular instructions. The preachers, who travelled about Vivarais and Cevennes, had more fervour than enlightenment, and more zeal than judgment. Supernatural inspiration or ecstasy, which had begun before the war of the Camisards, was not extinguished with it. Men and women rose in the assemblies, and uttered burning words, which influenced the mind of the audience, but did not enlighten them. It will be remarked that at the same time, the Jansenists had their fanatics and thaumaturgists. In the primitive ages of the Church, the errors of the Montanists and the Donatists had alike sprung from the source of persecution. Every oppressed communion has been perplexed by those, who supposed themselves to be inspired.

Intelligent Protestants, or those of timid character, did not go to hear these preachers; they confined themselves to domestic worship, and observed externally some of the ceremonies of (Roman) Catholicism. There was therefore a double cause of ruin at work against the French Reformation—the excesses of the fervent, and the concessions of the weak. It was necessary to provide a remedy, or everything would be lost; it was necessary to re-awaken in the souls of the religionists a living, and, at the same time, a rational piety, to renew the bonds of discipline, to increase and to multiply the assemblies by remodelling them, and to re-establish order in the churches. Such was the mission of Antoine Court.[112]

He was born at Villeneuve-de-Berg, in the province of the Vivarais, in 1696, and had followed from the age of seventeen the mission of lecturer and preacher in the meetings of the wilderness. As he belonged to a poor family, he had not received a classical education; but he supplied this defect by his natural qualities, his reflections, and knowledge of the Scriptures. Antoine Court had the capacity to learn much and quickly. In his latter years he even acquired an erudition very uncommon upon religious questions, and the history of Protestantism, the proof of which may be seen in his answer to the Bishop of Agen, published under the name of a *French and Impartial Patriot.*

A man, who has distinguished himself by his constant sympathies for the Reformed churches of France, M. de Végobre, has drawn the following portrait of Antoine Court. [He possessed] sound, straightforward sense, a wonderful facility of expression, both in speaking and writing; an intrepid courage, joined with consummate prudence in all his conduct; an astonishing vigour to support, without wearying or slackening, the greatest fatigues of body and mind; the most agreeable amenity in his intimate friendships, if we may judge by his familiar letters; a purity of views and an integrity of manners, which have ever been above all suspicion; and an unshaken devotion to the holy cause to which he had consecrated himself: these are the qualities which, standing in lieu of the resources of education, which he was without, enabled him to inspire the people with confidence, and to merit the name of "*Restorer of the Protestantism of France.*"[113]

Four conditions appeared to him to be necessary for the re-organization of the churches—regular

religious assemblies; a direct and inflexible combat against the disorders of the inspired; the restoration of discipline by means of the consistories, conferences, and synods; finally, the formation of a body of pastors. The plan was vast, though judicious, but its execution involved great difficulties.

Antoine Court established in the first place prayer meetings wherever he could shelter his head. They were but scanty in the beginning. “It was a great thing,” he says in an apologetic memoir, written forty years afterwards, “when, by force of cares and solicitation, I could anywhere induce six, ten, or a dozen persons to follow me to some mountain cave, or deserted grange, or to the open country, to render homage to God and to hear the discourse I wished to address to them. What a consolation, however, it was to me to find myself, in 1744, in assemblies of ten thousand souls in the same spot where I had with difficulty gathered together, during the first meetings of my ministry, fifteen, thirty, sixty, or at most a hundred persons!”

He next, with the view of remedying the disorders caused by the inspiration, convoked the preachers of Cevennes, to whom he joined some enlightened laymen. The first of these conferences or synods assembled on the 21st of August, 1715, eleven days before the death of the king, who thought he had crushed the French Reformation. Other synods succeeded from year to year. They were held in the depth of a cavern, or in an isolated hut; for if they had been discovered, all the members, or at least the preachers, would have been capitally executed.

Antoine Court, notwithstanding his youth, was the guide and soul of these meetings, and the adhesion of the preachers proved that there was among them

neither unbelief nor pride, but simply involuntary error or want of sufficient instruction. They only required to be better advised and directed.

We will recount some of the dispositions, which were adopted in these new synods. Elders were intrusted with the duty of watching over the flocks, of convoking assemblies in suitable places, of providing for the safety of the pastors, and of making collections for prisoners and the poor. Women were prohibited from speaking in the meetings of the faithful. The Bible was enjoined as the sole rule of faith, and individual revelations were rejected as anti-Scriptural and dangerous. (Synod of 1715.)

Fathers of families were exhorted to celebrate worship at home three times a day, and to consecrate at least two hours to devotions on Sunday. Those, who committed grave offences, were to be censured in public, after three admonitions in private. The pastors were recommended carefully to explain all the articles of religion, to procure information respecting vices most common in each district, with a view to their correction, and to assemble every six months for the purpose of intercommunication. If any pastor caused scandal to his brethren, or endangered them by his hasty zeal, he was to be immediately deprived of his appointment. An engagement was entered into to succour those, who had suffered in the cause of religion, but to give no assistance to any, who exposed themselves to persecution by their rashness. (Synods of 1716 and 1717.)

Of the six first subscribers to these regulations, four perished on the scaffold; there is blood upon every succeeding page of French Protestantism.

Antoine Court had not received pastoral ordination. He induced one of his fellow-labourers, Pierre Corteis, to undertake a journey to Switzerland in order to be consecrated. On his return to Languedoc, Corteis laid hands on Antoine Court in the presence of a synod. The chain of time was thus continued, and the sacraments were no longer administered by any but ministers ordained according to the rules of discipline.

In 1718, a synod, consisting of forty-five members, ministers and elders, decided that young men should be intrusted with pastoral functions after a serious examination of their doctrine and morals. Two years later, the remuneration of the pastors was fixed at seventy livres, for their clothing and entire provision. They were lodged and maintained, from house to house, by the faithful. Their salary was afterwards increased to six hundred livres, and towards the end of the century to nine hundred livres. It was not more than the pay of a workman; but it was not the appetite for money that attracted men who, by accepting the pastoral charge, devoted themselves to an almost certain martyrdom.

The churches were invited to establish consistories, in default of which they were not to be visited by the ministers, nor to receive notice of the convocation of the assemblies—a spiritual punishment for a spiritual offence. This was a return to true ecclesiastical order.

The assemblies of the wilderness, as they were called, were held in open day, when the danger was not excessive, at night when persecution was rigorous, in some wild retreat, or in rocky nooks and quarries during adverse weather. The summonses were issued only a few hours before the meeting, and by emissaries of the most trustworthy character.

Sentinels were placed about the heights, but unarmed, so that they might give the signal of the approach of soldiers.

The most intelligent and courageous acted as guides to the pastors, and after the service, conducted them to a secure shelter. Rarely did a pastor remain several days following in the same asylum. Wandering from place to place, forced to assume a thousand disguises, and bearing a borrowed name, he was compelled to hide himself like a malefactor, in order to proclaim the God of the Gospel. Such also was the life of the (Roman) Catholic priest under the *régime* of 1793; the names of the persecutors change, but not the characters, nor the excesses of the persecution.

The worship in the desert was the same as in the times of liberty; liturgic prayers, singing of psalms, preaching, administration of the holy supper on feast-days; a simple worship, easily practicable everywhere, and which required no more preparation than that of the “upper room furnished,” in which the apostles and primitive Christians assembled at Jerusalem.

This simplicity, however, possessed a charm of nobility and grandeur, the calm of solitude suddenly broken by the voice of prayer; the songs of the faithful mounting to the invisible Being, in the presence of the magnificence of nature; the minister of Jesus Christ invoking his God, like the faithful of the primitive church, for the oppressors who raged because they had not yet led Him to the scaffold; poor peasants and humble artificers, who, laying aside their tools of labour for a day, felt anxiety for naught but the sublime interests of the faith of the life to come; the common sentiment of danger which

placed their souls continually in presence of their sovereign Judge, endued all the assemblies of the wilderness with that serious majesty, which allies itself so well with the teaching of Christianity.

But whilst the French Reformation rose slowly from its ruins, a fresh blow was silently preparing to strike it anew.

VII.

This was the last great law against the Reformed, which was published on the 14th of May, 1724, in the form of a royal declaration. If it was never thoroughly executed to the letter, [although] it was often applied; and as it remained officially in force during sixty-three years, until the Edict of Toleration of Louis XVI., it is important that its origin, spirit, and principal articles should be made known.

The chief author of this law was Lavergne de Tressan, bishop of Nantes, almoner to the duke of Orleans, and a worthy acolyte of Cardinal Dubois, whom he had consecrated. Irreligious and immoral, and so avaricious as to have accumulated sixty-three benefices, he coveted the Roman purple, and thought that he could not prove his title to it better than by completing the extermination of the heretics. Lavergne de Tressan presented his project to Dubois and to the regent, each of whom refused to entertain it. He was more successful with the Duke de Bourbon, who had been appointed minister by Louis XV. This Duke de Bourbon was a severe and haughty man, of ignoble aspect, deficient at once both in convictions and intelligence, governed by shameless female favourites, and innocent of having ever passed any other than barbarous laws. He ordained, among other things, that all beggars should be branded with a hot iron.

Some magistrates, it is said, also had a hand in the declaration of 1724; they introduced certain modifications which were unfavourable to the domination of the clergy, as afterwards appeared.

The edict contained eighteen articles. It was a

compilation of the most severe ordinances issued against the Reformed under the reign of Louis XIV., with, in general, aggravated penalties. The odious fiction was relied upon, that there were no longer any Protestants in France; and Louis XV., then fourteen years of age, was made to say in the preamble, that he had nothing so much at heart as to pursue the lofty designs of his right honoured lord and great-grandfather, and that he was desirous of enunciating his intentions explicitly.

For these reasons, he declared as follows—the punishment of perpetual imprisonment at the galleys for men, and seclusion during life for women, with confiscation of their property, if they attended any other worship than that of the (Roman) Catholic religion; punishment of death against all the preachers; of the galleys or imprisonment against those who sheltered or assisted them in any way whatever, and against those who omitted to denounce them; an order to parents to have their children baptized within twenty-four hours by the curate of the parish, to send them to the (Roman) Catholic schools and catechisms until the age of fourteen, and to the Sunday and feast-day teachings until the age of twenty; an order to midwives to report all births to the priests, and to physicians, surgeons, and apothecaries to give notice of every serious illness of the new converts, and authority for the priests to have interviews with the sick by themselves. If any one refused the sacraments or directed a member of his family to refuse it, he incurred the penalty of having relapsed. There was to be no legitimate marriage, except such as were celebrated according to the canons of the Church. Parents were not allowed to send their children out of the kingdom to be educated, nor to marry them

there; but on the other hand, the minors of those parents who were abroad, might marry without the consent of their relations. The certificates of Catholicity were declared obligatory for all offices, all academic degrees, all admissions to trading corporations. Finally, the mulcts and confiscated property were to be appropriated for the relief of the re-united subjects who might be in want.

Never since the origin of human society, had the legislator more insolently disregarded the law of nature, the civil law, family, property, the liberty and sacredness of individual faith. This afforded another proof to what monstrous acts one is driven when, by confounding spiritual and temporal matters, the laws of the state are made subordinate to the maxims of the (Roman) Catholic church.

Historians unite in a common expression of horror at the Edict of 1724. Sismondi says, “It is with astonishment that we behold, in this infidel age, when the reins of power were held by a prince without belief or probity, and by a female courtier without modesty, the renewal of a persecution which the rigid faith of Louis XIV. could scarcely explain.... The clergy, who had not dared to ask for this inopportune law, accepted it with transport.”[114]

M. Charles Lecretelle also observes, “The first act of the government was as absurd as it was odious. It was even a more cruel edict against the Protestants than the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. The most secret exercise of the Reformed religion was prohibited. Children were torn from their parents to be reared in the (Roman) Catholic religion.... In short, every kind of oppression that had been conceived by the ministers of Louis XIV., and that public horror had begun to render obsolete, was

renewed. The Marchioness de Prie, whose impiety equalled that of Cardinal Dubois, persuaded her lover (the Duke de Bourbon) that he was acting upon the great principles of a statesman, by recommencing a new persecution. Everybody was disgusted by these efforts, which vice made to assume the appearance of zeal, and in this barbarous folly, regretted the regent's toleration."[115]

Rulhières and the Baron de Breteuil affirm that the council were surprised into sanctioning this edict. They prove that laws, inspired by two very opposite tendencies, had been strangely confounded in its compilation. The Molinist or Jesuitical spirit sought to employ universal outward constraint, consenting at the same time to a relaxation of all the interior conditions of Catholicity. The Jansenist spirit had, on the contrary, exacted rigorous conditions of Catholicity, but desired no constraint. Thus there was one of two things—either the employment of physical force, with a simple appearance of union with (Roman) Catholicism, or real union, without the employment of material force. But on the declaration of 1724, it was required, at one and the same time, that all people should be (Roman) Catholics under pain of the galleys and death, and that they should perform acts of Catholicity, which only good (Roman) Catholics could do. This was impracticable and absurdly impossible.

We should here observe the great change, which had begun to display itself in the conduct of the priests. On the eve and on the day of the Revocation, they widely extended their arms, as we have remarked before. They seemed to say to the Protestants, "Come, all of you, just as you are. We will be satisfied with the most vague and general

abjuration. We will not interfere with you at the domestic hearth. It is enough if you only call yourselves Catholics and observe the principal forms of the Church."

But subsequently, their language and their conduct sensibly changed, and their exactions increased from year to year, particularly when the law had declared that there were Protestants in the kingdom no longer. "Take heed," the priests said; "we cannot administer the sacraments to false brethren; this would be an abominable profanation. We must have long and severe proofs, instructions of six months, a year's, two years' duration, solemn oaths; in short, a complete certainty that you are true and faithful Catholics. Otherwise, we will not celebrate your marriages, nor give you certificates of Catholicity, and you may maintain your civil rights as best you can."

This alteration, continually more marked, is naturally explained by the disastrous defeats the priests had suffered since the Revocation. They imagined that the demolition of the places of worship, the banishment of the pastors, the deprivation of all regular instruction, the want of a religion, the legal duty of performing acts of Catholicity, would restore true believers to the Church, at least in the second generation. But their expectation had been deceived, particularly with regard to the country people and the industrial classes. Children and grandchildren hated the (Roman) Catholic church as much as their fathers; and they regarded the curates with no less detestation and contempt.

Tired of acting so miserable a part, they resolved to administer the sacraments to none but the most

undoubted (Roman) Catholics, and they were perfectly right; but they should then have disavowed and rejected the intervention of physical constraint, which they did not. They persisted in calling for rigour, as if they were satisfied with appearances, and to exact positive proofs of religion, as if they employed rigour no longer! A more enormous and detestable contradiction has never been witnessed! [116]

Then, having arrived at this degree of inconsequence, the clergy came into collision with the magistracy, and this is a new phase of the question, which it is important to understand; for all the remainder of this history until 1787 is involved in it.

If the councillors of the Parliaments, and the magistrates generally, exhibited severity against the Reformed, they always implied that the priests should administer the sacraments without exacting excessive proofs. From the reign of Louis XIV., their decrees might be interpreted in the following manner:—"We are absolutely determined that your marriages shall be blessed by a priest, and that your children shall be presented for Catholic baptism; otherwise, you shall have no civil status; your unions shall be illegal, and your children shall be attainted with illegitimacy; in certain cases, even, you shall forfeit your property and be condemned to the galleys. But reassure yourselves, we will require nothing but simple formalities. It is agreed that the clergy shall impose nothing else, and we will abide by it."

Relying upon these maxims, the Protestants conceived that they were authorized in conceding to the priests as little as possible; but the latter replied,

—"The opinion of the judges is nothing to us. The clergy alone have the light of deciding in sacramental matters. No human power can compel us to give them to those whom we think unworthy. Attend the mass and our instructions for years; confess yourselves regularly; show yourselves, in a word, to be faithful Catholics, and you shall participate in the favours of the Church; otherwise you shall not."

Strange spectacle! The judge insisted upon the execution of the laws, because he interpreted them in one sense, and the priest applied them in another. The first was only solicitous for civil unity; the latter was anxious above all things for spiritual unity. One only obliged the Protestants to be (Roman) Catholics outwardly; the other used the sentence to force them to be so internally. To such an anomalous state of things had these edicts given birth, which had ceased to correspond with the general conscience of the epoch. Even the (Roman) Catholics themselves, it is well known, had analogous conflicts in respect of the refusal of the sacraments to the Jesuits, and the certificates of confession. The only solution of the problem lay in the mutual independence, that is now proclaimed in all the constitutions, of the civil and the religious state.

The Baron de Breteuil shows, in a memorial addressed to Louis XVI., the inextricable embarrassment that had arisen with regard to the Protestants. He says: "On one side, there is the absolute necessity of the certificate of Catholicity; on the other, a scrupulous and arbitrary examination before granting this certificate. What else than laws of impossible execution could result from all these confused ideas, from all these incoherent and

contradictory dispositions?... These unfortunate people, alike rejected by our tribunals under one name, and repulsed by our churches under another name, unrecognised at the same time as Calvinists, and unrecognised as converts, wholly unable to obey laws which oppose each other, and thereby destitute of every means of proving, either before a priest or before a judge, the evidence of their births, their marriages, and their burials, are cut off, as it were, from the family of mankind."[117]

The illustrious Chancellor d'Aguesseau has stated the dilemma in a very perfect manner. "Either the Church must relax its rigour by some modification, or if the Church does not think it ought to do so, it must cease to importune the king to use his authority to reduce his subjects to an impossibility, by commanding them to fulfil a religious duty, which the Church will not permit them to discharge."

And, indeed, the declaration of 1724, while it repeatedly engendered frightful consequences, was never fully executed. It contained, moreover, dispositions revolting against the most sacred feelings of human nature, justice, and society. To punish with the galleys and confiscation of wealth a son, or a daughter, who addressed pious exhortations to a dying father; to inflict a similar punishment upon whoever should fail to denounce his pastor, or should open to him the door of his house; to load with a fine the physician who should refuse to discharge the infamous office of informer—all this, as M. de Sismondi remarks, bore the stamp of so barbarous and savage a fanaticism, that it may be doubted if the code of any other nation has approached it. Were it possible, again, in the eighteenth century, to write similar atrocities in the

laws, it would be impossible to find judges and administrators to carry them out.

As it always happens, atrocity engendered ridicule. Some of the priests instituted a roll-call of children in the Church, after the example of serjeants at a military review, and noted those who were absent that their parents might be fined. But the children frequently refused to answer, mocked the curate, and disturbed his mass. What could be done? Where were the means of punishment, when it might be required to send a whole population, fathers, mothers, and children, to the galleys?

Cardinal Fleury, who governed the kingdom after the Duke de Bourbon, seems to have comprehended this difficulty. Having been engaged in his youth on a mission with Fénélon in Saintonge, and passed many years in Provence, he was acquainted with the invincible firmness of the Protestants. This, conjoined with the alliance of this priest with Great Britain and Holland, the mildness of his character, and his desire of sparing Louis XV. the anxieties of government, will explain his conduct towards the Protestants. He did not destroy the sword of intolerance, but he willingly let it remain in the scabbard.

The curates of Cevennes addressed several urgent remonstrances to him upon this subject. They bitterly complained of the increasing desertion of the Huguenots. The aged cardinal gave little heed to them; he was engrossed with other affairs, and feared disturbance more than heresy.

The persecution, therefore, was only local and momentary, according to the humour of the intendants. Some meetings were surprised and

dispersed by the soldiery; some families were ruined, and other unfortunates were condemned to the galleys. The pastors, particularly, were tracked with implacable cruelty, in the hope that the terror of death would induce them to quit the kingdom.

Many of them were capitally executed. We will cite [the case of] the minister Alexander Roussel, who was hanged at Montpellier, on the 30th of November, 1728, respecting whose martyrdom a popular complaint has come down to us. He was sold for a bribe, and confessed without hesitation that he had preached in Cevennes. When he was asked where he lodged, he replied: “The heaven is my covering.” The Jesuits vainly solicited him to change his religion; his answer was: “I will ever keep the law of Jesus Christ: if I die for His sake, I shall dwell with angels.” He was dragged to the gallows with the rope about his neck, bareheaded and barefoot, singing the 51st psalm, and died uttering prayers to God for his judges and the executioner.

Another pastor, Pierre Durand, who, with Antoine Court, had signed the first deliberations of the synods of the wilderness, was also executed at Montpellier, on the 22nd of April, 1782. He was a man full of years, and noted for his faith and zeal. Five priests accompanied him to the scaffold, and endeavoured to wrench from him an abjuration at any price. Durand remained firm to the last.

These executions afflicted the Protestants of the wilderness, but did not cast them down. The very exactions of the clergy themselves conspired to drive them from the Church of Rome; for seeing that they would not be satisfied with simple forms of (Roman) Catholicism, they resolved upon renouncing the Church in their turn, and that completely. From this

time the number of baptisms and marriages of the wilderness multiplied, in spite of the civil disabilities which attainted them.

Antoine Court strengthened and encouraged the faithful by his exhortations and his example. In 1728 he undertook a tour of nearly a hundred leagues, convoked thirty-two religious meetings in two months, and counted as many as three thousand hearers at the foot of his pulpit; even the most timid began to be emboldened.

The synods rapidly increased, and became more rigid against the parents, who allowed their children to be baptized in the (Roman) Catholic church, or to be married there. They also insisted upon the duty of taking part in the religious services. The synod of 1730 says: “Write to the Protestants under the Cross, that they may know the indispensable obligation they are under to attend the meetings of piety, whenever Providence shall furnish the opportunity. If after being sufficiently instructed in this duty, they refuse to fulfil it, it shall be declared that they are cut off from the Church of the Lord, and are no longer His children.”

It is interesting to observe that these men, who were denied all the rights of citizens, were so bent upon discharging all its duties, that they employed their authority in repressing contraband trade. They thus decided in 1730: “The members of our churches who, to escape paying the king’s dues, shall carry on or countenance smuggling, shall be first censured, and then, if they relapse, exposed to final excommunication. The assembly does not in this article comprise the contraband commerce in religious books, which do not anywise prejudice the king or the state.”

The re-awakening of Languedoc and Dauphiny excited a pious rivalry in other provinces. Rouergue, Guienne, Quercy, Saintonge, Aunis, and Poitou, held meetings again and demanded pastors. There were but few. Antoine Court sought the young men who appeared fitted for this holy vocation at the plough, in the trader's warehouse, in the workman's shop; but the instruction they derived from a wandering life was insufficient.

The restorer of French Protestantism began to reflect upon the necessity of a theological school. To open it in France was not to be dreamed of. The universities of England and Germany were too distant from the southern provinces, and did not speak their language. Geneva was too near, and its academy too severely watched. Antoine Court decided upon Lausanne. His long and urgent solicitations, his indefatigable endeavours, the liberality of Switzerland, England, and the other Protestant powers, contributed to found there a French theological seminary. Court went to establish it himself, in 1730, with the title of deputy-general of the churches, and directed this school during the thirty concluding years of his life. It was this college that sent forth all the Protestant pastors until the reign of Napoleon.

VIII.

Before we proceed to relate the events, which will conduct us beyond the year 1750, it is but a duty of justice which we owe to the refugee pastors, to follow them in their exile; they had all ceased to live in the former half of the eighteenth century. Although they died upon a foreign soil, the French Reformation has a right to claim them: they belong to it by their birth, their education, the first years of their ministry, by the language they used, and by the constancy of their sympathy for their oppressed brethren.

We shall not speak of the lay refugees, whose names are illustrious in literature, science, and industry, such as Rapin Thoyras, the learned Bayle, Denis Papin, the constructor of machines, the chemist Lémery, the traveller Chardin, and many others. We must confine ourselves to those fugitives, who exercised a direct influence upon the state of the Reformed churches of France.

It is universally acknowledged, that the majority of the fugitive pastors was composed of pious and intelligent men of irreproachable character. No Protestant clergy in Europe were superior to them. We will only mention the principal among them, arranging them according to the date of their death.

Pierre Jurieu (1637-1713) was a laborious and vehement controversialist. He has had numerous opponents among the (Roman) Catholics and the sceptics, and his memory has suffered in consequence. It must be confessed that he gave occasion to certain attacks by his venturous predictions, his assertions concerning suspected

miracles, and the sharpness of his polemics. But these defects were redeemed by a host of estimable qualities; a firm attachment to his religious persuasions, an incomparable activity, a solid erudition in every branch of theological science, and a clear and ready wit. He never lacked penetration to discover error, or courage to combat it.

He did not long exercise the functions of a pastor. Nominated in 1674 professor of theology at Sédan, he made his appearance with much *éclat*. Bayle, who pursued him at a later period with so many invectives, at that time wrote: “He is one of the first men of his age, and if the delicacy of his constitution does not offer resistance to his ardour for study, and to his application to the functions of his office, everything may be expected of him. I tell you, and I repeat it, he is the first man of our communion, whether it be for sound judgment or for the nicety of his wit.”

It is not sufficiently known, that during his retreat in Holland, some years before the Revocation, he was almost the *only opponent* (*le seul tenant*, as they called it), of Arnauld, Bossuet, Nicole, and Maimbourg. The others, being still in France, dared not speak out. But in his pulpit at Rotterdam, he recoiled before no truth, and his strong and unfettered voice often inflicted the most severe and just chastisements upon the persecutors.

Nor is it sufficiently known that he became, after the fatal edict, the protector of a crowd of refugees, that he solicited and procured for them the assistance of several sovereigns, and that at the same time he gave them the shelter of hospitality, he consoled and encouraged their brethren, who languished at home, by his *Pastoral Letters*.

The list of Jurieu's works is very extensive. While yet with his flock at Vitry-le-Français, he composed a *Treatise on Devotion*, which was reprinted seventeen times within a few years, and twenty-six times in an English translation. This work has induced the regret that the author, absorbed by controversy, did not employ more of his time in writing books of simple edification.

His reply to Father Maimbourg, *Le Calvinisme et le Papisme mis en parallèle* ("Calvinism and Popery Compared"), less pointed than the answer of Bayle, and less venomous, nevertheless obtained considerable applause, and was greatly read. Claude wrote to him: "Your last work against Maimbourg has at length reached me, and I have not read, but devoured it, without the possibility of quitting it. Everybody here (at Paris) of any note, with any courage or zeal left, is charmed with the book."

He answered the attacks of Nicole by the *Vrai Système de l'Eglise* ("The True System of the Church"), which competent judges declare to be his master-piece. In it Jurieu develops the doctrine of the invisible church, in opposition to the visible communion of Rome. He also produced *Histoire Critique des Dogmes et des Cultes* ("A Critical History of Dogmas and Forms of Worship"), where humanity is considered in its religious development. The illustrious defender of the Reformed faith did not cease to wield his pen until the eve of the day of his death.

Pierre Allix (1641-1717) withdrew to England after the Revocation. He was only thirty years of age when he was summoned to succeed to the Drelincourts and Daillés. His discourses were full, solid, and distinguished for a sobriety and a clearness

of style that made them equally pleasing to the educated and the ignorant. He had prepared his last sermon upon the farewell of Saint Paul to the Ephesians, to be preached at Charenton; but the place of worship was closed by the kings order eight days sooner than was expected.

"Doctor Allix," says one of his biographers, "was loved and esteemed by all the learned men of his time. Extremely zealous for the Protestant religion, he was always ready to undertake its defence against the partisans of the Romish church. He passionately desired to unite the Protestants, particularly the Lutherans, with the Reformed, and he frequently consulted the ministers of Geneva, Holland, and Berlin, on this subject. He had a profound acquaintance with all the sciences. He was well versed in the Hebrew, Syriac, and Chaldean languages; and as his erudition was vast, and his memory excellent, he was a kind of living library." Some writers of great weight have considered him to be the most learned of the ministers of Charenton.

Pierre Allix received at London the title of Honorary Doctor, from the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. The Anglican clergy had so high an opinion of his ability that they confided to him the task of writing *The History of the Councils*, and even the Parliament bestowed upon him particular marks of consideration.

Jean La Placette (1639-1718) was surnamed the Nicole of the Reformed, on account of his numerous and judicious moral writings. He equalled the Jansenist doctor in knowledge of the human heart, and surpassed him in that of the Scriptures. His style was simple and chaste, and he was, above all, sincere in the highest sense of the word.

La Placette was a pastor of the French church at Copenhagen for the space of twenty-six years (1685-1711). He dedicated his *Nouveaux Essais de Morale* ("New Moral Essays") to the queen of Denmark. "Our people," he says in the preface, "are far from comprehending the extent of purity which the Gospel requires of us. They are even influenced by a great number of false maxims, more pernicious than errors of pure speculation. Besides, our writers —at least those of our nation—have been forced by the importunity of their adversaries, to give up all their leisure to the defence of the truth, so that they have been able to compose but a very few works of morality, and these only treat of some particular matters. Thus, that part of religion, which is, if I may venture to say so, the soul and essence of it, and which it is so necessary should be well explained and understood, has been in some sort neglected."

David Martin (1639-1721) has acquired a popular name in the Reformed communion of France by his corrections of the old versions of the Bible. His translation, without being free from defects, is nevertheless that which most faithfully reproduces the simplicity and the vigour of the original text. He was invited in 1694, by the synod of the Walloon churches, to undertake this book and to accompany it with critical reflections. Thirteen years after, he published his new edition of the Bible, in two folio volumes.

This pastor had made the French language his particular study. "So well had he mastered all the rules and niceties," says Nicéron, "that he was able to furnish remarks and observations to the French Academy. He sent many to them when the academy was about to print the second edition of its

dictionary; and the letter of thanks which he received in return, shows the importance the Academy attached to his criticisms."

David Martin twice refused the professorial chair; but he took pleasure in giving lectures at his house on theology, to the young students of Utrecht. At the age of upwards of eighty years he still preserved considerable mental vigour. On the 7th of September, 1721, he preached upon Providence, with a force which astonished all his auditory; at the conclusion of the sermon he was unable to descend from the pulpit but with the assistance of his friends, and two days after drew his last breath. This pious divine had always desired that he might die when leaving the house of God.

Jacques Basnage (1653-1723), grandson of Benjamin Basnage, of whom we have already spoken, surpassed all the members of his family in the variety of his acquirements, the extent of his labours, and the grandeur of the part he was summoned to play. "He was more fitted for a minister of state than of a parish," says Voltaire.

Basnage, in fact, participated in several important negotiations. He took part in the conferences preceding the peace of Utrecht, and demanded, but uselessly, the re-establishment of religious freedom in France. Shortly afterwards, Cardinal de Bouillon, who had retired to Holland, confided to him the affairs he had to settle with the States-General. In 1716 the Abbé Dubois had recourse to the intermission of Basnage to conclude a treaty with the United Provinces and England. Singular spectacle! that of a poor exiled pastor influencing the alliances of his native country!

The regent also addressed him to prevent the

Spanish Cardinal Alberoni from exciting insurrections among the Protestants of the southern provinces. Basnage advised the French government to put itself in communication with Antoine Court, and this humble minister of the desert, condemned to death by the laws [of his country], promised that Languedoc should not be disturbed. On this occasion, and at the express request of the Duke d'Orléans, Basnage wrote a pastoral instruction for the Reformed of France, which spread with rapidity. In it the author maintains the principles of Christianity respecting the obedience due to the sovereign; but, perhaps, after exhorting the oppressed to submission, he might have said something more to the oppressors.

Placed at the head of the French church of the Hague, appointed historiographer to the States-General of Holland, and surrounded by the esteem of the public, he was as happy as an exile from his native land could be. "He was true," says a biographer, "even to the minutest things. The custom of the highest society had imbued him with a politeness rarely found in the learned. Affable and popular, his greatest pleasure was to serve others, and to employ his credit in favour of the unfortunate."

It is surprising that he was able, in the midst of his political occupations and the labours of his pastoral office, to compose so many works on theology and ecclesiastical history. Some of them are very voluminous, among others, *L'Histoire de la religion des Eglises réformées* ("The History of the Religion of the Reformed Churches"); *L'Histoire des Juifs* ("The History of the Jews"); and that of the Church from the time of the Christian era to the eighteenth

century. The erudition of Basnage is vast, his thought penetrating, and his style firm; he raised controversy to a height that has only been attained by Bossuet.

Jacques Abbadie (1654-1724) was the best apologist of Christianity, and one of the most able writers of the Reformed communion. After completing his studies at the academies of Sédan and Saumur, he entered into the service of the French church of Berlin. “The only thing that vexes me,” the Duke de Montausier said one day to the ambassador of the elector of Brandenburg, when speaking of a work of Abbadie, “is, that the author of this book should be at liberty.” If France had lost one of her glories, who was chargeable with the fault?

Abbadie afterwards withdrew to England, and died dean of the parish of Killaloe in Ireland. We read in a notice of his life: “His manners, polished by intercourse with good society, were mild and easy, and a more even and obliging temper never existed. As his mind was full of gaiety, and he expressed himself upon all kinds of subjects with as much elegance, correctness, and fire as in his meditated works, his conversation was as agreeable as useful, and one never quitted his company without regret.”

His treatise on *L’Art de se connaître soi-même* (“The Art of Knowing Oneself”) is full of judicious observations, and shows that the author had profoundly meditated upon the relations of the human conscience to the duties of the Gospel. But the most celebrated of his works is the treatise on *La Verité de la religion Chrétienne* (“The Truth of the Christian Religion”). It obtained the suffrage of (Roman) Catholics as well as Protestants. “This admirable work,” said the Abbé Desfontaines, forty years afterwards, “eclipses everything that has ever

been published before it for the defence of Christianity. How many conversions has it not effected! How many strong minds has it not subjected!"

Madame de Sévigné wrote to the Comte de Bussi-Rabutin, "It is the most divine of books; this esteem is general. I do not believe any one has spoken of religion like this man. I shall re-peruse it every three months for the remainder of my life." And the count answered with the same enthusiasm: "Until now I have never been touched by other books, which tell me of God, and now I see well the reason; it is that the source appeared doubtful; but seeing it clear and transparent in Abbadie, I value what I did not before esteem. I repeat it, this is an admirable book. He pourtrays to me everything he says, and compels my reason not to doubt that which once appeared to it incredible."

The author combats the Atheists in the first part of his work, the Deists in the second, and the Socinians in the third. He starts with this proposition, "There is a God," to arrive at this: "Jesus is the promised Messiah." Then he ascends from this last proposition to the first. The book has been translated into several languages, and it has appeared in a great variety of editions.

Elie Bénoît (1640-1728) was a learned and industrious theologian. We discharge a debt of gratitude in consecrating a few lines to the author of *L'Histoire de l'Edit de Nantes* ("The History of the Edict of Nantes"), of which we have made great use in our own.

He was pastor of the church of Alençon, and had the pain of seeing his place of worship closed, under the futile pretext that the faithful had assumed a

defensive attitude on some occasion of their worship being interrupted by the populace. He went to Paris in support of their cause; but instead of obtaining the redress of his complaints, he was answered by threats.

Bénoît took refuge in Holland, and published there a letter addressed to his former parishioners. As we read in his memoirs, they emigrated *en masse*; for there remained in France scarcely an eighth, which will serve to explain why the town of Alençon ceases to figure in the catalogue of the Reformed churches.

The chief work of Bénoît is the history we have so often quoted. It should be read by all who are desirous of studying one of the most important periods of the French Reformation. More brevity and precision might perhaps be desired in this book, but assuredly not greater exactness. The author displays a correct judgment, and a moderation which proves him to have been swayed by no other passion than that of truth.

Jacques Saurin (1677-1730) was the greatest preacher of the French Protestants. He was born at Nismes, where his father practised as an advocate, and received his early education at Geneva. He was tempted, at the age of seventeen, by the profession of arms, and became an ensign in the Savoyard service. On the re-establishment of peace, he resumed his academical studies under the learned teachers Tronchin, Turretin, and Pictet.

In 1701 he was appointed pastor of a French church in London; and some years subsequently, having visited Holland and preached at the Hague, he received so much applause that a new place was created for him, under the title of "*minister of the nobles*:" he held it until his death.

From 1708 to 1725 he published five volumes of sermons; seven others, inferior to the first, appeared posthumously. He possessed all the great qualities of a Christian orator: a profound knowledge of the Bible, a healthy and vigorous theology, the art of devising learned and original plans, a masculine logic, judicious and always serious ornaments, and a style which was eminently subservient to thought; though sometimes it might be desired that there had been more unction in his speech and more correctness in his language. The misfortunes of the faithful, to whom Saurin preached the Gospel, enhanced his oratorical powers, by surrounding it with a tragic poignancy. Some of his sermons have thrown weight into the scales of the destinies of Europe.

The action, with which Saurin delivered his discourses, is not so well known as their substance. The journalists of his time speak of him in the following manner: “He has a natural exterior which prepossesses the congregation in his favour, whilst his voice is powerful and sonorous. Those, who remember the magnificent prayer which he pronounced before the sermon, will not have forgotten how the ear was filled with the most harmonious sounds. It could have been wished that his voice preserved the same *éclat* until the end of the action; but as we are not drawing a panegyric, we may confess that he did not so well manage it. A little less impetuosity would have freed him from this defect. The expectation raised by the prayer was not disappointed by the sermon; [that it was not so] we [may] confidently appeal to his auditors. All, without any exception, were charmed; and he who came with the intention to criticise, gradually forgot his purpose, as he attentively sought to discover

something susceptible of criticism."[118]

Saurin published letters upon the state of Christianity in France. He reproached the Reformed with not having quitted a country where they could not freely celebrate their worship, and applied to them the name of temporisers. The reproach was too severe, and it is not to be regretted that his advice to emigrate *en masse* was not followed.

He was accused before the Walloon synods of having justified officious lying in his discourses upon the Bible. This became the subject of a long and laborious polemical contest. Saurin addressed this declaration to the synods: "I have not pretended in my dissertation upon lying to do anything else than to report *historically* the sentiments of those who believe that lying is always criminal, and of those who believe it to be innocent in certain cases. As for the holiness and veracity of God, as well as the obligation which binds men to speak the truth, I hold by the doctrine contained in my catechism, which I will ever teach."

It is related that Saurin, who in the pulpit was so skilful in unravelling the passions of men and their secret motives of action, was unable to discover them in society. He was altogether wanting in experience of the world; and was so full of confidence and candour, that it was as easy to deceive him as a child. His life was frequently troubled in consequence.

Jaques Lenfant (1661-1728) and Isaac de Beausobre (1659-1738), are two names which ought to remain united in the pages of history, since they have figured in joint works. They were both pastors at Berlin, and had the same turn of mind, the same taste for historical and critical studies, the same

belief, [and lived] the same religious life; whilst contemporary memoirs attribute to both the same amiable character.

Lenfant has written the history of the councils of Constance, Pisa, and Basle—books dictated by science and conscience. Voltaire says of him, that he contributed more than any one to spread the grace and strength of the French language to the furthermost parts of Germany. Beausobre, for his part, has made for himself a name justly celebrated by his history of Manichæism.

The two authors were associated in the publication of a new edition of the New Testament, with critical notes. To Beausobre were allotted the Epistles of Saint Paul, and to Lenfant all the other books of the New Testament. The task of the former was more difficult, that of the other of greater extent. The biographer of Beausobre says: “This distribution of the work did not prevent their working in concert. When one was of a different opinion to the other, they discussed and criticised, but each cheerfully submitted to the strongest evidence.”

The successors of this illustrious generation of refugee pastors and theologians belong to us no more. Born and educated out of France, their glory is the property of the countries that sustained them on their hospitable soil.

IX.

We left the Reformed zealously labouring for the re-organization of their churches. They restored vigorous action to many of the articles of ancient discipline. The newly-established consistories watched over the maintenance of good order among the flocks. The meetings approached the great centres of the Protestant population, and were held more frequently by day. In a word, the period from 1730 to 1744 was a time of calm when compared with the horrible tempest, which had dispersed and scattered everything but a few years before.

The religious movement extended. A young pastor, who joined great prudence to ardent faith, Michel Viala, traversed Upper Languedoc, and held assemblies in the neighbourhoods of Castres and Montauban. The county of Foix received Pierre Corteis; Béarn, Etienne Deffère; and Poitou and Normandy, Jean Loire and André Migault. We see that the pastors, whose number was always limited, were compelled to discharge the duties of missionaries; their fields of labour were far more extensive than dioceses.

With a view to the introduction of greater regularity into their teaching and their maxims of conduct, they resolved to convoke a general or national synod, and this assembly was opened, on the 18th of August, 1744, in a secluded spot in Lower Languedoc, under the presidency of Michel Viala. The majority of the old Protestant provinces, from Cevennes to Normandy, were represented at this meeting; but there was no delegate from the Isle of France or Paris.

The moment was well chosen in one respect, and badly in another. The Protestants could collect with greater facility, because the war engaged all the attention of the government and all the forces of the country abroad. But this very war was certain to inspire the council with greater displeasure at such an assembly.

The first step of the synod was to declare its inviolable fidelity to the king. It ordered the celebration, before the end of the year, of a solemn fast in all the Reformed flocks of the kingdom, “for the preservation of the sacred person of his majesty, for the success of his arms, for the cessation of war, and for the deliverance of the Church.” The pastors were exhorted to preach at least once a year upon the submission due to “the powers that be.”

This meeting took wise measures for the observation of discipline and the correction of manners. It invited the pastors to abstain from treating of points of controversy in the pulpit, and not to speak without circumspection of the sufferings of the Reformed people. It recommended to the flocks to celebrate their worship as much as possible in open day. The tenth article of the resolutions stated, “As there are many provinces, where the religious services are still performed during the night, the synod, in order to manifest still more the purity of our intentions as well as to preserve uniformity, has directed the pastors and elders of the different provinces to conform, as far as prudence will permit, to the churches, which perform their service in daylight.”

Antoine Court came from Lausanne to be present at this great meeting, and after appeasing a difference which had arisen with regard to a pastor

who had been falsely accused, he had the joy of preaching to an audience of ten thousand persons.

This assembly of so many of the faithful, this general synod, of which the members came from the extremities of the realm, this semi-publicity given to acts that the law considered as criminal and rebellious, disturbed and irritated the council, who began to fear that the Protestants maintained a secret intelligence with foreigners.

Nothing was more false. From the sixteenth century, in the very times of the most bloody persecutions, the mass of the Reformed had never once forgotten their duty to their sovereign and their country. If in the wars of the Camisards, some of the Cévenoles had looked to England or Holland for assistance, it was only a local and partial affair. But the apprehensions of the court, which continually broke out afresh after the Edict of Revocation, prove the great truth, that it is not possible to persecute with impunity. When public authority ignores every condition of justice, morality, and order, it is the first victim of its attempt; and in default of the remorse, from which fanaticism or corruption may relieve it, it expiates its crime by unceasing and invincible terrors.

Calumny played its part in these deplorable circumstances; and opinion, ignorant of the true sentiments of a proscribed population, easily adopted the grossest falsehoods. It was pretended that the pastor Jacques Roger had read a false Edict of Toleration at the religious meetings, in order to drive the Protestants to rebellion; that those who were present were armed; that they had sung a hymn imploring God to bless the English with victory; that their collections for the poor were military taxes;

that twenty-five thousand Camisards held themselves in readiness to join the enemy, who blockaded the ports of Provence; that the convents were to be pillaged, the priests and the monks massacred, and the whole south of France put to fire and sword.

These popular rumours were still more extravagant than odious, and had not even a shadow of truth. Yet they were believed at court, and the Baron Lenain d'Asfeld, intendant of Languedoc, was directed to ascertain indirectly from the consistories and pastors of the desert, if it were true that the religionists had understandings with the enemy. He wished, moreover, to know if, in case of an invasion, the government might count upon a rising of Protestant volunteers. This was a new example of the effects of intolerance; they thought themselves obliged to treat with Frenchmen as if they were foreigners; and because they would not consider them citizens, they were no longer trusted in their country's day of misfortune.

The Protestants answered, that not one of their co-religionists would join the English armies, that they were all ready to perform their duty for the service of the king; that the pastors never ceased to recommend obedience, and that if they contravened the laws in matters of religion, it was under an obligation superior to all human authority.

The intendant Lenain, who had had many occasions of studying the [character of the] Protestants, did not distrust their assurances of fidelity. But it was not so at Versailles, where objects were distorted by fear and distance. The news of the national synod of 1744 produced those acts, which seemed allied to madness.

Louis XV. was made to sign, in February, 1745,

two ordinances still more cruel, if that were possible, than any that had preceded them. In addition to the penalty of death against the pastors, and of perpetual imprisonment at the galleys against those who harboured them, a fine of three thousand livres was pronounced against all the Protestants of the place where a pastor should be arrested. As for the meetings, it was no longer necessary to have been present at them in order to be doomed to the galleys and [to suffer] forfeiture of property; it was sufficient not to have denounced them. Everything was a crime according to these laws; and out of fifteen hundred thousand Reformed, one-half might have been condemned, at the end of six months, to row in convict vessels, and the other half to beg their bread.

Although it was impossible to execute these ordinances literally, and although the very men, who had drawn them up, would not have suffered it, they were followed by cruel disasters. The Protestants might send petitions upon petitions to the king, to the ministers, to the intendants, to every one who had power to help them; these requests, wherein they stated in the humblest language their sufferings and their unalterable sentiments of fidelity, did not reach their address, and if they did arrive there, were never read. Some were burned or fixed to the pillory by the hand of the executioner, as if their complaints were less just because they were stamped with ignominy.

Antoine Court has written an historical memoir upon the persecutions that recommenced after the synod of 1744. His integrity is as free from suspicion as his perfect acquaintance with the events, and we therefore borrow from him the facts we are about to relate.

The abduction of children multiplied in the provinces, and particularly in Normandy. Court gives a list, and it is very lengthy, name by name. This kidnapping was usually carried on at night, like a brigand's descent, by companies of archers headed by the parish curates. When there was a delay in opening the doors of the houses, they were burst in, and then the soldiers, sabre in hand, with oaths upon their lips, overthrowing everything in the search after their prey, insulting the despair no less than the shrieks of the mothers, and beating the fathers who dared to complain, carried off the children, the young girls in preference, and dragged them away to the convents. The parents were obliged to furnish a pension for their maintenance, and if one of the victims escaped, they were made responsible for it. These horrors provoked a fresh emigration. Six hundred families of Normandy profited by their proximity to the sea to fly from the kingdom with everything they could take with them.

Lettres de cachet were again used against the people of importance. The religionists of less consideration underwent the sentences of the judiciary or administrative sentences. The Parliaments of Grenoble, Bordeaux, Toulouse, and the intendants of Saintonge, Guienne, Dauphiny, Quercy, and Languedoc, relentlessly pursued the Reformed, who had had their children baptized, or their marriages blessed in the desert.

The religious meetings were spied, and attacked most unmercilessly. On the 17th of March, 1745, two troops of dragoons fell upon an assembly in the neighbourhood of Mazamet, killed several persons, wounded a greater number, and carried off many prisoners. Scenes of the same kind were enacted near

Montauban, Uzès, Saint Hippolyte, Saint Ambroix, and in other places. It was again necessary to have recourse to night meetings.

From 1744 to 1746 we count three hundred persons who were condemned to be flogged, to be degraded from the nobility, to be imprisoned for life, to the galleys, or to death, by the single Parliament of Grenoble, which showed a most pitiless spirit, because it administered justice in a border province, and at only a few steps from the enemy's camp upon the Alps. The fines were enormous. In a petition addressed to the king in 1750, the Protestants of Dauphiny stated that they had been obliged to pay more than two hundred thousand livres, and that from the depth of their prisons, they heard their goods and their inheritances sold by auction.

The same things happened in the provinces of the south, though to a less extent. Nismes paid upwards of sixty thousand livres. The intendants coined money out of heresy, as was afterwards done in 1793 out of the aristocracy.

"I could produce here," says Antoine Court, "first a list of more than six hundred prisoners arrested since 1744 (he wrote in 1753), in the provinces of Languedoc, the Upper and Lower Alps, Vivarais, Dauphiny, Provence, the county of Foix, Saintonge, and Poitou; among whom were many gentlemen, advocates, physicians, substantial burghers, and rich tradesmen, who have suffered long and cruel imprisonment, out of which they have escaped by arbitrary and ruinous fines alone. I could produce another catalogue of more than eight hundred prisoners who have been condemned to divers punishments, among whom more than eighty were gentlemen."

Some of the condemned obtained their pardon through the intervention of powerful protectors, or by means of pecuniary sacrifices, after having passed a certain time in confinement; and this explains how it was that, in 1753, there remained at Toulouse more than forty-eight convicts on account of religion. Allowances must also be made for the mortality which struck a great number of these unfortunate persons, [who had been] suddenly degraded from a position of competency to a condition so abject.

The glass-makers of the county of Foix were condemned by the intendant of Auch, to perpetual imprisonment at the galleys, and forfeiture of all their property. One of them, Grenier de Lastermes, was a venerable old man of seventy-six years. He underwent his sentence at the hulks of Toulon: his two sons died, one near him, the other upon the galleys of Marseilles. We have read a letter of this once opulent old man, in which he thanks the consistory of Marseilles for having allowed him two sous a day to alleviate his misery! He wrote: “We are engaged upon the labours marked out for us, having only bread and water for our nourishment, without the opportunity of exemption, but by payment of a *sol* every morning to the under-gaolers; otherwise we are exposed to remain fastened to a beam with a great chain, night and day.”

The *dragonnades* were renewed at Milhau, Saint Affrique, and at other places in Rouergue, Languedoc, and Dauphiny. This was the punishment of the lower ranks of the people for being present at the assemblies.

These sentences, if they had been less barbarous, would have been laughable. Not only were the religionists persecuted for having introduced Bibles

and pious books into the realm, but a poor man, named Etienne Arnaud, of Dieu-le-Fit, was sentenced, in 1744, to imprisonment for life and the pillory. For what? Because he had taught some young folks to sing psalms. His psalter and a copy of the New Testament were nailed to the pillory beside him.

X.

The pastors, however, continued to be the object of the most implacable persecutions. If the government had reflected, it would have seen, on one side, that the Reformed were invincibly attached to their creeds, whether with their pastors or without them; on the other, that their ministers of religion did more good than harm, even in a political point of view, since they restrained the explosion of the popular resentment, and always recommended order, patience, and respect for the law. But neither the intendants nor the Parliaments were able to comprehend that these men were among the number of the most useful citizens, and three pastors were put to death in 1745 and 1746.

The first, Louis Rang, or Ranc, was twenty-six years of age. He was arrested at an inn of Levron, condemned to capital punishment by the Parliament of Grenoble, and executed at Die, in March, 1745.

A contemporary historian says: "At Crest, the minister asked permission to be shaved, and to have his hair arranged. This neatness appeared to him requisite the better to show the serenity which reigned in his soul, and the contempt with which he treated the unjust death he was about to suffer. He met his end like a hero, and never did Christian exhibit a more elevated calmness at such a moment. On his way to execution, he chanted the verse of the 118th psalm: '*This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it*,' which he repeated several times. The speech he attempted to make could not be heard, on account of the noise of the drums, which were beaten purposely to smother his voice. He would not hearken to the Jesuits who

accompanied him, but kept his eyes continually raised to heaven, and gave signs of feelings of the most lively and earnest piety. When he arrived at the foot of the ladder, he knelt, prayed, and then mounted the scaffold courageously."[119]

His corpse was insulted by the populace; but a (Roman) Catholic lady, who must have blushed for her faith, provided a sepulchre for his wretched remains.

After this youthful servant of the Gospel, died the veteran of the assemblies of the wilderness, Jacques Roger—who had restored the churches with Antoine Court—an aged minister, seventy years old. He was taken in the neighbourhood of Crest. "Who are you?" demanded the officer of the patrol. "I am," he answered, "he whom you have long sought for, and it is time that you should find me." Like Ignatius of Antioch, Jacques Roger sighed for the crown of martyrdom.

Confined with other Protestant prisoners, he exhorted them to remain firm in the faith. When the executioner came to summon him, he exclaimed: "This is the blessed day, this is the glad moment I have so long yearned for. Let us rejoice, my soul, for this is the happy day when thou shalt enter into the joy of thy Lord."

He beseeched the Jesuits, who importuned him, to cease from troubling his mind in its repose, and walked to the scaffold in the midst of the crash of the drums that were continually beaten. "There was no one," says Armand de la Chapelle, "who did not read upon the countenance of this holy confessor, the profound calmness, the sincere piety, and the ardent zeal of his soul. Even the Jesuits spoke of him with praise, and many persons of the Romish communion

could not refrain from showing how much they were touched. When he had prayed on his knees at the foot of the ladder, he mounted the steps with the same air of modest confidence, which he had all along displayed." His body was thrown into the Isère, after it had been suspended twenty-four hours on the gibbet.

The third victim, who excited the warmest sympathy, was executed on the 2nd of February, 1746. His name was Matthieu Majal, and he bore, according to the custom of the desert pastors, the surname of Désubas. His age also was twenty-six.

Having been surprised at Saint Agrève, in Vivarais, he was taken to Vernoux. The news of his arrest spread universal grief. When he passed through a village on the way, some unarmed peasants supplicated the commanding officer to release their pastor; and one of them, throwing himself upon Désubas, closely embraced him, imploring his liberty. The only reply was an order to fire upon the peasants, and six were slain.

The next day—one of religious service—a more numerous gathering, but similarly unarmed, penetrated into the town of Vernoux. The officer, who dreaded a rising, ordered his soldiers to fire from the houses against this crowd, whose wailings and prayers were their only weapons. Thirty of these unfortunates fell dead, and two or three hundred were wounded.

Then the mountaineers of Vivarais flew to arms, and prepared to avenge the murder of their brethren. Fortunately the pastors hastened to intercede, and to beseech them, in the name of their faith, their families, their country, in the name of their common salvation, to refrain. "It is only on this condition,"

said the most revered of these pastors to them, “that I will continue my ministry among you.”

Désubas himself wrote this note from his prison. “I implore you, gentlemen, to retire. The king’s people are here in strong numbers; and too much blood has been spilled already. I am calm, and entirely resigned to the Divine will.”

The peasants yielded, and threw their arms away. But along the road by which the pastor passed, from Vernoux to Montpellier, they stood grief-stricken and indignant, with difficulty repressing the promptings of their desire to rescue him. All their ministers were there, hidden in the multitude, and striving to appease it with the sacred words of the Evangelist.

Désubas reached Montpellier at the time of holding the States. The whole body of the clergy hastened around him, soliciting but one word, one single word of abjuration. Vain efforts! The pastor of the desert was more firm before the seductions of his persecutors than before the tears of his people: he had long devoted himself to death.

The intendant Lenain asked him, not for his own information, but to acquit himself of the forms of his duty, if the Protestants had not a common treasury, if they were not collecting arms, and if they were not in correspondence with England. “There is not a word of truth in it,” answered the prisoner, “the ministers preach nothing but patience and fidelity to the king.” “I know it, sir,” said the intendant, deeply moved.

When sentence of death was pronounced against Désubas, both the judges and the intendant wept. “It is,” he said, “with sorrow that we condemn you, but such are the orders of the king.” “I know it, sir,”

replied the pastor of the desert, in his turn.

The scaffold was erected upon the esplanade of Montpellier, whither Désubas was conducted, bareheaded and barefoot, in the midst of an innumerable concourse of spectators. The papers and books which had been found upon him, were burnt before his face; and when he sought to address the multitude, the din of fourteen drums drowned his words. He preserved a placid countenance, repulsed the Jesuits, who held a crucifix to him, pronounced a short prayer, and ascending the fatal ladder, gave up his soul to God.

We may here recognise the profound opposition that existed between the laws and the manners of the period. The magistrates, while they sentenced [Désubas], revolted against the legal text, whilst their hearts acknowledged him to be innocent whom they were compelled to condemn as guilty. All the (Roman) Catholics of any moral or intellectual education, were thunderstruck at the execution of Désubas. The Protestants, on the contrary, thanked God for having given them so heroic a martyr, and his name is still heard in the popular legends, beneath the cottage roof of the peasantry of Vivarais and Languedoc.

Yet this renewal of the persecutions had exhausted the patience of many of the Reformed. Seeing that they were absolutely denied any approximation to religious liberty, they demanded permission to sell their property and quit the kingdom. They wrote to Louis XV.: “We cannot live without following our religion, and we are compelled, however unwillingly, to supplicate your majesty, with the most profound humility and respect, that you may please to allow us to leave the realm with our wives, our children, and

our effects, to retire into foreign countries, where we may freely worship God in the form we believe to be indispensable, and on which depends our eternal happiness or misery."

Instead of granting this authority, the council replied by an aggravation of severity, particularly after the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, in 1748. The troops required employment; the court had leisure; it remembered the uneasiness which the heretics had caused it during the war, and it resolved to attempt a decisive blow that should, if possible, put an end once for all to this proscribed people.

It is painful continually to discover the hand of the (Roman) Catholic clergy in these scenes of violence, spoliation, and death. The venerable Malesherbes, the Baron de Breteuil, Rulhières, Joly de Fleury, Gilbert de Voisins, Rippert de Monclar, the gravest statesmen, the most eminent magistrates, who have written upon the religious affairs of this epoch, all proclaim this with unanimous voice. They agree in characterizing the conduct of the priests as obstinate, unrelenting, sometimes haughty, sometimes supple and humble, but ever exacting the use of extreme measures of compulsion and severity for the re-establishment of religious unity.

What is still more intolerable is, that at the very time when the clergy demanded the strict execution of the horrible ordinances of 1724 and 1745, they never ceased to declare that the Church was always adverse to all means that were not charitable and paternal. Is it possible to conceive, imagine, or dream of the possibility of so flagrant a contradiction?

What! knock at every door, besiege the offices of all the ministers, address the sovereign, threaten,

solicit, pray, even offer money; and for what purpose? To oppress the conscience of more than a million of Protestants; to persecute them even in the sanctuary of domestic worship; to constrain them to have their children baptized by a priest under pain of bastardy; to compel married people to ask for the (Roman) Catholic benediction under pain of being denied any civil condition; to send soldiers, in a word, against the meetings, gaolers and hangmen against the pastors; and all this as only a labour of charity, goodness, and fraternal love!

There was a bishop of Castres, who applied for a regiment of dragoons in order to dissolve the meetings, taking care at the same time to add that the soldiers should not injure his flock, among whom he counted the re-united brethren. The bishop of Aire forwarded complaints that the custom of establishing the refusal of the sacraments at the death-bed of heretics had fallen into desuetude, and he wanted to renew the suits for the ignominious treatment of their corpses. The Count de Saint Florentin, secretary of state for religious affairs, who was not without complaisance for the clergy, was obliged to address a very severe admonition to this prelate.

The notion of religious freedom, or even of simple toleration, seems to have been absolutely unknown to the Romish ecclesiastics of the time: they did not understand it; and if they beheld an inkling of it in others, they combatted it as an act of impiety. We have a proof of this in a letter which made considerable noise in 1751. It bore the signature of Chabannes, bishop of Agen.

There had fallen into his possession a paper containing the following matter: “It is the intention

of the comptroller-general to grant every kind of protection to the Sieur Frontin, a Huguenot trader, and that he should be treated with such consideration as may induce the merchants of his sect to return to the kingdom." In fact, the object was to afford the opportunity to some of the industrious refugees of again peacefully residing in France.

The bishop immediately took pen in hand to express his *astonishment* and *grief* to the comptroller-general, Machault. His letter is lengthy, and skilfully written. He avoided all mention of dogma, well aware that this kind of argument would be of no avail with unbelievers; but he developed in his own way the political side of the question. According to him the Calvinists were the enemies of the king, rebels on principle, republicans by system; they had on many occasions brought the country within an inch of its ruin, and would do so again if they were recalled. Louis XIV. had the wisdom to free the body politic of the state from these vicious and peccant humours, which had caused so many disorders in it (we follow the text); Louis XV. will pursue the same course. As for the thought of permitting the Huguenot pastors to carry on their ministry in France, it was an enormity to which the bishop would on no account agree. "Heaven, which has ever protected the monarchy," he says in conclusion, "heaven, which has until now united religion with it by a bond that has not been broken, inspired him with this confidence. We will not witness the free exercise of Calvinism. No, the son, the heir, the imitator of Louis the Great, will not re-establish the Huguenots."

The comptroller-general, who had no affection for the priests, but who feared their intrigues and

denunciations, hastened to disavow the more or less apochryphal paper, which had stirred up the bile of the bishop of Agen, and the matter dropped. The difference of opinions and times was here again apparent. In our days, a prelate who should utter the sentiments of Chabannes, would be accused of insanity; in the middle of the eighteenth century, the Bishop Chabannes was taxed with excessive indulgence by his brethren; he was considered much too moderate a man!

Monclus, bishop of Alais, indeed carried his exactions a great deal farther. Although he confessed that persecution does not change the heart, and that conversion is only a work of grace, he, at the same time, in 1751, publicly solicited a new declaration against the Protestants. He required the entire abolition of judicial forms. The Huguenots, who should refuse to perform the acts of Catholicity, ought to be, according to this prelate's notions, summarily tried by the commandant of the province, or by the intendant. He accused the magistrates of having relaxed the severity of the ordinances, which was an act of unfaithfulness, which had been the cause of all the misfortunes of the realm. He demanded that the intervention of the Parliaments should cease; that the military or administrative power should be wholly uncontrolled; and that the judgments should be arbitrary and absolute.

The procurator-general, at the Parliament of Aix, Rippert de Monclar, defended religion, justice, morality, and humanity, which had been so greatly outraged by this priest. He replied, in a *Political and Theological Memoir*, published in 1755, that the sentiments of the prelate were as irreligious as they were inhuman, and tended to the total destruction of

society. “If the bishops have any reason to complain,” he adds, “of the profanation of the sacraments by the Protestants, and of the uselessness of the proofs they have exacted for seventy years past, why are they bent upon continuing the same acts of Catholicism, by soliciting against them a continuous and rigorous execution of royal ordinances? Why force them in this manner to repeat this horrible impiety which is complained of? Is it imagined that it is preferable to tread our holy religion underfoot, than not to profess it at all? Who believes that it is possible to force a person, against his inclination and belief, to receive mysteries so dread that faith alone with love and ardour ought to lead us to approach them, and which should be avoided by Catholics themselves, who feel the slightest coldness or indifference? The profanations that have happened have appalled both heaven and earth, and yet it is sought to renew the hideous sight.”[120]

Rippert de Monclar says that these heretics were, after all, not worse than the Jews, who were allowed not only liberty of marriage, independently of the Church, but also the free exercise of their religion. He asks if it were right to embrace in one condemnation, with the hundred and fifty thousand fathers and mothers who had contracted clandestine marriages, the whole multitude of children born or to be born? “What wrong have they done,” he exclaimed, “that they were made the opprobrium of the land?”

He proves, moreover, that the persecutions sought by the bishop of Alais, would not be more efficacious than those which had already taken place. “If this prelate,” he says, “were to have a correct list of all

the Protestant ministers, who have been put to death; of all the persons of every age and degree, who have been sent to the galleys; of all the taxes, fines, and other contributions, which have been exacted; of all the children, who have been torn from their parents; of all the marriages, which have been annulled and declared public concubinages; of all the property, which has been thereupon awarded to collateral relations; of all the individuals, who have been imprisoned and kept in long captivity; of all the decrees, that have been passed against an infinity of others; even of all the excesses, and of all the frightful massacres committed by the king's troops, and in opposition to the intention of his majesty; alas! this list would fill volumes. Every corner of France re-echoes with the cries of these miserable people; they attract the very compassion of those who glory, I will not say in being Christians, but in being men; and yet a bishop is insensible to all this, and would fain redouble them! Would it not better become him, to plant and nourish [measures] in their behalf, and to weep between the porch and the altar for them?"[121]

This lesson of morality and public reproof, given by the magistracy to the clergy, was as deserved as it was severe; it was not the only one, as we shall have occasion to show.

XI.

The government did not accede on all points to the demands of the bishops; it neither dared nor wished [to do so]. Nevertheless it complied with a great deal, and all the more in that it required to recruit its finances, [which had been] exhausted by the war. The prelates consented to increase their voluntary donations, but under the express condition that the extirpation of heresy should be prosecuted with more rigour.

The Protestants, for their part, did not cease by every peaceable means to petition for the redress of their grievances. Seven pastors of the desert addressed to Louis XV., on the 21st December, 1750, a new and respectful petition, in which, after having stated that they regarded the aggregate worship, baptisms, marriages, and sacraments of their communion as a matter of conscience, they said: "Your troops pursue us in the deserts as if we were wild beasts; our property is confiscated; our children are torn from us; we are condemned to the galleys; and although our ministers continually exhort us to discharge our duty as good citizens and faithful subjects, a price is set upon their heads, and when they are taken, they are cruelly executed."

Louis XV. and his council gave no heed to this petition any more than they had done to the others. The Protestants were in the depth of the provinces; they had neither voluntary donations to offer to the government, nor powerful protectors to invoke. They were regarded with suspicion from the very fact of their being proscribed, and the injury, which had been inflicted, was the best reason for inflicting

greater severity upon them.

These details of the sentiments of the court, and the incessant provocations of the clergy, serve to explain the renewal of the persecutions, which the Protestants endured from 1750 to 1755. The intendant Lenain, who was naturally a rigid man, but had treated the Protestants more mildly, as he had become better acquainted with them, was replaced in Languedoc by the Viscount Guignard de Saint Priest, who, without being either fanatically or cruelly disposed, unhesitatingly executed the most violent measures. The meetings near Cayla, Vigan, and Anduze, were again attacked. In the last of these encounters, three men were killed, others wounded, and many led to prison; whilst the pursuit was carried on with such bitter determination, that it became necessary to renounce religious service on the Sabbath.

The intendant received orders to proceed to a general *re-baptism* of children, and to a *re-benediction* of marriages throughout the whole Reformed population. The words [of this order] were as barbarous as the thing itself. With this view, he convoked the notables at Nismes and elsewhere, in 1751, and commanded them to take their children to the parochial churches within a fortnight's time; in default of which they would be punished with the utmost rigour of the ordinances; and the curates and (Roman) Catholic consuls were directed to prepare lists of the recusants. Guignard de Saint Priest took the trouble, ridiculous under the circumstances, to start a chapter of controversy, like a doctor of the Sorbonne, and to establish that (Roman) Catholic baptism being recognised by the religionists as effective, their rejection of it would be a *senseless*

obstinacy.

The Protestants replied to this military controversialist, that the curates interpreted the question quite differently; that they exacted the promise to rear the children in the Romish faith, that they treated and punished those of the baptized as having relapsed, who did not remain (Roman) Catholics, and that the clergy had made use of the following maxim: “The Church has power over those, who receive baptism, just as the king, neither more nor less, has full right over the coin which he issues from his mint.”

Finding his reasons fail, the Viscount de Saint Priest resumed a part better suited to his character, and pronounced the most fearful threats against the obstinate. The oppressed were terrified. They abandoned their houses, fields, workshops, and factories, and fled for safety to the woods and mountain caverns.

The intendants anger increased; and on the 1st of September, 1751, he wrote to one of his subordinates: “They are mistaken if they hope that the king’s mind will change, or that I shall omit to execute the precise orders which his majesty has given me on the subject. I am willing, however, to grant them a short delay.” But the desertion went on increasing, and Saint Priest had recommenced the *dragonnades* with billets conceived in these terms: “The Sieur N., cavalier of the *maréchaussée*, will remain in garrison at the house of * * *, until he has taken his children to the church to undergo the ceremony of baptism by the curate of the place; and he will exact, for his pay, four livres a day, until perfect obedience has been shown, at the same time informing him that the garrison will be reinforced.”

A commandant of the name of Pontuan, or Pontual, shouted in the streets of Cayla: “Let nobody deceive himself; all the Huguenots shall obey or perish, if I die myself!” The soldiers, aided by some of the [Roman] Catholics, and frequently accompanied by the local priests, tracked the children about the country, seized them as if they were malefactors, and dragged them to the church.

“Some,” says Antoine Court, “ten, twelve, and fourteen years old, absolutely refused to be led to the church, and it was necessary to drag them there by main force; some uttered piercing shrieks that went to the heart; others threw themselves like young lions upon those who tried to seize them; others, again, who had no other means of showing their despite, turned the ceremony into ridicule which they were forced to undergo: when they were covered with a white cloth, and the water was about to be sprinkled upon their heads, they exclaimed: ‘Are they going to shave us?’ The curate and the garrison of Lussan so greatly tortured the children of the village in dragging them to the church, where they shut them up under lock and key, that some of them told the curate they seemed to see the devil whenever they looked upon him, and others, still more desperate, spat in his face.”[122]

In such a state, in the midst of these brutal and degrading scenes, baptism was administered to them by force! If we were told that such acts had been committed by a horde of savages, we should scarcely believe it; and yet these things took place in France within a century of our time!

When he had effected the re-baptism of Cayla, the commandant Pontual, whose zeal increased with the gratification he experienced in the capture of the

children, continued his expeditions throughout Vaunage, the whole length of the coast, placing sometimes as many as fifteen or twenty garrison soldiers in the houses of the absentees and the obstinate, whose property they sacked and demolished.

The court of Versailles was rejoiced at the news of so many re-baptized children, and ordered the work to be prosecuted in the mountains. But this was the limit of Pontual's exploits. The old recollections of the Camisards were awakened; and some of the peasantry, rather encouraged than restrained by their minister Coste, resumed the musket, declaring that on the first act of violence against their children, blood should be spilled. Neither the curates nor the soldiers heeded the menace; and in an ambush of the Cévenoles, three priests fell on the 10th of August, 1752, two mortally wounded, as they guided the military in an expedition into Lédignan, on the banks of the Gardon.

These gunshots produced an extraordinary effect. The soldiers evacuated the hills; the intendant stopped short; Versailles took alarm; people remembered the war of the Camisards; the re-baptisms were instantly abandoned, and for ever. If the ministers of state had been fanatics, civil war would have broken out again with all its horrors; but they were only unbelievers who parodied, while they laughed at, the passions of bygone generations, and they halted at the first symptoms of a serious conflict.

Emigration also, which had been renewed upon a large scale, contributed to calm their factitious anger. It was true that the same precautions had been taken to guard the passes as in 1685; but the

Protestants had used the same means to escape the vigilance of the soldiers. Languedoc, Dauphiny, Saintonge, already impoverished by the Edict of Revocation, were threatened with the loss of the last remains of their industry and commerce. The frivolity of Versailles retreated before this prospect.

A few weeks after this exhibition of insurgency, the Marquis de Paulmy, the minister of war, visited the fortresses of Languedoc. Being a man of prudence and integrity, he received the complaints of the Protestants with kindness, and forbade the subaltern officers to maltreat them.

A pastor, François Benezet, had been condemned to death during the persecutions; he was executed at Montpellier, on the 27th March, 1752. Harassed by the importunities of an abbé, who continually cried, "You are damned; hell will be your lot if you do not abjure;" he replied, "If you were persuaded that there is a hell, would you persecute me as you do? And should I have been condemned to lose my life upon the gallows, merely because I have addressed a few exhortations to my brethren?"

He endeavoured to speak at the foot of the gibbet; as usual, his voice was drowned by the noise of drums. He died singing the 51st Psalm. Benezet left behind him a child of two years old, and a pregnant wife. Like Louis Ranc and Désubas, he was only twenty-six years old.

Another pastor, Jean Molines, did not display the same courage. He abjured before the scaffold; but until his last moment he repented his weakness. He withdrew, inconsolable, to Holland; and although he was reinstated in the communion of the faithful, after having given proofs of profound remorse, he never forgave himself. An eyewitness relates, that his

countenance, furrowed with wrinkles, bore the imprint of despair. His sight was dimmed with tears; and his head hung heavily upon his breast. For thirty years he wandered about insensible to everything around him, as one who reckoned himself no longer among the living, and died with the one regret of not having won the crown of martyrdom.

While he was in prison, some priests published a *Letter and Abjuration of the Sieur Molines*, in his name. The Protestants answered this work of pious fraud: “We cannot conceive how his converters can have let him date his abjuration from the citadel of Montpellier. A fortress has never yet been a school of enlightenment, or a means of convincing people of the truth of religion. Every retractation that comes from a fettered hand is so eminently suspicious, that no one would dare to adduce it before a tribunal.”

XII.

We have yet to traverse the epoch of general persecutions, particularly in the province of Languedoc; happily, it was but of short duration, and it was the last.

The author of these new persecutions was a nobleman celebrated for adventures of gallantry, the most brilliant epicurean of the eighteenth century, an unbeliever, who protected Voltaire, and whom Voltaire extolled,—in a word, the Marshal de Richelieu. Assuredly, of all the parts he could play, not one became him so little as that of an inquisitor of faith.

As governor of Languedoc he had for some time shown a degree of kindness to the religionists; but on a sudden, in the month of February, 1754, he ordered a proclamation, or instruction to the military commandants, to be placarded in the principal towns and villages of the dioceses of Montpellier, Nismes, Uzès, and Alais, which re-awakened all the alarms of the Protestants. The marshal did not mention re-baptism; that affair had been too unsuccessful in its results; but he pointed now at the meetings of the desert, and threatened to apply the most rigorous dispositions of the Edict of 1724 against them.

Orders were issued to arrest the new converts, and refugees or suspected persons, who came from foreign countries without an express authorization. The meetings were to be watched with the greatest tenacity, and dispersed by force. As many prisoners were to be made as possible; particularly the preachers were to be seized, and shot if they attempted to fly, and no one was to be released until

further orders. A reward of a thousand crowns was promised to any one who should capture a minister, and orders were given to arrest whomsoever should be found in the same house with him.

When this proclamation appeared, people asked what had provoked it. A tacit toleration had been established since the affair of Lédignan. The confidence of the Reformed had returned. They assembled peaceably, with very little mystery, but without ostentation, in the depth of some valley, or upon the heights of their mountains. Their relations with the [Roman] Catholics became more easy; agriculture, industry, commerce, the revenues of the states, everything gained by it. Wherefore, then, this new appeal to brutal force?

This has never been well known. The ill humour of a minister of state, some pressing letters of the clergy, the caprice or the vanity of a governor, who flattered himself that he would by ingenious combinations terminate a struggle that had lasted eighty years,—any of these things sufficed in those times to renew the persecution. But if the Duke de Richelieu had hoped to terminate the struggle by means of a strategetical plan, he was deceived. The courtier of Louis XV. judged of the conscience of the Protestants by his own.

Some meetings were immediately suspended, others were attacked. The prisons were filled; the tower of Aigues-Mortes received a further number of unfortunate females; but the greater number of the people would not submit. Richelieu reported his difficulties at Versailles, and the Count de Saint Florentin sent him an answer, that “The king’s judgment was, that it was absolutely imperative they should be sickened of their taste for assemblies.” This

was an easy sentence to pen in a despatch; but the *taste for assemblies*, inherent in every sincere faith, was even stronger than the will of Louis XV.

The Protestants simply redoubled the precautions, with which they sought to hold their religious meetings. They procured information as to the days and hours of the troops' excursions, the direction they took, the number of the soldiers on service, and the character, more or less rigorous, of the commanding officer. The faithful were warned even by (Roman) Catholics, who were ashamed of these brutalities, or, on the first signal of alarm, they dispersed. If, however, they were surprised, despite their precautious measures to ensure safety, their hearts accepted the suffering as a divine trial.

It was in one of these attacks upon the meetings that Jean Fabre, a Protestant of Nismes, supplicated a commander of a detachment to put him in prison in the stead of his father, an old man of seventy-eight. The governor of the province sent the pious son off to the convict prison of Toulon, considering, it would seem, that the Huguenots did not belong to the human race; and it was only when the drama of the *Honest Convict* informed the court, the ministers, France, and Europe, of this act of treason against humanity, and when Jean Fabre had worn the chains of the galley-slave for seven weary years, that he was restored to his family.

All the other surprises of meetings offer a repetition of the same enormities, and we will cite that only which happened in Lower Languedoc on the 8th of August, 1756. Three young men were to be ordained to the ministry of the Gospel at this assembly. The solemnity had collected several pastors, and attracted a vast concourse of people; as

many as from ten to twelve thousand had come from the whole surrounding country. They were singing a psalm, when a detachment of fifteen or eighteen soldiers made their appearance, hastening musket in hand to the spot. The multitude, although unarmed, might have crushed this handful of assailants by their very weight; but the pastors always preached patience and submission. The crowd leaped to their feet, and precipitately fled in all directions. The troop fired upon them,—every shot told; and while some fell dead, and others wounded, the rest escaped uttering shrieks of terror and grief; only a few stood their ground, and endeavoured to defend their wives and children with stones. The murderers remained masters of the field, and a long track of blood marked the locality of this prayer-meeting. Do we relate a scene of the age of Louis XV., or one of the time of Innocent III. and Simon de Montfort?

Another pastor perished in this deplorable epoch. Etienne Teissier, whose surname of the desert was Lafage, was arrested near Castres, at the farmhouse of a Protestant named Jacques Novis. On the approach of the troops, he endeavoured to escape over the roof; but a gun-shot broke his arm and wounded him in the chin. All the persons in the house were arrested with him, and among them a woman and two young girls. The prisoners followed the guards singing the psalms of the desert-meetings.

Lafage was taken to the prison of Alais. “The Abbé Ricard, canon of Alais, after showing the prisoner the greatest marks of politeness, thought proper to lead off a controversial discussion; and it was not until the unfortunate minister declared that he had not the strength to discuss, that he was nearly mortally wounded, and that his only desire was to prepare

himself for his approaching end, that he was relieved from the importunities of the priest. Several of the faithful, however, were admitted to the consolation of visiting the martyr. Even his father and one of his brothers were allowed to see him; and he implored them, to pray for him, but to submit themselves with holy resignation to the decrees of Providence; he assured them, besides, that he was resolved to suffer everything for the cause of the Gospel.... On his arrival at Montpellier, the trial of the minister was arranged and consummated with barbarous rapidity. The unhappy pastor, already dangerously wounded by the fire of the troops, was fastened to the gibbet, which did not, any more than the preparations for the execution, disturb the serenity of his soul. The soldiers who encompassed the scaffold, could not restrain their tears at the aspect of this last sacrifice of a faith so intrepid. The sentence of death was pronounced by Guignard de Saint Priest, the intendant."[123]

This administrator condemned also, upon his own authority, Jacques Novis as contumacious, sentenced him to perpetual imprisonment at the galleys, confiscated two-thirds of his property, ordered that his house should be razed to the ground (a house razed in 1754 for having sheltered a pastor!), and released his wife and three children, who were well-nigh reduced to beg their bread. All this was done without the intervention of any judge, by the mere sentence of a commissioner; the form of justice was not less outraged than justice itself.

And this act, which would now rouse the indignation of all France,[124] was not an isolated or exceptional iniquity. The other provinces, although treated with more caution than Languedoc, because

they did not contain so many religionists, were not without their share of sufferings and victims.

In Saintonge, the Protestants assembled in barns or remote buildings, because the inclemency of the climate would not easily permit them to celebrate their worship in the open air. Whereupon, one day, the intendant ordered the demolition of these places of service to the very last, and sentenced to detention for life at the galleys a poor man, who had allowed meetings to be held in his house. A woman was condemned to perpetual confinement on the bare suspicion of having given asylum to the pastor Gibert; and this very pastor, happily contumacious, was condemned, on the sentence of the intendant, to be hanged, after humbly kneeling before the principal door of a (Roman) Catholic church. His nephew, compelled to be present at the execution, was then sent to the galleys, with a number of Protestants, who had been convicted of having accompanied the minister in his excursions. This took place in 1756.

In the county of Montauban, the soldiers committed brutalities, which did not always pass without an effusion of blood, and the Parliament of Toulouse conceived the idea of enjoining all persons who had been married in the desert, to separate immediately, under pain of fine and corporal punishment. This wrought the dissolution of thousands of families at a single blow, or constrained them to purchase the benediction of the priest by sacrilegious acts of (Roman) Catholicism. The Protestants refused to submit, but they had to suffer every kind of trouble and anguish in their homes. The decree of the Parliament made hundreds of people miserable, but none of them (Roman)

Catholics.

The province of Béarn, once so oppressed, the first of the provinces where Louis XIII. had forcibly reinstalled the (Roman) Catholic religion, and where Louvois organized the expeditions of the *dragonnades*, encountered fresh calamities in 1757 and 1758. The governor put his troops at the disposal of the clergy. The Protestants of Orthez, Salies, and Bellocq fled to the mountains, and more than one hundred persons were proclaimed for capture dead or alive. The curates were generally extremely exacting in the proofs they required from the religionists. Those of Orthez, besides the gifts of large amount, which it was necessary to guarantee in the presence of the notary, made those who had been espoused wait one year, and sometimes two years, before they would give the nuptial benediction. In one case the curate imposed a delay of twelve years.

In Guienne, the Reformed of Sainte Foy, Bergerac, Tonneins, Clairac, and other places, were forced to maintain dragoons, to pay fines, to suffer vexations of every kind; nor were the ideas of re-baptism and re-benediction yet abandoned there in 1758.

The Parliament of Bordeaux (it is true that Montesquieu was there no longer), reprinted the declaration of 1724, sent it to all the curates of the district to be publicly read, and in the month of November, 1757, passed a decree commanding all those who had been married by ministers, *or even by any other ecclesiastics than their own curates*, to separate immediately; prohibiting them from conversing under pain of exemplary punishment; branding their cohabitation with the name of concubinage; declaring their children illegitimate, and, as such, incapable of direct succession; lastly,

commanding fathers, mothers, and guardians to send their children to the (Roman) Catholic schools, and to be catechized until they were fourteen years old, and to the Sunday and feast-day teachings until the age of twenty.[125]

To crown these tyrannical proceedings, this decree was published for several days on the Exchange of Bordeaux, where the most eminent of the Protestants were met: “a circumstance,” says a petition which we have before us, “that materially injured their credit in their commercial transactions on one hand; and that, on the other, tended to make them an object of hatred or of contempt to the lower orders of the people, always extreme in their opinions and heedless in their proceedings.”

The petitioners further said, “We do not regret either office or honours; it is with your majesty to dispense them to whomsoever you please; but we claim the rights that we derive from nature, and which every religion should hold sacred. It must be no longer hidden from you: there are, sire, more than fifty thousand marriages that will fall within the scope of the decree of the Parliament of Bordeaux; and among these marriages, there are some of so old a date as to have given birth to ten or twelve children. Behold, sire, what a multitude of citizens are reduced in one instant to despair!”

Lastly, the Protestants took up the political question: “When a neighbouring state, jealous of the prosperity of our armies, vainly sought, last September, to penetrate into Saintonge and Aunis, what class of your subjects showed more zeal than the Protestants to repel the presumptuous enemy? Your generals did them justice in this respect. Are not your armies and your navy at this present

moment filled with soldiers, officers, and sailors of the Reformed religion, distinguished not less for their unshaken fidelity than for their bravery?" (3rd January, 1758.)

This petition did not prevent the decree of the Parliament of Bordeaux from being followed by cruel iniquities. The seneschal of Nérac condemned five Protestants to the galleys, one of whom was an old man of eighty. Numbers of others were thrust into the prisons of Guienne, Périgord, and Agenois. The Reformed of Sainte Foy and Bergerac had to pay upwards of forty thousand livres, besides the losses they sustained through the soldiers billeted upon them. And yet the authorities had not the courage to execute the decree in its entirety; the rich merchants of Bordeaux had pronounced the word "emigration" in their complaints, and the interest of the treasury procured for them that which had been refused by the fanatic bigotry of the priests and the despotism of the court.

XIII.

Until now we have delayed to mention the venerable pastor Paul Rabaut, because he belongs to two epochs, and his long career connects him both with the times of persecution and those of toleration. During half a century, Paul Rabaut has afforded the most elevated, and the most perfect type of a true servant of Jesus Christ. He was firm and courageous, yet cautious, and as inflexible in matters of religion as he was submissive in purely civil affairs; and this rare union of qualities justly entitled him to the greatest influence over the churches of the desert.

Paul Rabaut was born on the 9th of January, 1718, at Bédarieux, near Montpellier, of an honest family of traders, who delighted in sheltering the proscribed pastors. It was in his conversations with them that he felt himself animated with a desire for the evangelical ministry, or, as Antoine Court would have said, for the vocation of martyrdom. He was grave, studious, and, beyond all, pious, which procured him the surname of "*the minister of Charenton*" from his schoolmaster.

From the age of sixteen he became, with his friend Jean Pradel, the companion of the desert ministers. He shared their labours, and imitated their patience. Rejoiced that he suffered with them for the sake of his Divine Master, he undertook, without having the title or the office of pastor, to instruct his brethren, reading the Bible at the meetings, exhorting the faithful in their domestic circles, encouraging some, comforting others, and setting an example to all.

But this noviciate, however dear it might be, was insufficient. The churches wanted pastors capable of

opposing the aberrations within and the objections without, with a sound and intelligent theology. Paul Rabaut perceived this, and in 1740 he went to study in the seminary at Lausanne. Antoine Court received him as a son, and his discernment soon marked the young disciple out as the man most fitted to succeed him in the government of the flocks of the wilderness.

On his return in 1743 he was appointed pastor of Nismes, and from this early moment, he took the lofty position which he occupied until his death in 1795. His colleagues reposed implicit confidence in him, and never failed to consult him on all difficult occasions. His abode, which was often but a hut of piled stones, became the centre of Protestant affairs. All the faithful respected him, and when persecution began to rage anew, they instinctively turned towards him, as sailors fix their look upon the lighthouse signal in a storm.

Every one knew the devotion with which he had embraced the pastoral office, and that he had no other object than the welfare of religion. A letter, which he addressed to the intendant Lenain in 1746, will show how he himself explained this: “When I resolved upon exercising the ministry in this kingdom, I knew well to what I exposed myself; and, indeed, I have always considered myself a victim destined to death. I believed that I was doing the greatest good in my power, by devoting myself to the pastor’s calling. Since the Protestants are deprived of the free exercise of their religion, since they think it wrong for them to attend the services of the (Roman) Catholic religion, since they cannot procure the books they require for their instruction, you may judge, sir, what would be their condition, if they

were absolutely deprived of pastors. They would forget their most essential duties; they would fall, either into fanaticism—that fruitful source of extravagance and disorders—or into indifference and contempt for religion altogether."

Paul Rabaut, whom the law condemned to death, contributed more than any one to dissuade the Protestant population from desperate counsels, and, perhaps, no Frenchman throughout the whole eighteenth century has been more useful to his country. Not only in the synods, where he maintained the authority of a wise discipline, but also in private interviews and conversations with individuals, he continually and unceasingly recommended obedience to the laws and the magistrates, never admitting an exception whatsoever but the conscientious worship of God.

We read in his letters that he always, and with all his power, strove to prevent the religionists from bringing weapons to the assemblies. In the melancholy affair of the pastor Désubas, when thousands of the peasantry vowed to avenge the blood of their brethren slaughtered at Vernoux, he invoked religion, humanity, the duty of submission, and whatever is of most avail in faith and Christian law, to induce them to disarm. He did this again in the insurrection that had begun on the borders of the Gardon, at the time of the general re-baptizement.

He wrote to the leaders in the province, on this head: "When I desired to know whence the evil proceeded, I found that divers persons, seeing themselves threatened either with loss of their property and their freedom, or by compulsion to perform acts opposed to their conscience, with reference to their marriages or the baptism of their

children, and perceiving no opportunity of quitting the kingdom and freeing their conscience, gave themselves up to despair and attacked some priests, because they regarded them as the first and principal cause of their troubles. Once again, I blame these folks, but I thought it my duty to explain to you the cause of their despair. If it be thought that my ministry is necessary to calm the minds of the people, I will undertake the task with pleasure. Above all, if I could satisfy the Protestants of these parts that they will not be molested in their conscience, I would earnestly recommend the mass to stop those who are bent on rising, should there be any so minded." (21st August, 1752.)

It is thus that he obtained the esteem of the (Roman) Catholics as well as the respect of the Reformed. People were confident that he would decide all religious questions with that wise moderation, which, without detracting from the obligations of faith, would never unreasonably provoke the severity of power.

When the minister of war passed through Languedoc, Rabaut had the boldness to present a petition to him for the king. This happened on the 19th September, 1752, between Nismes and Montpellier. While he waited at a post-house for a change of horses, the Marquis de Paulmy perceived a stranger respectfully approaching him, with a paper in his hand. Rabaut introduced himself by name: the minister knew him to be the proscribed pastor, and might have ordered his arrest, and even summary execution, according to the letter of the ordinances. But impressed with admiration at the noble bearing of the pastor, he bowed and accepted the petition, which he promised to lay before the king. It is

ascertained that he kept his word.

The intendant of Languedoc also refused to seize the person of Rabaut, for the reason that the trial and execution of the venerated pastor would have convulsed the whole province. As this officer, however, entertained the idea, that the religious meetings would cease to be held, on the departure of the minister, he used every effort to make him quit the realm: sometimes he offered to release a certain number of prisoners, as the price of his expatriation; sometimes he persecuted his wife, Madeleine Gaidan, whose name deserves to be associated with that of her husband. She never gave such advice as might be expected from the weakness of her sex, and preferred leading a wandering and uncertain life with her aged mother and her children, rather than urge Rabaut to quit the post, which God had allotted to him. The Duke de Mirepoix was ashamed of these unworthy molestations, and allowed Madeleine Gaidan to return to Nismes, after a lapse of two years of persecution.

Paul Rabaut, however, was not the less liable to the rigour of the ordinances, which decreed sentence of death against the pastors. “For more than thirty years,” says one of his biographers, “caverns and huts, whence he was unearthed like a wild animal, were his only habitation. For a long time lie dwelt in a safe hiding-place that one of his faithful guides had provided for him, under a pile of stones and thorn-bushes. It was discovered at length by a shepherd, and such was the wretchedness of his condition, that when he was forced to abandon the place, he still regretted this retreat [which was] more fit for savage beasts than men.”[126]

He assumed all sorts of disguises and names, like

the (Roman) Catholic priests during the Reign of Terror. At one time it was M. Paul, at another, M. Denis, or M. Pastourel, or M. Théophile, on his way to perform the functions of his ministry under the garb of a trader, or a journeyman baker.

It is difficult to picture to oneself the extent of his labours. He wrote to one of his friends at Geneva, in 1755, that being occupied all day with a multitude of affairs, he was often obliged to work far into the night; then, he said, with that humility which characterizes eminent men: “When I fix my attention upon the divine fire with which, I will not say Jesus Christ and the apostles, but the Reformed and their immediate successors, burned for the salvation of souls, it seems to me that, in comparison with them, we are ice. Their immense works astound me, and at the same time cover me with confusion. What would I not give to resemble them in everything laudable!”

What was indeed a singular novelty in this time of disorder—he entered into a correspondence with a prince of the blood, from the depth of his retreat. The influence of philosophical ideas, the desire of taking one of the causes of the opposition in hand, or perhaps the mere heaviness of idleness, engaged the Prince de Conti to interest himself in the fate of the Protestants. He sought information from Paul Rabaut, and invited him to a conference. The pastor of the desert started secretly for Paris, in the month of July, 1755.

He had two interviews with the prince, and stated the following points: “That the galley convicts and prisoners sentenced on account of their religion, and the children of both sexes shut up in the convents and seminaries, should be set at liberty; that baptisms and marriages celebrated by the

(Protestant) ministers should be valid, under condition of being registered in offices established by the king; that the exercise of religion should be permitted, if not in the places of worship, at least in private houses at some distance from the towns and villages; finally, that every one should be allowed to sell his property without any special authority, and that the refugees should have the right of returning to the realm."

These demands were assuredly moderate enough. [What they asked for] was far from full freedom of religion; it was not even toleration to any great extent. The (Roman) Catholics of Ireland have never at any time had less; and they already enjoyed much more in the eighteenth century. The Prince de Conti, however, did not consider that there was any chance of obtaining so much from the council and the clergy, and these negotiations had no result.

Paul Rabaut returned to his labours in Languedoc. The author from whom we have already quoted, gives the following description of him: "He was short of stature; his complexion was dark; his physiognomy and demeanour mild; lois manner grave, yet affable; and his habits simple and patriarchal. His food was of the most sober kind. His powers of endurance were remarkable. The hard and wandering life he had been forced to lead from his youth upwards, in following a proscribed faith, had strengthened his constitution; but his unceasing devotion to his flock had injured and undermined his vigour, and seriously affected him in his old age."

People flocked from all parts to hear him preach. Another biographer says: "We are told that his audience sometimes comprised from ten to twelve thousand of the faithful. But his voice was so distinct

and sonorous that although [he preached] in the open air, it reached those at the greatest distance, and all could take home with them the useful lessons of the pastor. He prayed with a fervour and an unction that penetrated every bosom, and disposed hearts the least prepared to listen to the sermon. He frequently preached without preparation, and his wild and uncultured eloquence seemed even to grow in sublimity."[127]

Some of the manuscript sermons of Paul Rabaut have been preserved. It is said that they are not distinguished either for oratorical genius or for studious finish: the venerable pastor had neither leisure nor opportunity. But they are remarkable for order, mildness, perspicuity, and unction: his style was of that simple and paternal kind which suited the meetings of the wilderness.[128]

XIV.

The approach of the year 1760 witnessed a sensible relaxation of persecution. The laws of intolerance were not, indeed, abrogated, but they were relaxed by desuetude; for knowledge, public opinion, the interest of the state, the relations of commerce and society, tended every day to approximate the (Roman) Catholics to the Protestants. The differences of confession were rapidly disappearing before the common name and quality of Frenchmen.

The clergy perceived this with dismay, and in their general assembly of 1760, they addressed urgent remonstrances to the king against this remission of the laws: “Nearly every barrier opposed to Calvinism,” they said, “has been successively broken down. Ministers and preachers, reared in heretical schools and foreign nations, have inundated some of our provinces. They have held consistories and synods, and are constantly presiding over assemblies, sometimes secret, sometimes solemn. They baptize, administer the [the Lord’s] supper, preach their erroneous doctrines, and perform the marriage ceremony. At first the Calvinists only demanded the power of celebrating their marriages in a purely civil and profane form; and although they feigned to limit themselves to this permission, it was evident that it would, of itself, lead to the entire toleration of Calvinism. Now this toleration is openly and loudly preached!”

Toleration, it would hence appear, was in the eyes of the priests, an impious and immoral maxim. Their sayings were unheeded, and the nation kept the even tenor of its new way.

Military and civil authorities, governors, intendants, subordinates, officers, magistrates, were alike ashamed, both before the tribunal of their own conscience and that of public opinion, of persecuting individuals whom they were compelled to esteem as men of honour and good citizens. Rulhières cites some curious instances of this: “Even the troops,” he says “softened the inhumanity of the orders they had to execute. The officers slackened the march of their detachments, that the assembled religionists might have time to escape. They took care that a sufficient warning should precede their approach; and they purposely followed circuitous roads, to throw their soldiers off the scent.”[129]

Sometimes the Protestants were still summoned by official means, to return to the strict execution of the edicts: but this was nothing more than the last discharge of artillery after a lost battle.

Thus, in 1761, the Marshal de Thomond, who had been appointed to the government of Languedoc, commanded the religionists to reverse their marriages and the baptisms of their children within six days. This order caused much astonishment, but no dismay. No one feared any serious conflict, and the simple force of *inertia* effectively defeated the measure; whilst the marshal himself undertook the charge of transmitting the petitions of the pastors to Louis XV. In three months the whole affair was forgotten.

Two synods were convoked in Lower Languedoc, in the year 1760. One comprised twenty pastors and fifty-four elders; the other fifteen pastors and thirty-eight elders. These gatherings were not publicly announced, but neither were they held in secret; appearances were preserved, though the law was

disregarded.

Gradually, as persecution relaxed, the language of the leaders of the churches became more resolute, as might be expected. Paul Rabaut and his colleague, Paul Vincent, in 1761, addressed a pastoral letter to the Reformed of Nismes, exhorting them to abstain from the *slightest act of adhesion to the Church of Rome*. They were no longer to assist at mass, to have their marriages blessed by the priest, or their children baptized at the (Roman) Catholic church, even when the curates remitted altogether their exactions; they were enjoined to be entirely and constantly faithful to the practices of the Reformed faith. The pastors were true to their duty in imposing these injunctions; they could not require less, since it is of the essence of every religion to be sufficient for the wants of its own members. The Romish clergy did the same thing after the 9th Thermidor.

The meetings became more regular; they were held nearer and nearer to the towns and villages; for *proximity*, to use the customary phrase, largely increased the number of assistants. These meetings were held in some places under the eye of the magistrates. The Protestants of Nismes performed their religious services within cannon-shot of the citadel, and those of Montauban in the suburbs.

Dating from 1755, the religionists confined at Toulon, the captives detained in the different provinces of the kingdom, and the prisoners of the tower of Constance, began to be set at liberty with greater facility, but only one by one, and frequently, it must be confessed, through the intervention of foreign influences, or by means of ransom. The liberation of a religious convict was effected for nothing, on a letter from Voltaire, or some Protestant

prince; otherwise, it cost a thousand crowns; and afterwards, two thousand livres; the rate of ransom gradually lowering with the advance of public morals. Yet in 1759 there were forty-one prisoners still confined at the galleys, whose only crime was that they had been present at a desert meeting, or had sheltered a pastor.

This improved condition was, however, disturbed in a horrible manner by the capital execution of four persons in one case, and of a venerable old man in another. It was the sad privilege of the town of Toulouse, which had erected the first scaffold against the disciples of the Reformation in 1532, to spill the last blood on account of an heretical offence in 1762.

Toulouse, which has made a considerable advance in enlightenment since this period, was at that time almost altogether wanting in intelligence and commercial spirit. It was filled with nobles and Parliament men, who had bent beneath the servile yoke of their traditional prejudices. By their side swarmed legions of priests and monks, more Spanish than French, who kept up an abject superstition by then processions, their relics, and their confraternities. Below them vegetated an ignorant and fanatic people. Every year the Church pompously celebrated at Toulouse the commemoration of the great southern massacre of Saint Bartholomew in 1562; and Toulouse was the stage of the last executions.

François Rochette, a pastor, aged twenty-five years, who performed the service of the numerous churches of Quercy, had gone to recruit his exhausted health by means of the mineral waters of Saint Antonin. He was invited, on the road, to administer baptism, and while crossing the country

in the neighbourhood of Caussade, during the night of the 13th of September, 1761, was arrested with the two peasants who were acting as his guides. They were suspected of belonging to a band of robbers who infested the province. The mistake was soon perceived; and as Rochette was not surprised in the exercise of his functions, he might easily have escaped by concealing his profession. Those, who interrogated him went even so far as to point out to him this means of acquittal, but he refused to buy his deliverance by the least disavowal of truth.

The morning spread the news of his arrest with the rapidity of lightning through the whole country. The sorrowing and anxious Protestants assembled together, and urgently solicited the liberation of their pastor. A fair was held that day at Caussade, and the town was crowded with people. The (Roman) Catholics conceived the notion that the Huguenots had flown to arms, and intended a universal massacre. The tocsin was sounded on every side; the villages rose *en masse*, and the (Roman) Catholic peasantry stuck a white cross in their hats, in imitation of the assassins of Saint Bartholomew. The night of the 14th was spent in casting bullets, preparing cartouches, and many a curate joined in and hastened the arming. The next day, the whole population was on the alert, ready for the direst excesses, and it was with the utmost difficulty the magistrates could restrain them.

Three brothers named Grenier, glass-manufacturers in the county of Foix, happened to be at this time in Montauban. Hearing that the pastor Rochette had been arrested, that the Protestants were threatened with attack, and that a terrible contest was imminent, they hastened to the spot of danger,

with the first arms they could snatch up in their haste, a sword and two guns. They were pursued, butchers' dogs were put upon their track, and at length they were captured and dragged to the prison of Rochette.

The Parliament of Toulouse took cognizance of the matter, as if it were an affair of state, and the trial was conducted with the most glaring partiality. Paul Rabaut and his companions, astounded with a severity so long forgotten, fruitlessly petitioned the Duke de Richelieu, the Duke de Fitz-James, and Marie-Adelaide de France. The accused sent long justificatory memorials to the court in vain. A sentence, passed on the 18th of February, 1762, condemned François Rochette to death, as convicted of having exercised the functions of a Protestant minister, and the three brothers Grenier, as guilty of armed sedition. The other accused, who were poor peasants that had never committed the shadow of a crime, were condemned to the galleys.

When the sentence was read to Rochette and his three fellow-sufferers, they exclaimed with one voice, "Well! since we must die, let us beseech God to accept the sacrifice we offer Him." The pastor prayed with his friends, and the court wept at the sight.

Four curates came to exhort them to abjure, and one of them threatened the religionists with hell, if they persisted in their heresy. "We are about to appear," replied the pastor, "before a more equitable judge than you, even before Him who shed His blood for our salvation."

They spent their time in prayer and pious exhortations, and encouraged each other for the final struggle. All the assistants, sentries, and gaolers,

were moved at their calm and noble resignation. Rochette, seeing a soldier more concerned than the rest of his comrades, said to him, “My friend, are you not ready to die for the king; why then should you grieve that I should die for God?”

The curates renewed their efforts to proselytize. “It is for your salvation,” said they, “that we are here.” The answer of one of the prisoners was, “If you were at Geneva, ready to die in your bed (for no one is slain there on account of his religion), would you be pleased if four ministers came, under the pretence of zeal, to persecute you until your last breath? Do not, then, unto others that which you would not wish to be done unto yourselves.”

On the 19th of February, at two o’clock in the afternoon, the mournful procession started on its way. Rochette was, according to the terms of the sentence, bareheaded, barefooted, with a halter hung about his neck, from which, before and behind, labels were suspended, with these words, *Minister of the pretended Reformed religion*.

When the array passed before the church of Saint Etienne, an attempt was made to force him, in pursuance of the terms of the Parliament’s condemnation, to kneel with a torch of yellow wax in his hand, and to ask pardon of God, the king, and justice, for all his crimes and misdeeds.

Rochette stepped down from the tumbril, and instead of abjuring or making a confession which his heart denied, he pronounced on his knees the following words: “I beseech God to pardon me for all my sins, and I firmly believe that they have been washed away by the blood of Jesus Christ, who has redeemed us so dearly. I have no pardon to ask of the king, whom I have ever honoured as the Lord’s

anointed, and loved as the father of my native land; I have ever been a good and faithful subject, and of this I believe my judges to be convinced. I have always preached to my flock patience, obedience, and submission; and my sermons, which you possess, are summed up in these words, '*Fear God, honour the king*.' If I have contravened the law touching religious assemblies, it was by God's commandments I contravened them; God must be obeyed before men. As for justice and the law, I am guilty of no offence against them, and I pray God may pardon my judges."

Every door, balcony, window, roof, and approach near to the place of execution, was covered with spectators. "Toulouse," says Count de Gébelin, an eyewitness, who related these circumstances, "Toulouse, that city drunk with the blood of martyrs, seemed a Protestant town. People asked what was the creed of these heretics; and when they heard our martyrs speak of Jesus Christ and of his death, every one was surprised and afflicted. They were infinitely touched, also, with the lofty, yet mild bearing of the three brothers, which compelled their admiration almost as much as the inexpressible serenity of the minister, whose graceful and spiritual physiognomy, whose words full of firmness and courage, and whose youth, filled every beholder with interest, knowing, as all did, that he only died because he disdained to save his life by a lie."[130]

Rochette was executed first. He exhorted his companions until the end, and sang the canticle of the Protestant martyrs: *This is the blessed day*. "Die a Catholic," said the executioner, moved with pity. "Judge which is the better religion," replied Rochette, "that which persecutes, or that which is

persecuted."

The youngest of the three brothers (he was only twenty-two years of age), hid his face in his hands to shut out this tragic scene. The two others contemplated it with calmness. As they were gentlemen,[131] their sentence was, to be beheaded They embraced each other, recommending their souls to God. The eldest offered his head to the axe first. When it came to the turn of the last, the executioner said: "You have seen your brothers die; change, lest you perish like them." "Do thy duty," said the martyr, and his head rolled upon the scaffold.

Count de Gébelin adds, as he concludes his recital: "Every one present returned home in silence, in a state of consternation, and unable to persuade themselves that there could be such courage and such cruelty in the world; and I, who describe it, cannot refrain from tears of joy and sadness, as I contemplate their blessed lot, and that our church should be still capable of affording examples of piety and firmness that will compare with the most illustrious monuments of the primitive church."

Eighteen days afterwards, on the 9th of March, 1762, the scaffold rose again at Toulouse for the execution of Jean Calas, an old man of sixty-eight. The whole world is familiar with his trial, and all its circumstances. Every one knows that the unfortunate Calas was accused of having murdered his son, Marc-Anthony, in order to prevent him, it was said, from embracing (Roman) Catholicism. Every one knows that the priests of Toulouse inflamed the fanaticism of the populace by carrying the body of this young man in procession, who had really committed suicide, and by representing him upon a funereal

bier as a skeleton holding in one hand a scroll, on which was written, *abjuration of heresy*, and in the other the palm-branch of the martyr. Every one, in short, knows that the magistracy and the clergy accused Calvin and his disciples of declaring abjuration a lawful cause of infanticide, and pretended that the assassination of Calas had been decided in a conventicle of Protestants.

These calumnies, which were not less stupid than detestable, were so credited by the fanatic people, that the advocate of Calas thought it necessary to procure from Geneva a solemn declaration, signed by the pastors and professors, attesting that neither synod nor any assembly whatsoever of the Reformation had ever approved of the doctrine that a father has the right of killing his child to prevent his changing his religion. Paul Rabaut published under this head, *La Calumnie confondue* ("Calumny Confounded"), a work in which he denied these execrable allegations with all the vehemence of a mind profoundly indignant. The Parliament of Toulouse answered it by ordering that the book should be torn and burned by the hand of the hangman.

In the most horrible agonies of the torture, Calas made no avowal, for he had none to make. He continually repeated: "Where there is no crime, there are no accomplices." He suffered death with the serenity of innocence and the firmness of faith. His execution lasted two hours, his sentence having been to be broken on the wheel. He uttered all the while no words but those of piety and charity, breathing pardon to his judges, and expressive of his pain that the young Lavaïsse should have been implicated in his misfortunes.

Father Bourges said to him: “My dear brother, you have but a moment to live. By that God whom you invoke, in whom you hope, and who died for you, I conjure you to glorify the truth.” “I have said it,” answered Calas; “I die innocent. Jesus Christ, innocence himself, was willing to die a more cruel death.”

“Unhappy man,” cried one of his judges, “see the faggot that shall reduce thy body to ashes; confess the truth.” The old man gave him no answer; he turned away his head, and received the final blow.

“The Fathers Bourges and Caldaguès,” writes Count de Gébelin, in his twenty-third *Toulousaine*, “were honourable persons. These two monks have conferred the highest praises upon his memory. Although Calas died a Protestant, they have fearlessly said—*Thus died our martyrs of old.*”

The widow and children of Calas demanded the repeal of this iniquitous sentence. Voltaire supported their cause with his powerful voice. The most celebrated advocates, Elie de Beaumont, Mariette, Loyseau de Mauléon, interfered; and on the 9th of March, 1765, three years exactly, day for day, after the fatal execution, a decree of the council reversed the judgment of the Parliament of Toulouse, with the unanimity of fifty votes. The sentence that restored the family of Calas, tore its bloody axe from the hands of fanaticism, and branded its forehead with an ignominy that will never be effaced.

XV.

The end of this period is the counterpart of the last years which preceded it. A century before, from 1660 to 1685, each day witnessed new acts of tyranny, and laid a heavier yoke upon the neck of the Reformed people. From 1760 to 1787, on the contrary, each day lightened their burden. Four generations of persecutors and of victims had perished in the interval.

The sanguinary executions that we have just related, far from injuring the Reformed churches, turned to their advantage. Respectable people blushed to resemble, in the most distant degree, the judges and priests of Toulouse. They became tolerant as much upon a point of honour, as through a sentiment of justice. The Prince de Beauveau, who succeeded the Marshal de Thomond in the government of Languedoc, was loyal, generous, and also religious. He had several interviews with the patriarch of the desert, Paul Rabaut, and granted to the Protestants all he could under the existing *régime* of the laws of intolerance.

Fifteen months after the death of Rochette and Calas, in June, 1763, a national synod was held in Languedoc. All the provinces, with the exception of those of the north, were represented at it. The pastors and elders, emboldened by public opinion, addressed a new petition to the king, and held firmer language in speaking to their co-religionists. “All the members of the synod,” they said, “have renewed with a holy alacrity, as well in their own name, as in that of their provinces, the solemn promise to maintain with all their power ... that union so just

and so advantageous, by persevering in the profession of the same faith, in the celebration of the same worship, the practice of the same morality, the exercise of the same discipline, and in rendering each other the mutual help and services which show that, like the first Christians, they are only of one heart and one soul."

Local or personal vexations annoyed the churches, but without intimidating them, or disturbing their tranquillity. In Poitou and elsewhere, the faithful had prepared houses of prayer, which were demolished by order of the public authorities, and some soldiers were even billeted upon a few families. The same was also done in Béarn, which was a puerile parody of the *dragonnades*.

In the county of Poix, the Protestants had opened schools: they were suppressed. At Nismes, they carried seats to the places of service, and went thither in bodies: this was forbidden them. These unworthy molestations were the last breath of expiring intolerance.

The last religious meeting, said to have been surprised and attacked, was one near Orange, in 1767. Eight Protestants of respectable station allowed themselves to be sensed, and held responsible for the remainder. The officer who arrested them was more embarrassed than his captives, and offered the opportunity of evasion. They answered, however, "No; it is for the public authorities to liberate us." They were released at the expiration of two months.

The pastor Berenger was also condemned to capital punishment in the same year, 1767, by the Parliament of Grenoble, as contumacious. He was executed in effigy in the town of Mens. Lastly, two

pastors were arrested in Brie in 1774, and thrown into prison. One died there at the end of nine days; the other was set at liberty, but sent to Guienne by a *lettre de cachet*.

There were Protestant convicts confined at Toulon so late as 1769; exemplifying the shocking contradiction of people detained in chains for acts, which the government had ceased to punish. This was in the end understood, and they were all liberated. At the same time, too, the old tower of Constance, at Argues-Mortes, was set open. Some of the women confined there had reached extreme old age, and had passed more than half their lives in this confinement.

But the treasury was the most difficult oppressor to overcome. If there were no longer imprisonments, it was still compulsory to pay heavy fines, and suffer ruinous extortions. The religionists were squeezed at one time by the judiciary bodies, at another by the administrative power, and paid in a manner double taxes, of which a very small proportion found its way into the treasury.

Many flocks, unknown until this time, because they hid themselves in the sanctuary of the domestic roof; began to show themselves. Lyons and Marseilles had their pastors. Sancerre, Orleans, Nanteuil en Brie, Asnières, and the Protestants of Picardy and Artois, endeavoured to reconstitute their respective churches.

Normandy was more advanced. It possessed two or three pastors, Louis Campredon, Jean Godefroy, and a minister of Dauphiny, Alexandre Ranc, who established himself in the province for a couple of years. The little town of Bolbec was the centre of this Protestant population. It would appear that the

abduction of young girls continued there after the year 1760; for we read in a petition of the inhabitants of Bolbec, to whom Louis XV. had granted an exemption from taxes, to help them to rebuild their town, which had been destroyed by fire: “Sire, to what purpose shall we build houses, if we are not sure of dwelling in them with our families?” (1763.)

At Paris, the Reformed attended the service of the Dutch chapel, a neutral ground, which enabled them to discharge their duties towards God, without openly contravening the ordinances.

The Protestants maintained at their common charge one or two general agents in Paris, whose official character was not, indeed, and could not be recognised by the ministers of state, but their intervention was publicly accepted, and they proffered their advice in all important affairs. This mission was confided, in 1763, to Court de Gébelin, son of the pastor Antoine Court.

He inherited from his father a great devotion for the cause of the Reformed churches. Upright, laborious, intimately connected with men of letters, and known for his philological works, he brought to the service of his co-religionists an indefatigable activity and numerous social relations. He was esteemed at court; he was sought after in the world; and if he died too soon to witness the abolition of the edicts of Louis XIV., he contributed powerfully to their abandonment.

Still, the position of the Protestants at the time we have reached, was singularly anomalous. There was [in it] nothing definitive, or regular: moral order was enforced by means of legal disorder. The arbitrary principle appeared at every turn; long

circumlocutions [were used] to avoid the letter of the laws without directly violating them; the pastors [were] half-recognised, half-proscribed, being neither public nor private persons; the civil condition of so large a number of French people [was] delivered up to uncertain chances; justice [was] wavering and contradictory; royalty soliloquized that it must do something, and did nothing; the subordinate agents of Church and State turned this precarious and disordered establishment to their profit by infamous bargains—a position which it is to be hoped, for the honour of France, will never be witnessed again.

The political and philosophical writers of the eighteenth century contributed largely to the triumph of toleration; but, it must be avowed, they were influenced neither by zeal nor sympathy for the fate of the French Protestants. Although they were so prompt in raising bold and delicate questions, they did not attack the cruel ordinances of Louis XIV., and never seemed to have heard of the lengthened sorrows of more than a million of their fellow-citizens.

Montesquieu, who has something to say on every subject in his *Lettres Persanes*, does not mention the oppressed Huguenots. In his *Spirit of the Laws*, he seems to be rather adverse than favourable to them; for he accuses the Calvinists of inclining to republican institutions; and when he would recommend toleration, he pleads through the lips of a Lisbon Jewess. He says, in another place: “This is the fundamental principle of political laws in the matter of religion. When it is optional in a state to receive a new religion, or not to receive it, it ought not to be established; but when it is established, it ought to be tolerated.”[132]

This left the question as regards the Reformed of France, entirely undecided; for the laws precisely denied that they had yet been established in the kingdom.

Helvetius, Diderot, and D'Alembert vouchsafed them not a word of benevolence. Rousseau, the child of the town of Geneva, displayed much greater desire to attack (Roman) Catholicism than to defend Protestantism, and his correspondence shows that when he was invited by some of his friends to write in favour of the victims of the laws of Louis XIV., he refused. He thought it enough to sketch in a few lines the argument of a plea, which he never resumed; and in his *Social Contract* he supported the principles of a state religion.

Voltaire did the Protestants a service in the affair of Calas, and by his treatise on toleration; but further than this, he never made himself exactly acquainted with the sufferings of this greatly oppressed people, or showed any care to advocate a remedy for them. In his book upon the *Siècle de Louis XIV.*, he speaks of Calvinism in a slighting tone, and dwells upon petty curious details, rather than upon useful matters. In his *Précis du Siècle de Louis XIV.*, he explains at great length the quarrels with regard to the bull *Unigenitus*, the refusal of the sacraments, and the expulsion of the Jesuits; but says not a word about the Protestants.

There are many causes that will explain this indifference. The Huguenots, as we believe we have remarked before, have borne the penalty, not of the evil they had done, but of that which had been inflicted upon them. After being violently cut off from the rest of the French nation, they were treated as strangers, whose misfortunes deserved no

sympathy; and their isolation enabled their adversaries to assail them, from generation to generation, with calumnies which have found a ready credence in the minds of even cultivated men.

Let this be added, that the writers of the philosophic school regarded the Calvinistic doctrines with no affection. They entertained a repugnance for the austere principles and rigid discipline maintained by the Reformed churches. (Roman) Catholicism and Protestantism were for them nothing more than two forms of the same superstitions. There is a saying of Voltaire that denotes exactly what he thought thereon. When a Protestant was presented to him, who had been released from the hulks of Toulon through his intercession with the Duke de Choiseul, he said to him: “What would they have done with you? How could they find it in their conscience to chain and place a man at the oar, who had committed no crime, but that of praying to God in bad French!”

It may be conceived that the pastors of the desert were not very anxious to have recourse to the assistance of the philosophers; they feared the influence such auxiliaries might exercise upon their flocks, and perhaps over themselves. The pastor Pierre Encontre wrote to Paul Rabaut upon the subject of the treatise on toleration: “As for myself, who have read it very hastily, I have found in it much good, but sadly mixed with poison!” And the veteran defender of the Protestant faith observed in his turn: “Penetrated with grief at the sight of the ravages made by the books of the infidels, I can only moderate it by the thought that so dire a situation cannot endure.” (1769.)

But if the philosophers could consign the condition

of the Protestants to oblivion, they compelled the attention of the legists, the parliament men and statesmen. The fiction of the new converts had become untenable. Not a single honest magistrate persisted in believing, according to the letter of the law, that there were none but (Roman) Catholics in France; and the expectation of bringing the children to (Roman) Catholicism by the constraint exercised upon the parents, had been too completely deceived for any to appeal to this course again.

As the century advanced, the baptisms and marriages of the desert multiplied. Whether the priests were exacting or not in their proofs, this question, so grave in the first fifty years of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, had lost all its importance. The Protestants rejected at any price the intrusion of the (Roman) Catholic clergy into their religious duties.

What course then was to be taken? Births, marriages, burials, were all without rule, and without guarantee, for a considerable part of the nation, whilst a shocking contradiction of jurisprudence prevailed in these matters. One Parliament accepted the pastor's certificate, and treated the marriages contracted in the desert as valid; another Parliament nullified them; and shameless collateral relations disgraced the tribunals by claiming a succession to possessions, to which, according to eternal justice, that spoke with a louder voice than iniquitous ordinances, they had no right. The confusion was intolerable.

Yet an issue must be found. It is true that the problem was more difficult than might be thought or even imagined in our days. Only complete and absolute principles can resolve questions with

trenchant conciseness. Full religious liberty, and perfect equality of sects, would have cleared away every difficulty: but no politician before 1789, would have dared to make the proposition. The efforts of the times, then, were exhausted in devising middle measures and laborious compromises, which, without granting to the Protestants rights common to their fellow-citizens, should restore to them their civil condition.

The magistracy, the hierarchy of the Romish church, the superior public administrative authority, and royalty itself interposed, each distinctly and apart in this matter, until the promulgation of the Edict of 1787.

XVI.

The magistrates, as we have elsewhere seen, took a different view of the measure relating to the new converts, and also of the nature of the proofs, to which they were submitted. This misunderstanding increased with the growing struggle between the judicial and the sacerdotal orders upon other subjects. When the Parliaments commanded the burning of the bishops' mandates, directed their temporalities to be seized, and decreed the imprisonment of curates, who molested the (Roman) Catholics by their fanatical exactions, it is clear that they would be less severe towards the Protestants, who defended the sacred rights of their domestic hearth.

It has been thought that the disputes between the Parliament and the clergy had produced a contrary effect, because the magistrates desired to establish, by the rigour of their sentences against the Protestants, the sincerity of their (Roman) Catholic faith, which had been compromised by their contests with the priests. This view is correct, if confined to certain limits, and a certain period. The general fact, however, is different. The magistracy, in their war with the clergy, were constrained to reflect upon the boundaries of ecclesiastical power, to define them, to circumscribe them in a manner constantly more precise, and from that time to fix them also in regard to dissentient creeds. Tactics sometimes prevailed over the idea of right; but right ended in obtaining the mastery.

The procurator-general, Joly de Fleury, addressed a memorial to the Council in 1752, in which he constituted himself the organ of the Parliamentary

spirit, all the while that he was subordinating his thoughts to the fiction of the ordinances. “Let the priest,” said this illustrious magistrate, “be simply an officer of the civil state for the registration of baptisms and marriages; let him add no injurious qualifications to the information furnished to him; let him in respect of the nuptial benediction be content with a simple exhortation, without exacting any verbal or written abjuration, or any act specially applying to the religionists. All Frenchmen are Catholics according to law; all should be treated as such, and in the same manner.”

In 1755, another procurator-general, whom we have already named, Rippert de Monclar, went farther. Shaking off the legal fiction, he confessed that there still were Protestants in the realm, and shuddered at the idea that a hundred and fifty thousand greedy collaterals might claim the inheritance of these families, whose marriages had been blessed in the desert. He proposed, as a remedy, the publication of bans by a tribunal of justice, and the celebration of marriages before a magistrate, “according to the practice in Holland,” says he, “with regard to Catholics.” This was tantamount to asking for a separation of the civil and the spiritual authority in respect of the Protestants. Rippert de Monclar could not foresee that, thirty-five years subsequently, the measure would be applied to all citizens without distinction of creed.

In 1766, the advocate-general, Servan, maintained before the Parliament of Grenoble the rights of a wife, whose husband sought to desert her and his children, under the pretext that the marriage of the desert was null and void. “This cause,” said the eloquent lawyer, “does not strike us much at the first

view. We see only a weeping woman, who interests us, without doubt; but in her cause are involved a host of other interests; her cause is that of all the other persons of her sect.... Every Protestant is aware of the misfortunes, which this female has suffered for her religion, and awaits a decision with anxiety that will perhaps influence his own destiny as well as hers. Scarcely will a decree be uttered, before it will be re-echoed among the rocks of Cevennes, and repeated from mouth to mouth, becoming a canticle of peace or an order of proscription." The Parliament of Grenoble only granted damages and interest, the sole remedy that a deserted woman could claim; but the principle had made one further step in advance.

In the same year, Gilbert de Voisins, formerly advocate-general, and a councillor of state, drew up, at the request of Louis XV., certain memorials upon the means of restoring a civil condition to the Protestants of France. He proposed, among other things, to give some of the ministry revocable safe-conducts, and to authorize them to perform private services. The baptisms and marriages of the Reformed would thus have obtained the double sanction of a civil contract and a religious benediction, without in any way affecting the uniformity of public worship in the kingdom.

The magistracy after this never quitted the course they had adopted; and although they continued to devise strange or impracticable arrangements, in order to reconcile the civil state of the Protestants with the maintenance of external religious unity, they advanced year by year in their memorials for the legal reversal of the [laws against the] oppressed.

What line did the clergy pursue in the face of the progress of toleration? Some of their members (it is

apparent that throughout the whole course of this history, we have joyfully adduced whatever was favourable to them), fell in with public opinion; and we do not speak merely of the philosophical bishops and abbés, who affected to be tolerant through *bon ton* or indifference, for the worthy head of the diocese which counted the greatest number of Reformed, M. de Becdelièvre, during forty-five years exhibited a praiseworthy moderation, and merited the eulogy bestowed upon him by Rabaut Saint Etienne, at his death. The abbé and doctor of theology Bourlet-Vauxelles, says in his panegyric of Saint Louis, which he pronounced before the French Academy in 1762: “The god of peace does not permit us to massacre those, who do not know Him.” The abbé Audra used his influence with the Parliament of Toulouse to legitimize a Protestant marriage. The curate Bastide opened his own house to the pastor Paul Vincent, whom soldiers were pursuing. Lastly, the bishop of Langres, M. De la Luzerne, spoke in favour of the Protestants in the assembly of Notables in 1787. “I prefer places of worship to open-air preachings,” said he, “and ministers to preachers.”

We collect all the evidence of toleration that it is possible to find in the acts of the (Roman) Catholic clergy, and doubtless many similar facts have escaped our researches. But we must add that the majority of the sacerdotal body obstinately resisted the generous views of the court, the Parliaments, and the country.

The clergy administered to Louis XVI., at his coronation, the ancient oath for the extermination of the heretics denounced by the Church, and M. Loménie de Brienne, archbishop of Toulouse, said to the monarch, “Sire, you will reprobate the counsels

of a hollow peace, and the systems of a criminal toleration. We conjure you, sire, do not delay to dispel the hope, which error has conceived of having places of worship and altars among us.... It is reserved for you to strike the final blow against Calvinism in your dominions. Command the dissipation of the schismatic assemblies of the Protestants; exclude sectarians without distinction from all offices of the public administration, and you will insure among your subjects the unity of the true Christian religion."

In 1780, the General Assembly of the clergy presented a long memorial to the king upon *the enterprises of the Protestants*. They complained that heresy lacerated the bosom of the Church, *that tender and afflicted mother*; and demanded that recourse should be had to the *salutary means and repressive measures of the good days of Louis XIV*. "Formerly," said the priests, "the religionists were rigorously excluded from offices, public employments, and municipal places; now infractions of all kinds increase. Formerly they held no religious meetings; now the holding of assemblies is notorious. Formerly they were not allowed to dogmatize in public; now every day witnesses some fresh irreverence against our ceremonies and our mysteries.... We have felt it to be our duty to deposit these alarms in the paternal and religious breast of your majesty. The source of the evil can never be seriously attacked, unless the foreign preachers be for ever banished, and unless measures be taken to prevent the natives from assuming for the future these functions of pretended pastors."

Thus they required the exclusion of the Protestants from all public charges, the banishment of the

pastors, the dispersion of the assemblies; that is to say, the execution of the most odious ordinances of Louis XIV.; and after having preferred these requests, the prelates added: “The erring will ever be our fellow-citizens, our brothers, and even our children in the order of religion. Ever shall we love and cherish them. Far from us be the thought of the axe and the sword!”

It is difficult to comprehend how the conclusion of this memorial agreed with the premises, since it was absolutely impossible—impossible as proved by the experience of more than a century—to prevent fifteen hundred thousand of the French people from exercising their worship, unless they were all to be drowned in their own blood. But we will not let a word of bitterness escape us here. We will, on the contrary, express our commiseration and our sympathy for these bishops and these priests. Alas! how many of them were destined to perish in the storms of the Revolution. Their misfortunes excite our pity!

An ex-Jesuit, Father Lenfant, in 1787 published “*A Discourse for the perusal of the Council upon the project of granting a civil condition to the Protestants*.” His language was much less guarded than that of the episcopacy, and before reading this tract, we could never have imagined that even the blindest of fanatics could have heaped up in a few pages so many infamous libels. The Reformed became, under the pen of this ex-Jesuit, impious wretches, rebels, monsters, enemies of all laws, human and divine. We may deplore also the lot of this miserable madman; he was murdered in the prison of the Abbaye, on the 3rd of September, 1792, and it was not a Protestant hand that wielded the homicidal axe.

This opposition of the clergy did not arrest [the purposes of] the magistracy; nor was it a barrier for the statesman, who, less influenced by legal traditions than the members of the Parliaments, and more struck with the damage, which the ordinances of Louis XIV. had inflicted upon public interest, therefore went still further than the others in their propositions in favour of the Reformed.

From the year 1754, Turgot, who in many points was in advance of the times in which he lived, demanded the separation of the spiritual and civil powers for all creeds. He put these words into the king's mouth: "Although you be in error, I will not the less treat you as my children. Show yourselves obedient to the laws, continue to be useful to the state, and you shall receive from me the same protection as my other subjects. My mission is to render you all happy." Then, asking himself the question whether the assemblies of the dissenting creeds would not be dangerous, he answered it by saying: Yes, so long as they are interdicted; not, when they shall be authorized.

The Baron de Breteuil, a minister of the king's household, gave instructions to Rulhières to draw up "*The Historical Evidences concerning the cause of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes*," which have helped us so often in our researches; and in 1786 he presented, under his own name, a memorial to Louis XVI., upon the necessity of restoring their civil condition to the Protestants.

Nevertheless, royalty was loth to take a definitive step. Louis XV., indifferent to everything that did not concern his debasing pleasures, had constantly adjourned the serious examination of this subject. Louis XVI. was animated with generous intentions,

but his intellect was narrow, his conscience easily alarmed by petty scruples of devotion, his will feeble, and he was greatly governed by a childish superstitious fear at the bare idea of touching the laws of his predecessors. Louis XIV. had contemptuously cast aside "*the perpetual and irrevocable*" edict of Henry IV., and Louis XVI. trembled to correct in the slightest degree that monstrous iniquity of Louis XIV.

Rulhières and the Baron de Breteuil were compelled to invent subtle distinctions to prove that Louis XIV. did not intend to deprive the Protestants of their civil rights; and that they might better quiet the conscience of the new king, they represented toleration as the best means of converting the heretics. They said, "We do not abandon the hope of reuniting the French Calvinists to the Church; we would rather aim at it by a more secure way; we would return to the true course, which has been too long neglected and disregarded."

While Louis XVI. hesitated, public opinion assumed a higher tone. The close relations of France with North America contributed to spread ideas of civil and religious liberty. General Lafayette, on his return from the War of Independence, went to Nismes and visited Paul Rabaut, embraced the old man cordially, and invited his son Rabaut Saint Etienne to follow him to Paris and plead the cause of his brethren.

The upright Malesherbes gave the Reformed the assistance of his knowledge and his virtue. He composed, in 1785 and 1786, two memoirs upon the marriage of Protestants, and annexed to them a *projet de loi* upon the subject. "It is but right," said he, "that I should do the Protestants some good service, since

my father did them so much injury!" Lamoignon de Malesherbes was a descendant of the ferocious Lamoignon de Bâville.

All these feelings broke out in the assembly of the Notables held in 1787. In the records of the proceedings of that meeting, we read, "The Marquis de la Fayette proposed to petition his majesty to grant the same civil condition to the Protestants as to the (Roman) Catholics, and to order the reformation of the criminal laws. He asked permission to read a proposition on this subject. This having been read, the Count d'Artois observed that the object being wholly foreign to those which had been submitted to the assembly, it would be going beyond the powers of the Notables to take cognizance of it; that he would, however, willingly undertake to mention it to the king, if the meeting desired it. Consequently, he asked for the opinions of the members, and they were unanimous for adopting the motion of the Marquis de la Fayette." A suitable address was drawn up, appealing to the king's goodness on behalf of "this numerous portion of his subjects, who groaned under a *régime* of proscription that was alike injurious to the general interests of religion, to morality, to the whole population of the country, to the national industry, and to every principle of politics and morals."

The Edict of Toleration was signed, at length, in the month of November, 1787, a hundred and two years after the Revocation, not in the form that would have been required by the principle of well-understood religious freedom, but restricted within the limits of the opinions of Louis XVI. and his most influential advisers. The name of Protestant does not occur in it; the law only spoke of non-Catholics. The

preamble even announced that the king "would always countenance and favour with all his power, the means of instruction and persuasion, which should tend to bind all his subjects by a common profession of the ancient faith of the kingdom." The 1st article states that "The Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman religion *alone* shall continue to enjoy the right of public worship in our realm."

The new edict granted these four things only to the non-Catholics. The right of living in France, and of exercising a profession or a trade in the kingdom, without being disturbed on account of religion; the permission to marry legally before the officers of justice; the authority to record the births of their children before the local judge; and a regulation for the interment of those, who could not be buried according to the Roman Catholic ritual.

But these concessions, which were strict and narrow enough according to the letter of the law, necessarily involved much more in the practice. The legal existence of the Protestants was recognised. How could they be prohibited thenceforth from having pastors, at least to bless their marriages, to baptize their children, and to console the faithful on their death-bed? How could they he forbidden to assemble for the service of their worship, since they had done this under the severest tyranny? Finally, who was to distinguish between the private worship authorized by the edict, and the public worship, which it still persisted in interdicting? Moreover, there was no penal sanction whatever against the delinquents.

If this incomplete law gave but little, it allowed of everything being taken. The Protestants were not deceived in this. "The Edict of 1787," says the

younger Rabaut, “spread joy and consolation throughout the families of the Reformed, and their religious assemblies resounded with thanksgivings to God, and blessings on the king and his ministers. The execution of this beneficent edict followed close upon its promulgation, and the Reformed were soon seen hastening in crowds to the royal judges for the registration of their marriages and the births of their children.... Old men might be seen registering, together with their own marriages, those of their children and their grandchildren.”[133]

The edict raised some difficulties in the Parliament of Paris. The impetuous D’Espremenil was one of its opponents. M. de Lacretelle says that he had been initiated into the sect of the *Martinists* or *Illuminati*, and that he imagined he heard the voice of the Virgin Mary, who commanded him to speak against the Protestants. In fact, D’Espremenil exclaimed, as he displayed to his colleagues an image of Christ, “Will you crucify the Saviour again?” This oratorical incident was out of season, and after addressing some representations to Louis XVI., the Parliament registered the Edict of Toleration.

All the churches laboured from this moment to reconstitute themselves upon the bases of the ancient discipline: and we may convince ourselves that Protestantism had preserved a strong hold in the north as well as in the south, and that the blasts of the storm, however they might have bent it to the earth, had neither broken, nor uprooted it.

The last consideration that forces itself upon us, is not the least important. The Reformed people of France had suffered more and longer than any others in the world. From 1660 to 1787 they had been deprived of all favours, excluded from all

employments, fettered in every liberal career, expelled from the corporations of arts and trades, and violently driven back in agriculture and commerce. At the Revocation, France lost its most illustrious men, the most opulent, the most industrious, and the most energetic and active [of its people]; the rest, overburdened with garrisoned soldiers, crushed with taxes and fines, chased to the woods and mountains, without schools, without legitimate family, without assured or certain inheritance, without civil rights, had been treated like a race of Pariahs; and yet, wonderful to behold! astonishing to relate! it was found in 1787 that the Reformed people of France had lost nothing either in intellectual and moral vigour, or in industrial power. Far from sinking into degradation, like the Irish under a *régime* incomparably less oppressive, it had not only maintained itself on a level with the Roman Catholic population, but had, in the main, attained a loftier step in the social scale, and possessed a more extensive and a higher degree of intelligence and instruction. This fact, which is beyond all serious doubt, offers one of the grandest spectacles in the history of mankind.

BOOK V.

FROM THE EDICT OF TOLERATION TO THE PRESENT TIME. (1787-1851.)

I.

This division of our history will be shorter than its predecessors. The period it embraces is not extensive; and it comprises no memorable events, or great successes and calamities; and it is more remarkable for ideas than for facts. But the recital of facts, not the discussion of ideas, is the object of our labours, and we will follow this plan to the end with the greater fidelity, in that we are nearer to the present generation. We have no desire to exchange the pen of the historian for that of the polemic.

This will explain the brevity of certain details, and even the absence of certain subjects, which perhaps excited, in their day, the most considerable interest. We omit them neither out of forgetfulness nor indifference, but from respect for our duty. It would be inconvenient in many ways, to eulogize or blame men still living, or to take part in questions yet under debate. This is a task that will be better accomplished hereafter.[134]

We step into a new world from the moment that we enter upon the history of the Revolution of 1789. Before that period, every petty reform had to be won by long negotiations, arrangements, and agreements of various kinds. The Edict of 1787, although it granted less than had been given by Henry IV. in the Edict of Nantes, cost twenty years of efforts. Now, on the contrary, we shall behold everything advancing with a firm and rapid step. The timorous scruples of the monarch, the subtle contrivances of his counsellors, the blind resistance of the privileged classes, no longer presided over the public affairs. A great assembly, the faithful interpreter of general intelligence and conscience, shook off the shackles of

the past which had only sustained itself with artificial props, and enunciated principles that must resolve the most important problems of political and social order.

From the 21st of August, 1789, the Constituent Assembly overthrew the barriers, which had until then debarred the admission of Protestants to offices of state. Article 11 of the Declaration of Rights was thus conceived: “All citizens, being equal in the eye of the law, are equally admissible to every public dignity, place, and employment, according to their capacity, and without other distinctions than those of their virtues and their talents.”

With some slight differences of expression, this article was subsequently reproduced in each of the French constitutions. It may have been still disregarded in practice, as it has been, indeed, frequently, since 1814; but the principle was definitively won. It triumphed only after ages of persecution, iniquities, and combats. So tardy are human laws to inscribe the maxims of truth and justice!

The eighteenth article of the Declaration of Rights was destined to guarantee liberty of conscience and of worship. The committee of the National Assembly had drawn it up at first in these words: “No one shall be molested on account of his religious opinions, or disturbed in the exercise of his religion.” This was clear, precise, and unequivocal; but a curate proposed a restriction, which was adopted. The new article bore the appearance, in its embarrassed style, of the impress of the legislator’s hesitation: “*No one shall be molested on account of his opinions, or even for his religious opinions, provided that he does not, in manifesting them, disturb the public order established by*

the law."

This addition was superfluous in one sense, since it is evident that every religion must respect legal order in its acts. In another sense it was dangerous, since it seemed to confer upon the civil power more authority than it ought to have possessed in such matters. The priest, who was inspired with this unfortunate thought, ought to have foreseen that he placed a weapon in the hands of the politicians, which they would perhaps turn against [the members of] his own communion. Did the persecutors of 1793 invoke anything else than the duty of maintaining the order established by the law?

Rabaut Saint Etienne, who had been nominated a member of the Constituent Assembly by the seneschalry of Nismes, perceived the danger, and pointed it out in a speech, which obtained great applause throughout the country. It is one of the most admirable specimens of advocacy that has ever been pronounced in favour of religious liberty: such an oration has a place in history.

The speaker began by showing that those who have opposed toleration in every age, have never alleged any other pretext than that adduced by the imprudent curate. "The Inquisition always said, in its soft and guarded language, that assuredly no attack should ever be made upon thought; that every one is free as to his opinions, provided he does not manifest them; but that, as this manifestation *might disturb public order*, the law ought to watch it with scrupulous attention; and under the favour of this principle, the intolerant classes have arrogated to themselves that power of inspection which has subjected thought, and enchained it during so many

centuries!...

"I discharge a holy mission," continued the orator; "I obey the voice of my constituents. I represent a seneschalry of three hundred and sixty thousand inhabitants, of whom more than one hundred and twenty thousand are Protestants, who have intrusted their delegates to solicit from you the complement of the Edict of November, 1787. Another seneschalry of Languedoc, and other places of the kingdom, have expressed the same hope, and ask that you should give the non-Catholics the liberty of their worship...." (*All! All!* shouted a crowd of deputies.)

Rabaut Saint Etienne then appealed to the rights already sanctioned by the Assembly. "Your principles are that liberty is common property, and that every citizen has an equal right to it. Liberty, then, should belong to all Frenchmen alike, and in the same manner. Every one has a right to it, or no one has; he who would deprive others of it, is not worthy of it himself; he who distributes it unevenly, does not know what it is; he who assails the liberty of others, no matter in what [fashion it may be], assails his own, and deserves to lose it in his turn, as being unworthy of a gift, of which he cannot estimate the value.

"Your principles are that liberty of thought and opinion is an inalienable and indefeasible right. This liberty, gentlemen, is the most sacred of all; it is above the control of men; its refuge is in the depth of the conscience, whither it retreats as to an inviolable sanctuary, where no mortal has the light to penetrate; it is the only liberty that mankind has never submitted to the laws of universal society. To constrain it is unjust; to attack it is sacrilege."

Approaching the special question of the

Protestants, he established [the fact] that the Edict of 1787 permitted the continuance of a shameful inequality between the religious communions, and that the penal laws against the worship of the Reformed had never been formally abolished. He claimed *their rights as Frenchmen for two millions of useful citizens*. It was not toleration he asked for, it was liberty. “Toleration!” he exclaimed; “sufferance! pardon! clemency! ideas supremely unjust towards the dissenters, so long as it is true that difference of religion, that difference of opinion, is not a crime! Toleration! I demand that toleration should be proscribed in its turn, and it will be,—that iniquitous word, that deals with us as citizens worthy of pity, as criminals to whom pardon is granted!...

“I demand for all non-Catholics that which you ask for yourselves—equality of rights, liberty; the liberty of their religion, the liberty of their worship, the liberty of celebrating it in buildings consecrated to that object; the same certainty of not being disturbed in their religion as you have in yours; and the perfect assurance of being protected as you, as much as you are, and in the same manner that you are by our common laws.”

Some speakers had cited the intolerance of certain Protestant people in justification of their own. “A generous and free nation,” answered Rabaut Saint Etienne, “will not permit that the example of these intolerant countries, who proscribe its worship among themselves, should be cited before yourselves. Your high place is to set examples, not to receive them; and because there are unjust people, are you to be so too? Europe pants for freedom, waits upon your teaching, and you are worthy to lead it.”

The speaker conjured up before the bar of the

Assembly the great body of proscribed whom he was defending. “They would present themselves to you,” said he, “dyed with the blood of their fathers, and would exhibit to you the mark of the fetters wherewith they have themselves been bound. But my country is free, and I would forget with her both the ills we have shared, and the yet greater evils, of which we have been the victims. What I ask is, that my native land should show herself worthy of liberty, by distributing it equally among all her citizens, without distinction of rank, of birth, or of religion.”

In concluding, Rabaut Saint Etienne enunciated that every religion demands a worship in common; that one set of Christians cannot refuse it to another without contradicting their own maxims; and that every restriction placed upon the public exercise of a religion, is an attack upon the basis of all creeds, since belief inevitably produces worship, which corresponds to it.

Notwithstanding the logic and eloquence of Rabaut Saint Etienne, the Right, succumbing to religious prejudices, the Centre, governed by political views and pre-occupations, and the priests of the Left, obeying their doctrinal antipathies, formed a majority, which accepted the proposed restriction. Each party had occasion to repent of their resolution.

Four months after this memorable debate, the National Assembly confirmed, on the 24th of December, 1789, by the following decree, the admissibility of Frenchmen to all offices and employments. “1. That the non-Catholics, who should otherwise have complied with all the conditions prescribed by the preceding decrees, with regard to electors, and [such as were] eligible, might

be elected to every department of public administration. 2. That the non-Catholics were capable of receiving appointments to every civil and military office, without exception."

The opportunity of applying this law in the most striking manner soon presented itself. On the 15th of March, 1790, Rabaut Saint Etienne, the son of the long-proscribed pastor, who had been glad to shelter his venerable head under a hut of piled stones, was nominated president of the Constituent Assembly; he filled the chair of the Abbé de Montesquieu. It was on this occasion that he wrote to his father these words, that mark so well the change of ideas and situations: "The president of the National Assembly kneels at your feet."

Rabaut Saint Etienne was born at Nismes in 1743. He completed his theological studies in the seminary of Lausanne. On his return to France, he was ordained to the ministry of the Gospel, and fulfilled his functions most courageously in the emergency when the Parliament of Toulouse condemned the pastor François Rochette, the three gentlemen glass-makers, and Calas to death. In the front of these execrable scaffolds, he unceasingly preached resignation, obedience to the law, and the duties of fraternal love.

In 1779, he pronounced, as we have elsewhere said, the funeral oration of M. Becdelièvre, bishop of Nismes. This discourse having been printed and communicated to Laharpe, by M. Boissy d'Anglas, that illustrious critic replied: "You have sent me an admirable composition, replete with true eloquence, that of the soul and of feeling. It is clear that everything which flows from the pen of the author, is inspired by the virtues which he celebrates."

Rabaut Saint Etienne published other discourses, and a book entitled: *Amboise Borély, or the Old Cévenole*. In this last work he painted, under a dramatic form, the sufferings of the French Protestants at the period of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and during the eighteenth century.

Chosen by the seneschalry of Nismes first among the eight deputies of the Third Estate, his noble character, his oratorical talents, and his devotion to the public good, immediately obtained for him great influence in the Constituent Assembly, over which he was elected to preside on several occasions.

Having been sent to the National Convention by the department of Aude, Rabaut Saint Etienne brought to his place in the Assembly a wise moderation, as well as a generous love of liberty. He sided with the party of the Girondists, and boldly confronted the popular passions, by refusing to vote for the death of Louis XVI. “The nation,” he said, “has sent you to delegate its powers, not to exercise them all at once; for it is impossible that it should have desired only to change its masters. As for myself, I avow it, I am weary of my part in despotism; I am fatigued and harassed with it, and loathe the tyranny which I share in exercising; I sigh for the moment when you shall have created a national tribunal that will divest me of the features and the aspect of a tyrant.”

At the sitting of the 3rd of May, he presented the report of the Commission of Twelve who represented the party of the Gironde, and maintained an obstinate struggle against the violence of the Mountain. Its doom awaited so firm a courage. His arrest was decreed, and his retreat having been discovered, he was dragged before the Revolutionary

tribunal, who ordered, upon his simple identification, that he should be executed within twenty-four hours. Rabaut Saint Etienne perished on the scaffold on the 3rd of December, 1793.

Let us return to the Constituent Assembly. A member of the Left, the Carthusian Don Gerle, a man of singular, but unsettled ideas, who had begun to experience some disquietude about the course he was following with his new associates, suddenly proposed, on the 12th of April, 1790, that (Roman) Catholicism should be declared the religion of the State, and that no other religious worship than the Romish should be authorized. The Right and a few Jansenists hailed this unexpected motion with transport. The bishop of Clermont even asked that it should be voted by acclamation, as a homage paid to the (Roman) Catholic religion.

The majority seemed for a moment to be undecided, and the sitting was adjourned until the following day. In the interval, the defenders of religious liberty had time to combine. Charles Lameth had already appealed to the maxims of the Gospel in favour of the dissenting communions. Public opinion, in the meanwhile, became agitated; tumultuous crowds gathered round the building occupied by the legislative body; Mirabeau recalled to mind the horrible recollections of the Saint Bartholomew massacre; and Don Gerle, by this time aware of the dangers of his proposition, withdrew it.

The Constituent Assembly hastened to give the Protestants new proof of its good-will. It ordered the restitution of property confiscated on account of religion, which was still in the possession of the State, to the heirs of the lawful proprietors. By another decree, it restored all the rights of French

citizens to the descendants of the refugees, on the sole condition that they should return to France and take the civic oath. Finally, the constitution of 1791 sanctioned the liberty of religious creeds in these terms: “The Constitution guarantees to every man the exercise of the religious worship to which he is attached.”

The legislature had fulfilled its task by proclaiming true principles; the people had next to fulfil their duty. But if, in former periods, the manners of the nation were in advance of the laws, the laws were at this epoch in advance of popular manners, at least in the southern districts, where there existed greater ignorance and stronger religious passions in combination.

The province of Vendée did not rise until 1793, because it contained scarcely any Protestants within its territory. In the south, on the contrary, where they were very numerous, the old antipathies between the two communions began to explode from the year 1790. These facts were accompanied by results of grave importance, which require illustration.

II.

In the earliest days of the Revolution, the (Roman) Catholics and the Reformed lived in concord throughout the south of France, as in other provinces. “Everything worked easily and naturally by the concurrence of wishes,” says the historian of the disturbances of Gard, “and the only noise heard was that of rejoicing, on the receipt of the news of some favourable event at Paris. In many communes, the Protestants assisted at the *Te Deum* of the (Roman) Catholics, and the (Roman) Catholics (it is a well-known circumstance), were also present at the thanksgivings of the Reformed.”[135]

But differences began to manifest themselves from the day that the Constituent Assembly decreed, on the proposition of the Bishop Talleyrand, the sale of the property of the clergy (2nd of November, 1789). The priests and the monks persuaded the multitude that it was intended to destroy the Church, to abolish religion, to persecute the (Roman) Catholics; and the lower orders of the south, not being able to vent their anger upon the philosophers and the Jansenists, of whom they knew nothing, turned all their fury against the Protestants, who were entirely strangers to the measures of which they complained.

Violent separations and burning enmities were the result. The elements of discord were kept alive, increased, and envenomed by some members of the privileged classes, who hoped, with the help of religious collisions, to give the signal for a counter-revolution in the southern provinces, afterwards to raise the west, then to march upon Paris, and once more to seize upon their ancient prerogatives. This fact has not only been avowed, but was publicly

boasted of in 1814 and 1815, as an admirable combination to restore the cause of royalty, the priesthood, and the aristocracy.

Among others, there was a certain François Froment, afterwards cabinet secretary to Louis XVIII., who published, in October, 1815, a pamphlet entitled, *An Account of my Operations for the Defence of Religion and Royalty during the Course of the Revolution*. He relates therein, with a frankness that blushes at nothing, all the details of this conspiracy, of which he was one of the principal agents. His recital is accompanied by official documents, with which he substantiates his narrative.

"I went secretly to Turin," he says, "to solicit the French princes for their approbation and assistance. At a council which was held on my arrival, January, 1790, I demonstrated to them that if they would arm the partisans of the altar and the throne, and combine the interests of religion with those of royalty, it would be easy to save both. I was then, as I am now, convinced of this truth, that a strong passion must be smothered by one still stronger, and that religious zeal could alone smother the rage of republicanism."

François Froment reasoned correctly from his point of view. The people of the country and the towns would not willingly have defended privileges, by which they were the first to suffer. They were instinctively led to cherish a revolution, which had freed them from tithes and feudal services, and had bestowed upon them civil equality. But by appealing to their religious passions, by re-awakening their traditional hatred against heretics, they might have been roused to arm against a cause hostile to their own, and, once excited, might have been blindly

urged further than they would have desired. This is the secret of all conspirators, and beneath many a flag recourse will be had to these tactics so long as ambitious men are found on one part, and ignorant or fanatical men are met with on the other.

Froment had little difficulty in procuring the adoption of his project. The emigrant princes (we continue to use his own narrative), confided to him the charge of forming a royalist party in the south, and of organizing and commanding it. Money was given to him, with the promise of men and ammunition, as soon as the struggle should begin. He returned to France, travelled through the south, communicated with the nobles and priests, whose opinions corresponded with his own, and soon after the two towns of Montauban and Nismes were deluged in blood.

The conspirators pursued everywhere a pre-arranged and uniform course. They circulated atrocious calumnies against the Protestants, and even scattered about the streets and public squares, incendiary libels without number. The following extract, by no means the most violent, from one of these pamphlets, will serve as a specimen of their style: “Close against the Protestants the door of public offices and civil and military honours. They seek to participate in the advantages which you enjoy; but you will no sooner have associated them with yourselves than their only aim will be to despoil you; and they will shortly succeed. Ungrateful vipers, whose benumbed strength, disabled from hurting you, warmed by your benefactions, only recover to kill you. They are your born enemies!”

These odious provocations did not fail to produce their effect upon the masses of the people. The

Protestants were systematically excluded from all the municipal councils; and generally from all elective offices. This was a first step: the communal authority might be now wielded to the advantage of the counter-revolution, and an appearance of legality thrown over the plans of the faction.

A second line of action was to excite the (Roman) Catholics to sign addresses demanding unity of religion. Many conferences were held upon this subject, usually at the houses of the curates, or in the convents. The devotees flocked to sign, thinking they obeyed the will of God by attacking the most sacred rights of human conscience, and their fanaticism increased to a frenzy. The women of the populace, particularly, enslaved by a servile bigotry, abandoned themselves to the most savage fury. The Protestants, on their side, were profoundly irritated, when they saw that their opponents were bent upon soliciting a new Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. All this had been foreseen by the conspirators, and formed a feature of their plan.

But more was wanted: an armed force was necessary. The regular troops were faithful to the government that had issued from the Revolution. In the national guard, many Protestants had obtained high rank, because they generally possessed more intelligence and ampler fortunes than the (Roman) Catholics. How were soldiers to be obtained? Companies of volunteers were organized, who obeyed concealed leaders. Recruited for the most part from among the dregs of the people, or agricultural labourers, their ignorance was a guarantee for their docility, and the contest might be ventured upon with no mean prospect of success.

These miserable partisans not only raised the cry

of "*Long live the King, and the Cross!*" but they shouted also: "*Down with the Nation!*" as if they did not belong to a nation that had just resumed its rights and its liberties. Many wore, instead of the national cockade, a white cross, in imitation of the old Leaguers. The brotherhoods of penitents, who dated so far back as the religious wars of the sixteenth century, furnished their contingent of devotees. The League in fine was resuscitated, the League without the Guises; the League without Philip II. and Sixtus V., the League after Voltaire—an empty phantom summoned in vain from its bloody tombs!

On the 10th of May, 1790, the day of the Rogations, which had been chosen by the municipal council to visit the convents about to be suppressed, the people rose at Montauban. Six dragoons, or picked national guards, of whom five were Protestants and one a (Roman) Catholic, were killed at the Hôtel de Ville, before they could defend themselves. Many others were shamefully maltreated and thrown into prison, where, however, they found a refuge from the bloodthirstiness of the assassins. We forbear from relating the details.

On the 13th of June in the same year, the struggle known under the name of *bagarre* began at Nismes, and lasted four days. The official report laid before the Constituent Assembly after a most searching inquiry, shows who were the provokers and aggressors in this ill-fated collision. The conspiracy is evident; and it is easy to discover its origin, to follow its windings, and to convince oneself that religion was only used as a pretext for bringing about a counter-revolution.

The (Roman) Catholics of the lowest order, whom the leaders of the faction had armed and collected,

committed the most atrocious acts. We will only cite one instance, that happened on the 14th.

The youth Peyre, fifteen years of age, was carrying victuals to his brother, and on his way passed before a company posted on the bridge of the Isles: a man asked him if he were a (Roman) Catholic or a Protestant. The lad answered: “I am a Protestant.” Whereupon the man shot the child dead. A companion of the assassin exclaimed: “You might as well have slain a lamb.” “I have promised,” rejoined the ruffian, “to kill four Protestants as my share, and this youngster will count as one.”[136]

Negotiations were opened; but the reports of some guns fired from a convent, interrupted them. The (Roman) Catholics, attached to the cause of the Revolution, joined the Protestants, and fearful reprisals were exacted. On one side and the other, a hundred and thirty-four individuals were deprived of life during these fatal days; for which let those who prepared, organized, and excited these insurrections be responsible to posterity! It is gratifying and consoling to add, that several curates of the neighbourhood of Nismes, hearkening only to the voice of their consciences, hastened, at the head of the national guards of their communes, to aid in restoring order and peace between the two communions.

In the report read to the Constituent Assembly, M. Alquier attests in the most formal terms that it was not the Protestants, who had provoked these conflicts.

“They became,” said he, “the objects of the hatred of a party, as soon as a party was formed against the Constitution, at the period of your first decrees

respecting the property of the clergy; and loaded with the vile outpourings of calumnies, fabricated against them in order to excite disturbances, and the outbreak of a counter-revolution, their only enemies have been the enemies of the Revolution itself."

At Toulouse, Bordeaux, Montpellier, Marseilles, where the Protestants were of too small numbers to afford the opportunity of throwing more importance into the religious than into the political question, there was no stir. The attitude of these places preserved the south from civil war, and the conspirators were driven to seek the aid from foreign powers, which their own country refused them.

When quiet was restored at Nismes, the Reformed opened a place of worship there, according to the right which had been guaranteed to them by the Constitution. They placed this inscription upon the front: "An edifice consecrated to religious worship by a private society: peace and liberty." The venerable Paul Rabaut pronounced the inaugurative prayer, with a faltering voice and tearful countenance.

In the other provinces of France, the Protestants also applied themselves to their new organization, paying the pastors from their own purses, as they had long been accustomed to do, and no longer seeking from the civil power anything else than the preservation of their liberty under the safeguard of the common laws.

The Revolution, however, daily exhibited a more hostile feeling towards the (Roman) Catholic clergy. After having deprived them of their property, it was determined to impose upon them a constitution and an oath. This was the work of the Jansenists, and particularly of the representative Camus. They were irritated by the remembrance of the long injuries

inflicted upon them by the majority of the priests, and they were unfortunately powerful enough to draw into their quarrel the party of the Left in the Constituent Assembly, which had a presentiment it was about to commit a serious mistake. The Protestants took no part in this debate.

The Civil Constitution imposed upon the (Roman) Catholic church, precipitated the Revolution out of the limits, which it ought to have respected. A great part of the clergy resisted. The priests, who were refractory or had not sworn, fled to the woods and caves, pursued by the insults of that same people, who had so many times outraged the pastors of the Reformation. France had not been taught by her spiritual leaders to bow before the independence of the human conscience, and the ministers of Rome were now the victims of the lessons of persecution they had themselves taught. Woe to them, who take the sword of intolerance; sooner or later it recoils upon themselves!

These sad conflicts do not belong to our subject. The (Roman) Catholic clergy, we say freely, did their duty then, and the politicians failed in theirs. They outstepped the boundaries of civil authority by pretending to regulate ecclesiastical points in which doctrine was necessarily implicated; and having been guilty of this first error, they committed a second—that of attacking, and of proscribing religion itself, in order to take revenge for the lawful resistance with which they had been met.

It is true that no express law was ever passed against religious liberty. The Constitution of 1793 still contained an article (22), which professed *to guarantee to the whole French people the free exercise of their worship*. But the Convention by the arbitrary

acts of its agents, overthrew the rights it had inscribed in its legislation, and itself passed decrees which assailed every religious communion. Thus, on the 22nd September, 1793, it replaced the ancient division of the week by that of the Decade, and attempted to compel all the French people to work on the Sabbath, whatever might be their scruples of faith.

This unjustifiable tyranny was not exercised without opposition, in spite of the terror which weighed upon France. The younger Rabaut relates, in his *Ecclesiastical Repertory*, a circumstance connected with the Protestant communion, which happened in the commune of La Salle (Gard): "A country labourer, called Alègre, about sixty years of age, was arrested and thrown into prison for not having worked on a Sunday. A week after, this man, dressed in his best clothes, presented himself before the committee. Being asked what he wanted, he replied that he was now an old man, that he had worked the whole week long, that he absolutely required rest; that if he went to work on the Sabbath he would be only robbing his employer, and that he preferred to be put in prison. The committee, who expected that he was about to denounce some one, were surprised by his answer and sent him home."

On the 7th of November, 1793, Gobel, the constitutional bishop of Paris, abjured the (Roman) Catholic faith at the bar of the Convention, accompanied by some priests, who were well worthy to follow in his rear. He laid down the insignia of his office upon the table, declaring that there was no necessity for any other worship than that of liberty, equality, and morality. Certain members of the Assembly, (Roman) Catholic and Protestant

ecclesiastics, followed his example. The Bishop Gregory alone had the courage to ascend the tribune and disavow this apostasy. Rabaut Saint Etienne was then absent and proscribed.

The abjuration of Gobel was the signal for the invasion of the churches and the abolition of all religious worship. No one spoke any longer, according to the language of the period, but of invoking reason, of listening to the voice of nature, of lighting the lamp of truth upon the altar, and of rendering mankind happy by stifling the monster of superstition.

The temples of the Protestants, which had been opened only the day before, were closed like the churches of the (Roman) Catholics, and the pastors were compelled to abstain from their functions under pain of being held as suspected, and consequently liable to capital punishment. The delegate of the Convention in Gard and Lozère, published, on the 16th Prairial, in the year II., a decree commanding the priests and the pastors to withdraw, within the space of eight days, to a distance of twenty leagues from the communes where they had exercised their ministry. The Terrorist had invented nothing new; he merely copied or reproduced an ordinance dictated by the Jesuits in the reign of Louis XIV.

Some of the pastors perished by the Revolutionary axe; others were imprisoned, and among them the veteran of the desert, Paul Rabaut, who was led to the citadel of Nismes upon an ass, as his age and infirmities had deprived him of the strength to travel on foot. “He had seen his eldest son die upon the scaffold, had wept over the proscription of two other children (Rabaut-Pomier and Rabaut-Dupuy), and he was in his turn incarcerated himself. We are

witnesses of the resignation he displayed at this painful moment. Imperturbably calm with respect to his own fate, he showed anxiety only for his children and for his fellow-captives, whom he consoled and supported by his example."[137]

Protestantism counted as many victims in proportion to (Roman) Catholicism, if not more, either pastors or laymen, in the days of 1793. The *Dictionary of the Condemned* indicates, for the department of Gard, where the Reformed did not constitute half of the whole population, forty-six Protestants, ninety-one (Roman) Catholics, and one Jew. The members of the Revolutionary tribunal of Nismes were, with one exception, all (Roman) Catholics. The French Reformation, to use the expression of M. Aignan, was never named in the mourning and terror of France, and it paid the tribute of blood twice over,—first to the intolerance of Rome, next, to that of impiety.

We find it impossible to trace the Protestant religion at this epoch. It appears that at Sainte Foy and the neighbourhood, the public exercise of religion was never completely interrupted. Doubtless the memory of the aged has also preserved other instances, but books make no mention of them. Piety, which had generally been greatly weakened, nearly everywhere secluded itself in the depth of the conscience, or in the asylum of the domestic roof.

The day of the 9th Thermidor marked the term of this oppression, for as soon as public opinion dared to raise its voice, it demanded and obtained religious freedom. A decree of the 3rd Ventose, year III. (21st February, 1795), authorized the free exercise of religious worship, leaving to the faithful the care of making a provision for it out of their own

subscriptions, and prohibiting them from celebrating any worship upon the public highways. The constitution of the year III. confirmed this regulation by the following article: “No one shall be prevented from exercising the worship he has chosen, provided he conforms to the laws; no one can be forced to contribute to the expenses of any creed; the Republic salaries none.”

A police law, issued on the 7th Vendémiaire, year III. (28th September, 1795), commanded that a preliminary declaration should be made before the opening of places of worship, and obliged the ministers of the different communions to sign this formula: “I acknowledge that the universality of French citizens is supreme, and I promise submission and obedience to the laws of the Republic.” The condition of an oath to the following effect was afterwards added: “I swear hatred to royalty and to anarchy, attachment and fidelity to the Republic and to the Constitution of the year III.” The promise of obedience to purely political laws was just; the order to swear hatred to royalty was not so, and excited legitimate remonstrances.

Some Reformed churches seized the opportunity, offered by the appeasement of the public mind and the protection of the authorities, to re-establish themselves. This restoration was laborious and slow. There were but few pastors; some had died during the Revolutionary tempest; others had definitively abandoned the ministry of the Gospel; and the youths of the seminary of Lausanne were dispersed. The laity also displayed little zeal: the scandal of apostasies had produced a deplorable impression upon them, and many had given themselves up to the negations of scepticism, or to the chimeras of

theo-philanthropy.

In the midst of this painful re-establishment of Protestantism, Paul Rabaut gave up his soul to God. He had been set at liberty after the 9th Thermidor; but the weight of his years no longer permitted him to participate in the reconstruction of the sanctuary. He died at the age of seventy-six years, on the 26th of September, 1795, invoking the name of the Lord, whom he had confessed before four generations of Christians.

III.

The first consul found the affairs of the (Roman) Catholic church in great disorder. Sworn and unsworn priests assailed each other in violent controversies, and divided their flocks. Buonaparte's advisers almost unanimously recommended him to abstain from interfering in the religious question, assuring him that the advantage he could reap would be but small, while the difficulties were infinite; and that it would be better to leave the Church itself to pacify, as it could, its internal struggles. The new chief of the state did not adopt this advice, and opened negotiation with the Holy See. We are assured that he confessed, fifteen years afterwards, that this was the greatest mistake of his reign.

A Concordat was signed between the first consul and the legate of Pius VII., on the 26th Messidor, year IX. (15th July, 1801). This re-establishment of the alliance between the temporal and the spiritual powers was necessarily destined to react upon the position of French Protestantism.

The pope had strongly insisted that the (Roman) Catholic religion should be proclaimed as the *state*, or at least as the *dominant religion*. Neither the one nor the other of these pretensions were admitted, lest, as the negotiator of the consular government stated, the supposition might be excited of the return of an intolerant and oppressive religion. The following declaration was merely inserted in the preamble of the Concordat: "The government of the Republic recognises the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman religion, as the religion of the great majority of the French people."

This was nothing more than the enunciation of a simple fact. Nevertheless the council of state conceived that it was bound to remove any interpretation that might be unfavourable to the Protestants. We read these remarkable words in a report submitted to the Consuls in the beginning of 1802: "While the government has declared that Catholicism is in the ascendant in France, it has not intended to authorize any civil or political pre-eminence in its favour. It has simply signified the priority of the measures it has taken to secure the independence, which it proposes to guarantee to all creeds. Protestantism is a Christian communion, which unites in the same belief and the same rites a very great number of French citizens. On that ground alone, this communion is entitled to the protection of the government. In other respects it deserves marks of consideration and favour. Its founders were the first to spread liberal maxims of government in Europe; they gave an impulse to morals, philosophy, and the useful arts and sciences. In later times, the Protestants were the first to hasten to the standard of liberty, and have never deserted it. It is, therefore, the duty of the government to insure its protection to the peaceable assemblies of this enlightened and generous minority of citizens, met together in their temples with the praiseworthy view of hearkening to the precepts of the religion of Christ.... Everything that is secured to the different Christian communions by the articles agreed upon between his holiness and the government of the Republic, is equally guaranteed to the Protestants, *with the exception of pecuniary subvention*."

The Protestant pastors were therefore to receive no salary from the public treasury, while the bishops and the priests had one. This was returning to the

decree of the Constituent Assembly, which granted incomes in effect to the ministers of the (Roman) Catholic creed only, but different reasons were relied upon. The Constituent Assembly regarded the salary of the clergy as an indemnification for the loss of their property. The council of state of 1802, left out this consideration altogether. It justified its intention of paying the priests without paying the pastors, upon three grounds. Firstly, certain expenses might be imposed upon all for the interest of the majority. Next, the voluntary offerings raised by the priests for the maintenance of the (Roman) Catholic worship, begot prodigality and abuses, which, for different causes, did not exist among the Protestants in the same degree. Finally, "in the articles agreed upon between the head of the Roman church and the government of the Republic, the burden imposed upon the State was compensated by the right acquired by the government, to interfere directly and efficaciously in the administration of the Church by its nomination of the principal ministers and its control over the subordinate ministers."

Thus there arose two very distinct positions for the (Roman) Catholics and the Protestants. For the former, a state salary, but also the intervention of the government in the appointment of the bishops and cantonal curates: the civil power provided the money, and by its money *acquired* the right of interference in the affairs of the Church. For the latter, no salary, but also a full liberty of internal action [was permitted]. [There was to be] no sacrifice of money on the one side, no sacrifice of independence on the other.

In reality a decree of nine articles was drawn up, on the 21st Ventose, year X. (12th March, 1802), by

which there was no question [admitted] but of general measures of police and common right for the communion of the Protestants. Buonaparte wrote in the margin of the minute of this decree, that two articles were wanting,—one respecting the oath of the Protestant ministers, another respecting the manner of their appointment; but the project went no farther.[138]

It may be thus seen that the Reformed communion narrowly escaped completely realizing the separation of Church and the State. The obstacle came from the first consul, who, anxious to secure authority over Protestantism by the oath and the appointment of the pastors, felt at the same time that he must, in compensation, support the Reformed faith at the cost of the public treasury; and out of the desire to possess this influence flowed the law of the 18th Germinal, year X. (7th April, 1802).

If we had proposed to ourselves to write observations upon the history of French Protestantism instead of relating the history itself, we might ask what would have been the destiny of their churches, and what would be their position to-day if Buonaparte had adopted the advice of his council of state, and had left them wholly independent without granting them any endowment. Opposite opinions might be maintained upon this question with equal good faith; but the examination of this subject would lead us away from our subject.

The historical fact, which is the only point that engages our present attention, is, that the majority of the Protestants, both pastors and laity, right or wrong, hailed the law of the 18th Germinal as an inestimable favour. They cared less for the sacrifice of a part of their religious independence than for the

advantages they hoped for from a state endowment; in which they beheld two great advantages,—a legal and incontestable recognition, and the official pledge of a perfect equality with the Roman Catholics.

Rabaut-Dupuy, who presided in the legislative body in 1802, made himself the organ of the feelings of gratitude and joy of his co-religionists at the closing of the session. “Legislators,” he said, “this law of justice has been received with thankfulness by all Christians; the Protestants have recognised all its value.... Restored to the freedom of civil, political, and religious rights, now that the law organizes all creeds *in a parallel manner*, they will be the firmest supporters of a protecting government.”

He also said, in 1807, in a letter addressed to the Reformed of the Empire: “You, who have lived like us under the yoke of intolerance, the relict of so many persecuted generations, see and compare.—It is no longer in deserts, and at the peril of your life, that you pay to the Creator the homage which is due to Him. Our places of worship are restored to us, and every day new ones spring up. Our pastors are recognised public functionaries; *they are salaried by the government*; the sword of a barbarous law is no longer suspended over their heads.... Alas! those whom we have outlived, ascended the mountain of Nebo, whence they beheld the land of promise; but we alone have gone in to possess it.”

At the same time, however unanimous the Protestants of that epoch may have been in their sentiments concerning the law of Germinal, it must be acknowledged that it has in many essential points changed the constitution of the French Reformation, and has made it pay dearly for the advantage of the political equality of the religions.

In bringing the new organic articles before the legislative body, the councillor of state, Portalis, afterwards minister of worship, announced that the law had been made upon verbal or written instructions taken from the Protestants. “If it appertains,” he said, “to the laws to admit or to reject different creeds, the different creeds have an existence by themselves, which they cannot hold of the law, whose origin is not thought to take its source in human wishes.” One would thereupon suppose that the government had confined itself to interrogating the Protestants upon their articles of faith and discipline, and that it had simply sanctioned them. But we have only to compare, in order to undeceive ourselves, the law of the 18th Germinal with the rules established by the national synods.

According to the ancient order, which is the system of Calvinistic presbyterianism, religious society exists in and by itself. It has its supreme authority, its secondary authorities, its doctrine, its discipline, its means of government, and its penalties. In the new order, religious society having no longer any confession of faith officially recognised; having no power to establish another without the permission of the civil magistrate; possessing no longer any general and fixed rules outside or independent of its relations with the state, and, controlled in the conduct of its internal affairs by the secular power, having no government, in the true sense of the word; it seems to lean for its very existence on a strength that does not emanate from its own foundation.

Formerly, it was the pastors and the elders who, assembled in conferences, in provincial synods, and

in national synods, sovereignly decided upon all ecclesiastical questions. They appointed ministers, tried and adjudged disputes arising in the flocks, inflicted spiritual penalties, ordered changes that were thought to be useful; directed, in short, the churches in their quality of churches, in everything that concerned piety, morals, edification, and Christian life. Under the *régime* of 1802, there was nothing that did not seem to originate with the temporal authority, and everything centres in it one way or another—the confirmation and removal of pastors, dogmatic decisions, modifications in discipline, the projects of ministers of worship or of the consistories, and disputes among the flocks. Does not this seem to be an essentially civil organization substituted for an essentially ecclesiastical organization?

The chief differences, which exist in the general outline, are also reproduced in the details.

The primitive element, which corresponded to that of the commune in the political society, that is to say, the individual church, having its consistory and its pastor, is suppressed, at least in its proper and distinct authority, by the articles of 1802, and replaced by the creation of the consistorial church, which is composed of a certain number of agglomerated Protestants. The five or six particular churches of which it consists, are nothing more than sections or fragments of the body, and their consistories have no legal title. It is absolutely as if all the communes in the domain of the state were suppressed with their municipal councils, and absorbed in the purely conventional existence of the cantons.

The law of the year X. concentrates the consistorial

capacity in the ranks of the persons paying the largest amount of direct taxes. Twenty-five of these tax-payers nominate the first consistory. Then the consistory itself designates the notables, who are, in concert with itself, to provide for the re-elections to the vacancies. The two conditions of piety and of fortune may doubtless be found in union; but when they are not so, it is wealth that will prevail, if the legal text be strictly complied with. The mass of the faithful, or the people, according to the expression of the ancient discipline, have no right of election, of veto, nor of consent.

In the place of the provincial synods, which reckoned from thirty to forty members, and occasionally more, since each particular church of the province deputed a pastor and an elder to them, the law of Germinal instituted district synods, formed of five consistorial churches. The assembly, therefore, can consist of ten members only, and may last only six days. It has no privilege of meeting but with the permission of the government, after having informed it of the matters for discussion, and in presence of a prefect or sub-prefect. Even farther, all the decisions which emanate from these synods, of whatever description they may be, must be submitted for the approbation of the civil power. And yet, for nearly half a century, there has been, in spite of these excessive precautions, only one district synod, that of Drôme, which was convoked in 1850.

Lastly, there is no longer a national synod; for the organic articles having stated nothing about the composition and the attributes of this assembly, and not having even pronounced the name, while they carefully determined everything concerning the district synods, it is beyond all doubt that the silence

of the legislature is equivalent to an entire suppression.

The law of Germinal, therefore, is not the confirmation of the ancient discipline of the Reformed, as might be inferred from the speech of M. Portalis; it is, in some respects, its destruction. It is true, that the change of ideas and manners must necessarily induce modifications in ecclesiastical regulations, and that no intelligent man could have desired a complete restoration of the past. It is also true, that the internal defects of Protestantism have done more harm to liberty than the organic articles, and that faith might have corrected in many respects the vices of the law. Let us not impute to the legislator what must chiefly be laid to the charge of the Protestants themselves. Nevertheless, the *régime* of 1802, established after the recent excesses of liberty, bears the marks of an extreme reaction. No subsequent government would have exacted so many sacrifices of independence, and the unanimous opinion of French Protestantism, in the present day, is, that the revision of the articles of the year X. is imperatively required. Some members of that communion demand more, others less; but all desire a law that shall more fully guarantee the freedom of the churches.

It was not so, as we have seen, in the time of the Consulate. A memorial was simply presented to the political authority, soliciting the formation of a *central commission*, which would have been composed of a pastor and an elder from each district synod. This commission, subjected to all the rules imposed upon the inferior synods, would have endeavoured to establish some unity in dogma, worship, and discipline, under the eye of the government

commissioner. But the memorial produced no effect.

Twenty-seven consistorial presidents were summoned to the coronation of Napoleon. In a preliminary conference, they discussed whether they ought to assist at the religious service, and after some hesitation, they decided in the affirmative, either because the emperor was pledged to take the oath to protect the liberty of worship, or because they feared that their absence might be injurious to the interests of the Reformed churches. “It would be absurd to suppose,” they said, in a deliberation recorded upon the registers of the consistory of Paris, “that any pastor-president could be compromised, or have any scruple of conscience respecting a mute assistance at ceremonies,—religious it is true in their nature, but which require no consent, no outward sign of adoration on the part of the spectators,—ceremonies which are so intimately associated with the civil ceremonies, that they almost lose the peculiar character imparted to them by the Roman Catholic creed.”

M. Martin, the president of the consistory of Geneva, which was then a French town, presented his homage to the emperor in the name of his colleagues and of all the Protestants. The answer of Napoleon deserves to be remembered in history: “It is with pleasure that I see the pastors of the Reformed churches of France here assembled. I gladly avail myself of this opportunity to express how much I have always been satisfied with everything that has been told me of the fidelity and good conduct of the pastors and citizens of the different Protestant communions. I am desirous it should be known that my intention and my firm will are to maintain freedom of worship. The empire of

the law ends where the indefinite empire of the conscience begins; and neither the law nor the sovereign can prevail against this freedom. Such are my principles and those of the nation, and if any member of my family, whose lot it may be to succeed me, should forget the oath I have sworn, and, deceived by the inspiration of a false conscience, should violate it, I devote him to public animadversion, and I authorize you to style him a Nero."

The emperor kept his promise faithfully. There was no persecution against the Protestants during his reign; [they suffered] no violence of any kind against their civil or religious rights; [they enjoyed] a full and continued security. But it was an internal liberty confined within the walls of the places of worship. There was a strict prohibition against any disturbance, or any movement in religious matters. Neither journals nor associations, neither controversy nor proselytism were permitted; and if by any act or thought it was ventured to pass beyond the precincts wherein they were restrained, the iron hand of Napoleon immediately drove them back.

We have heard it said that a (Roman) Catholic village having formed the design of entering the Reformed communion, a pastor, conceiving that he had the right of doing so, visited it for the purpose; but he immediately found himself confronted by the imperial government, which ordered him to return home and remain quiet. The pastor was compelled to submit and obey. How many circumstances [there were] like this are unknown!

If Napoleon forbade the religious sects to step beyond their places of worship, he reserved the privilege of entering and commanding there himself

whenever he thought expedient. For instance, on the 19th of February, 1806, he instituted two *fêtes* upon the simple report of the council of state; one for the anniversary of his birth, the other for that of his coronation and the battle of Austerlitz. The decree ran, “A discourse shall be preached in the churches and in the places of worship, by a minister of religion, upon the glory of the French armies, and upon the extent of the duty imposed on every citizen to consecrate his life to his sovereign and the country.”

And, indeed, French Protestantism has, properly speaking, no history during the fourteen years of the Consulate and the Empire. Weak in numbers, scattered, without bond or union, without a common discipline, constrained to be humble and silent, and to avoid all occasion of disturbing the official classification of religions, the community of the Protestants dragged on a uniform and obscure existence. “The ministers preached,” says M. Samuel Vincent, “and the people listened; the consistories met, and worship preserved its forms. Beyond this, no one troubled himself, no one thought, and religion was a thing beyond the life of all. This lasted a long while.”[139]

We are not aware of the publication of a single important book upon dogma, ecclesiastical history, or sacred eloquence, in the course of Napoleon’s reign. A few occasional sermons, some courses of religious instruction, some abridgments of sacred history, three or four translations of English and German works, constitute the Protestant literature of this epoch. We do not comprise such works as the *Essay* of Charles Villers, in which literature, arts, and philosophy engaged the attention more than religion.

If we confine ourselves to the actual limits of France, there were not more than two hundred pastors in 1807; the number is more than double now. The flocks of many were spread over so wide a breadth of country, that the pastors were necessarily compelled to lead a kind of nomade life, which, in itself, would be a sufficient reason for not judging them severely. Nor can we, indeed, form an idea of all the good they did in their humble labours, of all the unfortunates they consoled, the poor they succoured, or all the souls they edified and brought back to God. Their burthen was heavier than that of the men who succeeded them, and their task was less thankful. They had to contend at the same time against the too great extent of their ecclesiastical districts, and against the lukewarmness of the people, who cared for nothing but the military triumphs of Napoleon.

Some of these pastors maintained relations with the German societies of the Moravian Brethren, and gathered round them the faithful, who were influenced by the same convictions. “They were in general,” says M. Vincent, “peaceable and inoffensive people, who dogmatized little, and made religion to consist of love, particularly of love for Jesus; whilst they assembled in small numbers, without show or pretension, with the intention of a very mild and moderate proselytism.”[140]

The French seminary of Lausanne had been transported to Geneva; but as it was inadequate to the wants of the pastoral body, the emperor created a Faculty of Protestant theology at Montauban (1808-1810). The chain of associations was thus renewed for one of the most ancient and celebrated of the chief towns of the French Reformation.

Montauban had lost its theological academy in 1661 by the intrigues of the Jesuits; Napoleon restored it. Men pass away, and persecutions expire; but the institutions necessary to human intelligence and conscience fall only to rise again.

Projects of reunion between the Christian communions were proposed about this period. Public authority did not interfere again as in the time of Richelieu and Louis XIV.; it did not even appear to attach the slightest importance to the notion, which simply originated with a few private individuals.

The archbishop of Besançon, M. Claude Lecoz, who had been a member of the Legislative Assembly, a constitutional bishop in 1791, and the author of some very severe pamphlets against Pope Pius VI. on the subject of the civil constitution of the clergy, felt it incumbent upon him to evince his zeal for the (Roman) Catholic faith. In the month of November, 1804, he addressed a public letter to MM. Marron, Rabaut-Pomier, and Mastrezat, pastors at Paris, in which he invited them to profit by the visit of Pius VII. to France, in order to return to the Romish church. “With what eagerness,” said he, “would the pontiff acquiesce in every means of reconciliation compatible with the rights of truth! With what joy would he open his arms to children, whose estrangement distracts his paternal bosom!” The pastors of Paris replied, that no project of reunion was practicable with the condition of returning as erring and repentant sheep to the Church of Rome; and that, moreover, complete religious unity seemed to them utterly impossible.

M. de Beaufort, a lawyer of some talent, entered the lists in his turn; taking up the question on political grounds, he contended that a word from

Napoleon would reunite the different churches. M. Lecoz answered this new antagonist with some asperity; M. de Beaufort rejoined in vehement terms, and the project of reconciliation terminated in reciprocal invectives.

M. Tabaraud, formerly a priest of the congregation of the Oratory, also published a book with reference to the union of the Protestant communions. He had defended their civil lights in 1788, against a diatribe of the bishop of La Rochelle, upon the edict of Louis XVI.; and as he was an inflexible adversary of Ultramontane opinions, and an enlightened Jansenist, he had a stronger title than the generality of his cloth to be listened to with favour. His attempts, however, had no greater success than the preceding, and we have only to admire the learning he displayed in the historical exposition of his subject. Where can be the point of junction between the absolute authority in matters of dogma, which Rome will not renounce, and the right of examination, which the Reformation cannot be induced to surrender? The most ingenious combinations must fail to supply the want of a common ground.

IV.

When the dynasty of the Bourbons returned in 1814, the Protestants made no effort to form a distinct political party. As agriculturists, proprietors, members of the liberal and enlightened classes, they did not regret the military domination of Napoleon. Those among them, who were merchants and engaged in industrial pursuits, rejoiced at the prospect of a peace that opened a wider field to their activity. If they could not repress some disquietude in seeing a descendant of the prince who had revoked the Edict of Nantes upon the throne, their recollections reverted to the king who had bestowed it, and the memory of Henry IV. reassured them against that of Louis XIV.

It might have been expected that the Bourbons, who had to contend with so many adversaries, would not causelessly have irritated a million and a half of peaceable citizens; and who could have supposed, moreover, that they would have attacked Protestantism in France, when Louis XVIII. said that he owed his crown, next to God, to a Protestant prince, the regent of Great Britain.

The first acts of the restoration were dictated by a spirit of impartiality and prudence. The Count d'Artois, afterwards Charles X., having gone to Nismes in 1814, gave a very gracious reception to the Reformed, and distributed several decorations of the Legion of Honour among them. Policy, perhaps, had as much to do with this as confidence; but the Protestants, satisfied with the protection promised to them, might refrain from scrutinizing intentions.

The charter given by Louis XVIII. said, in its 5th

article, “Every one professes his religion with equal liberty, and obtains the same protection for his form of worship.” It is true, it added in the 6th article, that the Catholic, Roman, and Apostolic religion was the religion of the state. Nevertheless, the equality between creeds having been proclaimed first and formally, the distinction granted to (Roman) Catholicism would be, according to the terms of the Constitution, nothing more than a simple privilege of honour, without any hurtful or oppressive privilege, and the Protestants were all disposed to concede the honour of the first place to the Romish church, provided their rights were as much respected as those of the (Roman) Catholics.

If the charter, therefore, had been well understood by the masses of the (Roman) Catholics, duly carried out by people in power, and sincerely admitted by the members of the ancient privileged orders, there would have been no Protestant party, in the political sense of the word, nor collision of any kind. But the first were wanting in intelligence; there was no spirit of justice in the next, or love of liberal institutions in the last.

In the south, particularly, the workmen and the peasants, who belonged to the Romish church, openly threatened the Reformed with new persecutions, and were not sufficiently contradicted and repressed by the local authorities. Sinister reports were spread abroad. It was rumoured that the places of worship would be closed, and the public services of the Reformed interdicted. (Roman) Catholics of the lower order, when they met Protestants in the streets, shouted out: *Vive le roi!* (*long live the king*), as if they were the only royalists. Those of the highest classes, who called themselves

respectable people, openly insulted the most honourable men of the Reformed communion.

The emigrants, who had returned with the Bourbons, and others of the nobility, who, shut up for five-and-twenty years in their castles, had only learned to curse the Revolution, were indignant at the liberties granted by Louis XVIII., and, ignorant of any direct means to abolish the charter, they fell into the old plans of the conspirators of 1790. A religious contest, which should make a second Vendée of the southern provinces, might bring the fundamental law into question; and the occult government, so frequently denounced by the sincerest friends of the Bourbons in the two legislative chambers, began its secret work. It has been said that these men were more inveterate royalists than the king himself. But it was not so: they had interests wholly different from those of the king, interests of position and caste, and their aim was to satisfy and secure them at any price, were it at the expense of the kingly office itself.

Fresh addresses were signed, as in 1790, demanding that there should be only one religion in France. Handbills were distributed in many of the churches, with these words: “The faithful are requested to say five *Paters* and five *Aves* every day, for the prosperity of the kingdom and the re-establishment of the Jesuits.” The anti-Protestant controversy reappeared in many of the pulpits under the most bitter and violent forms, denouncing heresy as a public calamity; and the Reformed, pursued with as many provocations, were in a manner forced to adopt political opinions in unison with their religious convictions.

We wish to do justice without delay to those, to whom justice is due. The fault of the attempt, which

we are about to narrate, is not chargeable to the majority of the (Roman) Catholics; on the contrary, they were as indignant against them, and regretted them as much as the Protestants. Nor must it be allowed to fall on the majority of the priests. They were no longer to be seen in the foremost ranks of persecution, as they had been in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The populace, excited by some of the secret leaders, acted without the priests, and often in spite of the priests. Many of the Roman ecclesiastics courageously interposed to shield the victims. We shall have occasion to cite an admirable instance of this.

Such was the situation of the south when the emperor disembarked upon the coasts of France. The Protestants of Nismes offered the Duke d'Angoulême their services as royal volunteers. The prince was ready to accept them, when the fanatics repulsed them with this insult: "We will not endure these rascally Protestants!" Their purses were, however, taken, if not their persons.

On Napoleon's re-entry into Paris, the Protestants resumed the places and the legitimate influence, of which they had been deprived. They could count upon the protection of the laws, and testified a satisfaction that may be easily comprehended. But they were far from committing the excesses with which they have been reproached. The faction of 1815 felt it necessary to accuse them with expressly invented crimes, in order to extenuate their own. All the massacres of the Hundred Days, which have been ascribed to them, are confined, as the official documents attest, to the death of two royal volunteers, who were killed at Arpillargues (Gard), in a disturbance they had themselves provoked, by

obstinately persisting in marching through the village with fifty of their companions, sword in hand.

As soon as the defeat of Waterloo was known at Nismes, the royalist bands were reorganized, and ordered the municipal council to declare immediately for the government of Louis XVIII., although no order of any kind had arrived from Paris. The council replied that it was necessary to wait for official instructions, and published a proclamation, in which it said: “Fellow-countrymen of every opinion, for whom we have equal solicitude, in the name of the efforts we have made to avert the disasters which threaten our country, in the name of your dearest interests, in the name of God, who enjoins upon you clemency and concord, do not be deaf to our voice.” (18th July, 1815.)

The following day a courier announced the return of the king to the capital, and the Reformed population quietly resumed the white cockade. This prompt submission did not satisfy the men who had adopted the white and green colours, attesting by this that they served another cause than that of royalty. Then terror rose and spread itself over the south.

On the 14th of July, a hideous populace, recruited at Nismes, Beaucaire, and the surrounding places, attacked the garrison, which, weakened by the numerous desertions after the news of the emperor’s fall, did not reckon more than two hundred men. These brave soldiers, besieged in their barracks, were aware that any resistance would produce only a useless effusion of blood, and consented to capitulate. The next day, at break of dawn, having laid down their arms in compliance with an express arrangement, they marched out of their quarters,

four abreast, with firm though sorrowful demeanour. But the miscreants through whom they had to pass, fired upon them in treacherous violation of the surrender, and trampled underfoot the corpses of the murdered veterans.

All regular authority was at an end in Nismes. Pillage, incendiarism, and assassination, desolated this great city. The details are horrible. “Of crimes upon crimes,” says M. Lauze de Peret, with energetic eloquence, “shall I have to speak; of wretches without fear, of peace without repose, of entire submission without security, of a city without guardianship, of victims without defence, and of chiefs mute without being absent.”[141]

The Count René de Bernis, the royal commissioner, and the Marquis d’Arbaud-Jonques, appointed prefect of the department after the Marquis Jules de Calvières, who was only provisional prefect, have published justificatory memoirs. These have, however, been contradicted upon almost every point by M. Madier de Montjau, in his petition to the Chamber of Deputies, and by other respectable citizens. It is right that persecutors should learn that truth has necessarily its day; it is also right that they should remember that history does not stop to pick from the gore the names of the subordinate cut-throats, but that it casts the blame and odium upon those who ought to have withheld and punished them.

This spirit of savage fanaticism soon spread beyond the precincts of Nismes. The whole surrounding country was abandoned to the fury of some hundreds of brigands, who, while they imposed ruinous contributions, devastated property, sacked houses, maltreated the most inoffensive citizens,

insulted women, profaned the sacredness of the burial-grounds, and finally massacred those, whose position or some false rumour marked out for popular vengeance, huzzaed for the Cross! and the King! committing at the same time crimes equally opposed to the holiest interests of religion and royalty.

If the unhappy Protestants assembled anywhere in arms for their common defence, or for the protection of the asylum of the aged and the cradle of the young, they were treated as factious rebels. They were dragged before judges, who would not, or dared not do them justice; and these contemptible tribunals raged against the victims, instead of striking the murderers.

Among other towns, that of Uzès had been invaded by a band of robbers, on which occasion a priest evinced remarkable self-devotion. The authorities were either alarmed or were accomplices, and the national guard remained passive. “One single man, a worthy minister of the law of charity, a priest of the God, who has commanded all mankind to live together as brethren, the abbé Palhien, set a different example. He encountered Graffan (Quatretaillons) near the church of Saint Etienne; he prayed, he insisted, he knelt to him: but he followed him in vain to the fatal place, he pleaded in vain the words of religion to this bandit armed for the defence of the altar and the throne. On this memorable day, Uzès appeared to contain but one single Christian, one single Frenchman.”[142]

Terror lasted for several months. Towards the end of August, four thousand Austrians arrived in the department of Gard. They had been made to believe that the Protestants menaced public tranquillity, and

that it was necessary to defend both law and order against their hatred. They advanced with great precaution, sword in hand, as if they had entered an enemy's country, and were surprised to find a peaceful population, abandoned to the fury of robbers, and decimated by assassination.

It may be asked how such disorders could have happened without exciting universal indignation, at such a period and in a country like France. The answer is, that the whole country was at that time delivered up to a violent reaction. There was no liberty of the press; no right, save that of the conqueror; the spirit of party oppressed and disorganized everything. The official journal of Gard, which was published in the police offices or in those of the prefecture, did not hesitate to contest the most evident facts, nor to deny the most authentic,—to boast of the clemency and the generosity of the enemies of the Protestants, with the corpses of the victims before their eyes. And if any one, even away from this unfortunate province, uttered a free thought respecting these atrocities, he was reputed as a calumniator and a rebel.

M. Voyer-d'Argenson experienced this, when in the session of the 23rd October, 1815, he demanded an inquiry, affirming that his heart bled to hear the reports of the massacres of Protestants in the south. He was violently interrupted with cries of order, and notwithstanding the forms of speech which he employed in his explanations were expressive of doubt, the call to order was agreed to by a large majority. Did the chamber of 1815 think that by stopping M. Voyer-d'Argenson's mouth, it could smother the terrible cry for blood and the voice of truth?

The government was better instructed than it cared to make known. Louis XVIII. was an enlightened prince, who was aware of the true position of affairs, and he was not a little anxious respecting the impression which the crimes of the south would produce upon the opinion of France and of Europe. England and Prussia, the two countries whose armies had restored his crown on the battle-field of Waterloo, began to show signs of disquietude; and the cabinet of London, interrogated in the House of Commons, appealed to the guarantees of the charter in favour of the French Protestants.

The Duke d'Angoulême was sent, in the month of November, to the southern provinces. He found the places of worship of Nismes closed,—all public exercise of religion had been suspended from the middle of July,—that a part of the Protestant population had been driven from their homes by the dread of massacres,—that others were hidden in their houses as if they were a proscribed race, whilst assassins stalked boldly abroad, the magistrates powerless, and the laws inoperative.

Some delegates of the consistory, confounded by the crowd of civil functionaries, in order that they might avoid the ill-treatment of the populace, went to pay their respects to the duke, and met with a most favourable reception. He gave them an order to reopen their places of worship from the following Thursday, the 9th of November. But none were opened until Sunday, and then but one. The result proved that too much reliance had been placed upon the good disposition of the people and their leaders. Tumultuous assemblages collected round the religious edifice, shouting: "Down with the

Protestants! Death to the Protestants! Let us have back our churches! Scourge them back to the desert!" The doors were broken open, and a band of wretches burst into the place of meeting. The General Lagarde, who was endeavouring, with some fellow-officers, to repress the assailants, was shot through the heart; and perhaps this disaster prevented the commission of still greater crime; for the populace, struck with dismay, hastily fled, thinking only of their own safety.

This assassination of a soldier of high rank, committed before the whole town, obeying the orders of a prince of the blood, left the government no longer the opportunity of denying the excesses of the reaction or of temporizing. On the 21st of November, Louis XVIII. published an ordinance with the following preamble: "An atrocious crime has stained our town of Nismes. Despite the constitutional charter, which recognises the Catholic religion as the religion of the State, but which guarantees to other creeds protection and liberty (the minister thought of this very tardily), seditious crowds have dared to oppose the opening of a Protestant place of worship. Our military commandant, whilst striving to disperse them by persuasion before using force, has been assassinated, and his murderer has fled from the officers of justice. If such a crime were to remain unpunished, public order and government would be at an end, and our ministers guilty of not executing the laws."

Notwithstanding the more than usual solemnity of this ordinance, which commanded the arrest not only of the assassin of General Lagarde, but also of the authors, fautors, and accomplices of the disturbance of the 12th of November, the judges punished no

one. Even the murderer of the general was acquitted; and the other bandits, who had devastated half the province with incendiarism and assassination, were allowed to display an insolent and odious impunity upon the very scene of their misdeeds. Witnesses were afraid to come forward to give testimony against them, and mysterious protectors gained their absolution.

The Protestant worship was at length re-established in Nismes, after an interruption of six months, on the 17th of December, 1815. Yet the apprehensions of the Reformed were not calmed, and security did not fully return until the issue of the ordinance of the 5th of September, 1816, which again raised the hopes and the strength of the liberal party.

We will not terminate the narrative of the troubles of Gard, without paying a just tribute of respect to the pastors of this province. Some threw themselves before their armed parishioners, conjuring them in the name of the Gospel, not to return evil for evil. One particularly, M. Juillerat Chasseur, now president of the consistory of Paris, who was called to officiate on the fatal day of the 12th November, continued his prayers with a serene countenance and unfaltering voice, in the midst of the shouts of death from an enraged populace, and compelled the respect of these madmen, who had cast aside all reverence for the majesty of the sanctuary. He felt that the least sign of weakness on his part might have led to a frightful catastrophe. Such courage is both more grand and rare than that of the soldier on the battle-field.

In the other departments, saving two or three exceptions of little importance, the Protestants were

neither molested in their worship, nor assailed in their persons or their property. Public opinion came to the assistance of the law, and deprived intolerance of its hope of again renewing the persecutions of the olden times.

V.

After the re-establishment of order, two opposite influences began to act upon the conduct of political power towards the Protestants; whence there ensued more or less contradictory acts, and a singular mixture of good-will and hostility until the Revolution of 1830.

On one side the promises of the Charter; the desire of not alienating so many citizens, who reckoned, in proportion to their number, more electors than the (Roman) Catholics; respect for opinion, the national conscience, which would have revolted against every direct measure of persecution; the fear, in short, of giving new weapons to the opposition, which was ready to take up the cause of the Protestants as their own; these reasons were quite sufficient to recommend to the Bourbons and their ministers the maintenance of a prudent reserve.

But on the other side, the natural and intimate alliance, which existed between the ancient dynasty and the old religion; the necessity of meeting the requirements of the clergy in order to gain their support in the struggle against the new spirit; the growing influence of the Jesuits, and the congregations, particularly under the reign of Charles X.; the conduct and the demands of the members of the Right, who laboured incessantly for the restoration of (Roman) Catholicism for the sake of political interest; perhaps also some vague distrust of the tendencies of Protestantism, and some disagreeable recollections of which the descendants of Louis XIV. have never been able to rid themselves completely; all this explains the hostility, sometimes

hidden, sometimes avowed, which the Reformed might complain of after the Restoration.

To look first of all at the favourable side, we will remark that the numbers of the Protestant faith sensibly and constantly increased. New pastoral districts were created, new places of worship built, and more abundant means of elementary instruction were granted out of the public purse. This increase was even more rapid under Charles X. than under Louis XIII.; and the cause of this is easy to be indicated: whatever was given to the Protestants, facilitated the passing of the prodigal grants which were lavished upon the (Roman) Catholics, and a few thousand more francs for the former, covered with a varnish of impartiality the millions distributed to the latter.

In the annual presentations of public bodies, the two kings never failed to reassure the Protestants of their protection and good-will. When he ascended the throne, Charles X., who felt that he was under a still greater obligation than his predecessor to give solemn guarantees to liberty of conscience and of worship, said to the consistory of Paris: “Assure yourselves, gentlemen, of my protection, as you did of that of the king, of whom you have been deprived. All Frenchmen are equal in my eyes; all Frenchmen have an equal right to my love, my protection, and my favour.”

A Protestant committee, composed of peers and deputies, was formed under the ministry of M. Decazes, and was continued under that of M. de Villèle. Not only did the government offer it no opposition, but it approved and seconded this non-official commission. In 1824, M. Georges Cuvier was placed at the head of the Faculties of Protestant

theology; and four years later, under the ministry of M. de Martignac, he exercised the functions of director of the non-Catholic worship. The learning and integrity of this illustrious man were well fitted to inspire the Protestants with confidence against the enterprises of the clerical party.

From 1817 to 1830, in a word, we have to complain of no important act of intolerance; we might relate favours sometimes, and always security for the mass of the Protestant population. It is but justice due to the elder branch of the Bourbons, and we do it with the more willingness, that the last of the race is an exile from his country.

But the same justice also requires that we should present the reverse of the picture, always taking care to add, in order that nothing owing to great misfortunes may be omitted, that for the words and acts unfavourable to the Protestants, the imprudent counsellors, who surrounded the princes, are more responsible than the princes themselves.

A powerful and restless faction was bent on interpreting after its own fashion, the article of the Charter which constituted the (Roman) Catholic religion the religion of the state. It was no longer merely a question of the first rank of honour, but of a real pre-eminence applied to every institution, and to every measure of public authority. According to these strange commentators upon the fundamental law, the 6th article, which granted an official prerogative to Roman Catholicism, ought to override the 5th article, which established equality of protection and liberty for every creed, whilst according to common sense, logic, and the very order in which the articles were placed, the special privilege should be subordinate to the general

principle.[143]

The Jesuits and their allies openly declared that to put all religious communions upon the same footing, was an anti-Catholic, anti-social, and impious maxim. A ministerial bishop did not hesitate to declare that the non-Catholic creeds were only tolerated, and M. de Peyronnet pronounced these imprudent words in his defence of the law of sacrilege in the tribune: “I recognise an equality of protection promised to the creeds sanctioned in the kingdom, and I respect it; but an equality of creeds, I do not recognise at all.”

The law, of which we speak, confounded the spiritual with the temporal, and importing the (Roman) Catholic dogma into the domain of legislation, established a great inequality between the two creeds. No profanation of Protestant worship any longer incurred the penalty of imprisonment, whilst profanation of the (Roman) Catholic worship was punished with the pain of death, and even, in the project of the government, with that against parricides. This alone ought to have told Charles X. and his ministers that they were pursuing a fatal course. Protestantism lost nothing by the measure; the cause of the Bourbons and the priests suffered immensely.

Another consequence, which it was attempted to deduce from the principle of the state religion, was that non-Catholics should be compelled to do some act, if not of adoration, at least of homage and indirect participation in certain ceremonies of (Roman) Catholicism. Thus it was insisted that they should hang the fronts of their houses with tapestry on the passage of the (Roman) Catholic processions, under penalty of process and fine. Yet it had already

been made a question whether processions without the precincts of the churches were not a violation of the organic articles, and generally whether, in a well-organized society, any creed whatsoever should have the right of transporting the celebration of its particular rites into the public streets and highways. But without insisting upon these two points, it may be conceived that the Protestants would energetically refuse to decorate their houses; for they must perceive in this, a serious attack upon their ancient discipline, a defiance of the independence of their personal faith, and an attempt against the equality of creeds, and against their very liberty itself.

In order to try the point, the Jesuits had put forward some functionaries of subordinate degree, such as the Count de Narbonne-Lara, sub-prefect of Florac, who suddenly and upon his own authority, published a circular ordering the inhabitants, of whatsoever religion [they might be], to decorate the front of their houses against the passing of the Holy Sacrament. The consistory of Barre answered this sub-prefect, on the 19th of May, 1818, with a categorical refusal, appealing at the same time to the discipline of the Protestants and to the Charter.

Similar attempts were made in other places, and several citizens were fined for not having obeyed this iniquitous assumption. But there was one M. Paul Roman, of Lourmarin, who would not submit to the sentence of the inferior tribunals. He appealed to the supreme court, and won his cause after a prolonged hearing. M. Odillon Barrot supported him with his eloquence, and proved that religious liberty was altogether involved in the question. “This cause,” he said, “is not that of a Protestant; it is not even that of the Protestants solely; it is that of every citizen,

whatever may be his religion, whatever may be his religious opinions, apparent or not apparent; the whole body of citizens are represented by M. Roman in this matter."

The Court of Cassation passed a decree on the 20th November, 1818, conformable to justice, law, and the rights of minorities. An affair of the same kind was also tried at Marseilles in 1820, and decided in like manner to that we have mentioned, in favour of the Protestant appellant. The government itself renounced this illegal exaction, in spite of the clamours of the fanatics, and the point was definitively settled.

Another pretence was set up, more dangerous in its principles, more serious in its effects, more obstinate in every respect, and from which even the politicians of the present day have not yet completely freed themselves. This consisted in restricting the Protestants to certain boundaries, as if Protestantism was such an evil that it was necessary to confine it within the narrowest possible limits. It appeared as if the disciples of the Reformation were told, "Since you exist in the kingdom, we tolerate you; but remain where you are, and guard yourselves from trespassing. Unity of faith is our rule, dissent the exception; and far from authorizing it to spread, we will restrict it to the fullest extent of our power."

Nothing could be more opposed [than this] to the Charter, which assured equal liberty to all creeds. For as the Romish clergy had always and everywhere the right of proselytizing in the bosom of Protestantism, it is evident that if the pastors were refused the privilege of making proselytes in their turn among the (Roman) Catholics, equal liberty was nothing but a bitter mockery.

The Charter would not be respected, at least in one sense, unless the priests were interdicted from converting Protestants, as well as the pastors from converting (Roman) Catholics. Now this was a condition, which the Roman clergy would never accept; it could not; it ought not [accept it]; it would have been a disgraceful prevarication on their part, and they would have been right in not subjecting themselves to it, even in Protestant countries. But then there is no logical or legitimate resting-place, but the common right, or liberty of proselytism for all.

The government of the Restoration did not always do its duty in this matter. It invented administrative fetters, judiciary obstacles, and obstinately relied upon the 21st article of the penal code, according to which no association of more than twenty persons, could be formed without the concurrence of the authorities. By applying this article to religious assemblies, it was clear that the establishment of every new assembly, the opening of any new place of worship, depended upon the pleasure of the civil authority. Liberty of religion ceased to exist for the French Protestants beyond, or without those places of worship which were counted and numbered by the State. This was almost returning to the vicious maxims of the first years of the reign of Louis XIV.

Incessant contests, as might have been expected, were the result of such an application of the law. We will cite only two circumstances, in which the two greatest towns of France were concerned. In 1825, the consistory of Paris, although it demanded the free exercise of religion, not for converted (Roman) Catholics, but for Protestants by birth, was hindered from opening a place of worship in the commune of

Ageux, “because,” ran the administrative decree, “the establishment of feeble fractions of a dissenting population in the midst of a population of an homogeneous creed, would not be without inconvenience!” This was the very language of the persecutors of the sixteenth century. In 1826, some communes of the neighbourhood of Lyons expressed a desire to hear the doctrines of the Reformation preached; the authorities interposed in spite of the reclamations of the consistory. But in these two cases the hands of government were strengthened both by this version of the law, and public opinion.

While the attempt was made to imprison Protestantism within its official walls, all the doors were thrown wide open to the proselytism of the (Roman) Catholic clergy. Three pastors having embraced the Romish faith under the Restoration, their pamphlets against the communion they had abandoned obtained the honour of being printed at the royal press, and they were even rewarded with a pension.

The idea was also conceived of resuming the ambulating missions of the seventeenth century, with a double task, instead of one; for they were charged with the conversion of the followers of Voltaire, as well as those of Calvin. These vulgar declaimers travelled with their crosses from town to town, and village to village, vociferating in the public places senseless invectives against the Reformation and philosophy. Far from winning either Protestants or unbelievers, they only disgusted the more healthy and enlightened portion of the (Roman) Catholics. Many respectable priests were themselves ashamed of such discreditable auxiliaries, feeling that the power of (Roman) Catholicism was not to be re-

established by scenes, in which the populace were the chief actors.

The defenders of the two communions maintained controversies in a higher region, which did not at least do violence to the laws of public decency. Some men of eminent reputation, although but mediocre theologians,—M. de Bonald, M. Joseph de Maistre, and M. de Lamennais, who has since refuted his own opinions more effectually than any of his antagonists could have done, assailed the Reformation with extreme pertinacity, and were much more successful in assailing it than the justness of their arguments warranted. They were creditably met, however, by MM. Stapfer, Samuel Vincent, Henri Pyt, and others, opponents who, less known to fame, indeed, defended the Protestant creed with more logic and vigour.

The substance of these polemics did not, generally, bear much resemblance to the great discussions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Religion, in those times, was supported on each side for the sake of religion itself; it was dogma, and particularly the dogma of the Holy Supper, that engaged controversialists. Under the Restoration, the most renowned advocates of (Roman) Catholicism took up another ground. Religion had become a political weapon. Putting aside doctrinal matters, the [disputants] exerted themselves to effect the establishment of the position, that the unity and authority of the Roman (Catholic) Church secure the power of princes, obedience to the laws, and the maintenance of social order better than Protestantism. Heavenly interests were of secondary importance to those of the earth, or were not considered at all.

Doubtless it might be possible to meet with some discussions purely dogmatical or ecclesiastical, at this period; but they attracted little notice, and awakened no echo amongst the masses of the country. The tide of humanity seems to have retreated from its ancient landmarks, to hollow out a new bed on unknown shores.

There is no other fact deserving mention in the external condition of French Protestantism, until the Revolution of 1830. The 3rd article of the Charter, which declared all citizens to be equally admissible to civil and military offices, might, and ought to have been observed under certain circumstances. The professorial chairs of instruction were rarely conferred upon, and were as lightly taken away from, the Protestants. The same partiality was shown, although in a less degree, in the distribution of public appointments; where the merit was equal, to say no more, the (Roman) Catholic nearly always prevailed against the Protestant; and this dislike continued to increase every day, as the ill-fated Charles X. gave himself up more unreservedly to the counsels of those who ruined him.

VI.

In treating of the internal condition of Protestantism, we shall make mention, as we have done when speaking of the preceding periods, less of opinions considered in themselves, than of the men who were their most distinguished representatives.

When the peace of 1815 had allayed the storms which had shaken thrones and nations, the popular mind experienced a calm approaching to the void. The illusions of glory, the dreams of distant conquests vanished. There was now leisure to breathe, to think of oneself, and the want of something, upon which to fix the mind, was experienced. One class turned itself to the cultivation of the sciences, literature, social questions, historical studies, or to industrial works; another, much less numerous, sought from religious belief a satisfaction of the wants of their conscience and their heart.

The freedom once more permitted of making ideas known, facilitated and gave life to this religious movement: not that faith is unable to grow beneath outward oppression, for we may see splendid examples to the contrary in the history of Protestantism; but the independence of thought and action is the true atmosphere of spiritual existence.

Finally, the return to religious subjects was strengthened by the relations that were re-established between the Protestants of France and those of other countries. The Reformation had, for half a century, inspired great works, and founded great associations; it had despatched its missionaries to the extremities of the globe, and distributed the Bible in every human tongue by millions of copies.

When French Protestantism was brought into contact with these noble aspirations of Christian life, it learned to know its duties better, and to fulfil them with greater fidelity.

Many pious souls resumed the ancient faith of the Reformed churches, and displayed in acts of religion and proselytism, an energy, a zeal, and an ardour of which later generations had lost the tradition. This change was not always well understood, not only by the masses, but by men of superior intelligence, and provoked painful dissensions. The names of Methodist and Rationalist, the one borrowed from Germany, the other from England, became party cries.

These divisions just began to appear when Protestant France lost a man, who, having inherited the doctrines taught in the churches of the desert, yet having abstained from the new conflicts, might have given a lofty and powerful impulse to theological studies, from the position he occupied in the faculty of Montauban. His faith, his learning, and his worth, entitle him to a place in this history.

M. Daniel Encontre was born at Nismes in 1762. His father, who had been one of the pastors of the desert, was only able to bestow upon his education the rare opportunities of leisure afforded by a wandering and restless life. But the young Encontre did more by himself than others would have done under the most able masters. “In him was again witnessed the phenomenon, which had been in former times so much admired in the youth of Pascal. Debarred from the privilege of studying mathematics, he divined them. Before the age of nineteen, without books, obliged to work in secret and by stealth, his power of genius was such that he

succeeded in penetrating so far into the science as to reach the infinitesimal calculus, the object of his astonishing aspiration. He cultivated at the same time, and with the same energy, under the eyes, and with his father's consent, the study of the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin languages; and his success was so surprising, particularly in the two last, that they were soon as familiar to him as his mother tongue."[144]

He went to the academies of Lausanne and Geneva to finish his studies, and exhibited there so much superiority, that his fellow-students compared him to their most skilful professors. His religious convictions were not without their troubles and storms; but he returned to the faith by the avenue of doubt, and rested in it more firmly.

On his return to France, Encontre preached the Gospel to the desert flocks. His success in preaching was, however, small, because he was deficient in those physical qualities, without which the best discourses do not engage [the attention of] the multitude. His stature was small, his voice husky, his action more hasty than imposing. An extinction of voice intervened to decide the question with his conscience; and he quitted the pulpit of the house of worship for the chair of the academies.

The Revolution, which deprived so many of their lives, did not leave his existence undisturbed. He sought an asylum at Montpellier, where, says the biographer whom we have quoted, "he was reduced, in order to earn his bread, to give lessons in stone-cutting to master masons and workmen. He who was worthy of teaching by the side of a Lagrange, a Laharpe, or a Fourcroy, thought himself even fortunate in being able to procure employment in the

quarries." Nor did he forget, in these times of proscription, that he was the minister of Jesus Christ, and at the peril of his life he celebrated baptisms, blessed marriages, gave religious instruction, and supported the piety of the faithful at Montpellier and in its neighbourhood.

At the opening of the central schools, he presented himself to contest for the chair of literature. Another candidate, fearing the rivalry of M. Encontre, besought him to withdraw, which he immediately did, and offered himself successfully for the chair of pure mathematics. It was only such a man, who could do such an act: his encyclopædical mind, equally versed in literature, the sciences, and theology, was profound and original in all. The celebrated Fourcroy has said of him, "I have seen in France two or three heads that might be compared with his, but I have never found one that was superior."

Appointed dean of the faculty of sciences at Montpellier, he exercised a legitimate ascendancy, and enriched the collections of the learned societies with many excellent papers. A career, as peaceful as it was honourable, lay before him, when the voice of the Reformed churches called him, in 1814, to the professorship of theology of Montauban. M. Encontre sacrificed everything to a vocation pointed out to him under the austere image of duty, and only expressed his fear that he should be found unequal to his new task—a modesty equalled only by his genius.

On his arrival at Montauban, where the double functions of professor and dean had been confided to him, he imparted firmness to the professorship of theology by the solidity of his doctrine, the extent of his learning, and the authority of his character. All

acknowledged that he had a right to exact much from every one, since he exacted more from himself.

Unhappily his strength was soon exhausted by the labours of his office; yet although suffering and ill, he continued to consecrate the remainder of his expiring life. Seeing that his end was near, he proceeded to Montpellier, where the ashes of his first wife and daughter reposed, and died there on the 16th of September, 1818. “There is only one voice in the Protestant church of France as to the irreparable loss it has sustained,” said the editor of the *Archives of Christianity*, on the announcement of this sorrowful news.

M. Daniel Encontre engaged himself upon philosophical and religious subjects in some sketches which obtained deserved success. His letter to M. Combe-d’Ounous on Plato, and his dissertation upon the true system of the world compared with the Mosaic relation, prove that he made profound researches upon questions, which have in all ages most deeply interested the human mind.

However, French Protestantism strove to found some new institutions. The general meeting of the Bible Society of France was convoked on the 6th of December, 1819. We quote the following observation from the president’s speech, which has an historical value: “According to our by-laws and the government authorization, the Bible Society of Paris consists solely of Protestants. It appears, and we ought not to complain of it, that the government has thus invited the Reformed to make each other’s acquaintance to edify one another, and to become more exemplary, by intercommunication.” Such, in effect, was, next to the essential motive of religious faith, one of the principal objects of the members of

the Bible Society under the Restoration; namely, that of offering to the Protestants scattered over the face of the kingdom, without any common organization, a central rallying-point around which they might assemble for reciprocal assistance, an advantage of vital importance when considered with reference to the intrigues and encroachments of the clerical party.

Other associations were successively established: *The Religious Tract Society*, in 1822; and *The Society for the Encouragement of Primary Instruction among the Protestants of France*, in 1829. Each of these institutions contributed its share in fortifying and extending the empire of Christian piety.

Among the men, who laboured to found these societies, displaying as much intelligence as devotion, the Baron Auguste de Staël should be named.

He was the grandson of Necker, the son of Madame de Staël and the brother of the Duchess de Broglie. The Protestant churches welcomed in him one of those pious laymen, so useful in former times, who united political influence with a Christian spirit; and they were glad, allowing for the difference of time and circumstances, to salute him as the future Duplessis-Mornay, or the Wilberforce of the French Reformation.

Born at Coppet, in the canton of Vaud, in 1790, he received his first religious lessons from the venerable pastor Cellerier. His biographer says: “We do not doubt that M. de Staël owed a great part of his just ideas on religion, and of the excellent sentiments he so early displayed, to his connection and intimacy with this tried and faithful minister; and we can confidently affirm that the scholar ever entertained the liveliest and most tender remembrance of his

teacher."[145]

The part he took in the establishment of the Bible Society helped to develop his pious tendencies. Having accepted the task of drawing up the Reports of the Committee, and of going from house to house to exhort the faithful to make sacrifices for the dissemination of the Scriptures, he learned better to appreciate the holy books himself.

During a visit to England in the spring of 1822, he became acquainted with Wilberforce and other eminent Christians, whose words and examples strengthened his sentiments of piety. The *Letters upon England*, which he published in 1825, give but an imperfect idea of the observations he collected upon this subject; for the author confined himself to a treatise upon the religion and the Christian communions of Great Britain in a volume which he was not able to complete.

M. de Staël applied his zeal and efforts to several labours that might be called *mixed*, because, although evangelical faith lay at the base, their object was temporal improvement. We may mention among them the foundation of Savings-banks, popular elementary instruction, and the abolition of the slave-trade.

No one has forgotten the shudder of indignation which he excited at a general meeting of the *Society of Christian Morality*, when he exhibited the instruments of torture used in that abominable traffic. He did more. "From hall to hall, from office to office, from palace to palace," says one of his biographers, "we saw him display these hideous proofs of the most atrocious cruelty and lust of gain. He brought before the notice of the princes and princesses of the royal family, these machines

invented by the spirit of evil, and he explained to them their bloody use. He showed them to the peers of the realm in their places in the legislative assembly, and to all the friends of humanity in the public meetings of the benevolent societies.... We may, without hesitation, assert, that it is to his generous efforts we owe the cessation of the evil, and the change manifested in the system of government and in the legislature on this subject."

The sympathies of M. de Staël were extended to all classes of the oppressed, and he defended the victims of an intolerant law in the Canton of Vaud. His writings, his letters, his solicitations, moved every right-thinking conscience, and if he did not succeed in procuring the repeal of this mischievous law, he succeeded in having it more mildly applied.

His character offered a rare mixture of earnestness and caution, of zeal and moderation. So great was his integrity, that it frequently prevented him from speaking to the extent of his religious convictions, from the fear of overstepping them. No one understood better than himself how difficult it is, in the midst of social affairs and relations, to make one's life conform unerringly to the precepts of the Gospel. "This want of harmony between his life and his religion," says the editor of his works, "was an insupportable load, under which he languished, and his very physiognomy bore the impress of this mental anguish. But by degrees his mind was calmed by the Christian faith, at once so consoling and so pure, which, without detracting from the beauty of the moral type which should be the object of our endeavours, teaches us to turn our eyes from our own misery to fix them upon that one divine, holy, and just Being, who has accomplished everything for

us."

The Baron de Staël died at the Château de Coppet, on the 17th of November, 1827, when only thirty-seven years of age.

The attention and the labours of the pious were also directed, during the Restoration, towards the scattered Protestants, who were threatened with the loss of their religious belief and habits, by the distance of their dwellings from regular pastoral action. The greatest of these new Evangelists was undoubtedly Félix Neff, who was born at Geneva, in 1798. Although a stranger to the Reformed churches of our country by his birthplace, he belongs to them by his missionary career; for it is in Dauphiny, more than elsewhere, that he spread the seeds of the Gospel, and he has been justly called the Oberlin of the Upper Alps.

Neff was not covetous of glory, and it is probable that the idea of a distinguished name never presented itself to his mind, when he went to expound the Bible in the huts of the poor mountaineers. Yet no name of the French Reformation in our day has been so famous as his: numerous original writings and a host of translations have been published concerning his life. In the heart of Germany, in the most distant valleys of Scotland, on the borders of the Orinoco and the Ohio, the name of Félix Neff is pronounced, and thousands of voices will re-echo, "He was a mighty servant of the Lord."

In his youth he was fond of reading Plutarch and Rousseau; he studied mathematics and the natural sciences, and distinguished himself by the manliness of his character, as much as by the powers of his mind. Enrolled at seventeen years of age in the

artillery of Geneva, his approach to the principles of Christianity was slow; but when he had once embraced them, he never quitted them. He immediately quitted the military service, and travelled through several of the Swiss cantons, preaching the Gospel from place to place. Thence he entered the department of Isère, and in 1823 went to the Upper Alps.

There, in the deep gorges, or upon peaks covered with eternal snow, dwells a population which, it is said, dates back by its symbols and its religious creed, to the primitive Christians of the Gauls. They form a link, not only with the disciples of Pierre Valdo, but with the apostolate of Irenæus, the second bishop of Lyons.

These Christians of Dauphiny, exposed to cruel persecutions, and continually straitened as the authority of Rome gradually more closely encircled them, had taken refuge from rock to rock, from mountain height to height, as far as the extreme limit where man can exist in the rarefied air. They had carried with them their Bible, their confessions of faith, and that firm piety, which welcomes the most terrible tortures in preference to apostasy. When the Reformation appeared, they saluted it as a sister of their ancient communion, and joined the churches of Dauphiny and Provence.

Neff discovered in the valleys of Fressinières and Queyras, at Triève, Lacombe, Dormillouse, villages hung upon the precipitous slopes of the Alps, the remnants of this faithful race. Without schools, without fixed pastors or regular religious service, they were left to live upon their pious recollections rather than upon a personal and active faith. Neff, by God's help, restored this to them; and, a missionary

at the same time of civilization and Christianity, he became their schoolmaster, and their instructor in agriculture, engineering, and surveying; the first in the field to labour, the last to quit the offices of prayer, he devoted himself wholly to this people whom he served.

Three years and a half passed in these pursuits of fraternal love. Félix Neff sheltered his head now under the roof of one cabin, now under another, never sleeping three nights following in the same resting-place. His parish was fifteen leagues in length, and comprised twelve annexed districts. He visited them in winter and summer alike, wading through the snow knee-deep, taking long circuitous routes to pass the glaciers, eating the black bread of the inhabitants, preaching in the barns, and opening schools in the stables. Such devotion was not permitted to be fruitless. The mountaineers of the Alps awoke at the voice of the apostle. “The rocks, nay, the very glaciers,” he wrote, “all seemed animated, and presented a smiling aspect; the savage country became agreeable and dear to me from the moment its inhabitants were my brethren.”

But his health, however robust, gave way beneath the burthen, and in this sublime contest between charity and physical suffering, his frame broke down. Félix Neff was compelled to quit the Alps to behold them no more; he died in the month of April, 1829, in his native town.

He has left but few writings—one or two fragments of sermons, some pious meditations, and letters, which have been collected and printed. He was rather a man of action than of study, and he might have addressed to the writers on religion the saying of a great citizen of antiquity to a

philosopher: “That which you speak, I do.”

However rich Protestant literature may have been under the Restoration, if judged by the number of its works, it is poor in original books of any value. Translations and reprints were numerous. English authors figure principally in the first category: Bogue, Chalmers, Paley, Thomas Scott, Erskine, Milner, Miss Kennedy, and others. In the second we meet with the works of Nardin, Saurin, Court, Duplessis-Mornay, Dumoulin, Claude, and Drelincourt. The *Mémoire* of M. Alexandre Vinet in favour of religious liberty, the *Vues sur le Protestantisme en France* of M. Samuel Vincent, and the *Musée des Protestants célèbres*, an unfinished work, are distinguished by different kinds of merit from the mass of the forgotten books of that period.

VII.

The Protestants took no active part, as Protestants, in the Revolution of 1830; but they generally hailed its occurrence with joy, because it brought them new pledges of security for the free exercise of their worship. We have witnessed how their vexations, annoyances, and exclusions were multiplied towards the end of the reign of Charles X.; and if their political rights, consecrated by the Charter, had fallen beneath the ordinances of July, to what perilous attacks might not religious liberty, which rested upon the same foundation, have been exposed? Many persons believed [that it would have been so exposed]; and without crediting the reports circulated at the time among the popular masses concerning projects of persecution against the Protestants, it is probable that their position would have been greatly aggravated.

This explains the satisfaction which they exhibited at the news of the three days' victory. Yet this contentment was calm, reserved, and without the least thought of reprisals, and perfect harmony between the two Churches was nowhere disturbed, except at Nismes, where it seems as if the religious communions must always experience the consequences of political events.

The Protestants were not the aggressors. Far from this; for in the very first days of the month of August, an appeal to union was published, having the full adhesion of all the respectable portion of the community, without distinction of creed, and the pastors went from family to family, everywhere recommending forgetfulness of the crimes of 1815. Their voice was listened to. A multitude of Protestant

workmen, accompanied by a great number of (Roman) Catholics, entered the public square, pronouncing words of reconciliation, and formed a procession that marched round the city, uttering cries of *Vive l'union! Vive la paix!* (Long live union! Long live peace!)

But some rioters of the lowest class of the people, led partly by fanaticism, and partly, perhaps, by the dread of the account that justice might require of them for their past excesses, returned to Nismes, on the 15th of August, with suspicious-looking strangers, after having sought a refuge at Beaucaire, and their presence was the occasion of unfortunate collisions. Happily several companies of courageous countrymen came down from Vaunage, and intimidated this seditious band. On the side of the (Roman) Catholics two were killed and six wounded, and on the side of the Protestants six were killed and twenty-eight wounded. The last had therefore furnished three or four times more victims than they had made; the French Reformation had been accustomed to suffer in this way for three hundred years past.

In revising the Charter, the Chamber of Deputies abrogated the 6th article, upon the religion of the state, and re-adopted the terms of the *Concordat* upon the religion of the majority of the French. In doing this, there was much less desire to give satisfaction to Protestantism than to the opinion excited against the usurpation of the clerical power. M. Dupin explained this very clearly in his report. "The expressions of the 6th article," he said, "have awakened impudent pretensions to an exclusive domination, as much opposed to religion as to the freedom of conscience and the peace of the kingdom.

A threefold interest demands the erasure of terms which, without adding anything to what religion will always possess of the holy and venerable in our eyes, had become the source of many errors, and, finally, caused the disgrace of the reigning family, and brought the state to the brink of ruin."

Two months afterwards, M. Dupin, then procurator-general at the Court of Cassation, who has since maintained different opinions, demanded true conditions of religious liberty. The question was still the same; namely, whether it required the permission of the authorities or a simple preliminary declaration, before opening a new place of worship and forming regular assemblies of Protestants in communes, where none had ever before existed. It was the important question of a preventative or a repressive *régime*, of censorship or of liberty, of the arbitrary intervention of power in religious matters, or of the independence of believers.

M. Dupin also said, respecting the affair of the Protestants of Levergies (and his words are still worthy of quotation), "He who wills the end, wills the means. What avails a proclaimed liberty, if the means of its enjoyment be denied? What! The free exercise of worship is permitted, and at the same time there is a prohibition to exercise it in every place! The exercise is to be interdicted in the streets and public squares: that would shock other creeds. And when its exercise is asked for in any special edifice, it is forbidden! Such liberty is a mockery! What is the obligation thus imposed of obtaining permission to celebrate one's worship, but tantamount to the preliminary censorship applied to the freedom of the press?... In the actual condition of our constitutional legislation, I can conceive that the

administrative authority has a right to keep a watch upon the exercise of worship, as upon every other kind of assembly; a right to inquire into and punish offences arising out of this exercise, and by this very fact the utility of a preliminary declaration to prepare the authorities. But I can admit neither the peremptory right of refusal, nor the silence equivalent to this refusal, as a lawful means of preventing citizens from exercising their religious worship with full liberty. This liberty is not subject to preliminary authorization; it is not subordinated to optional permission any more for those, who are not Catholics, than for those who are so." (October, 1830.)

The external condition of the French Reformation seemed therefore more favourable than it had ever been, and we may read in the Protestant journals of the day how full of hope they were. There were to be no longer any direct or indirect inequality between the two communions, or obstacles of any kind to the manifestation of the Reformed faith! There was thenceforth to be an end to the necessity of waiting about the antechamber of priest-led prefects to solicit their authorization in ecclesiastical matters, or about the office of a minister, governed by political calculations! The ill-will of a mayor or a royal procurator was not to be any longer sufficient to dissolve religious meetings, and the tribunals would not punish the prayers of a few peaceable men out-numbering the perilous figure of twenty persons, as if they were crimes! We shall soon see how completely their expectations were deceived.

Many Protestants thought that the occasion was propitious for demanding the alteration of the law of the 18th Germinal. It appeared to them that a

government sprung from the triumph of liberal ideas could not, without self-contradiction, maintain a law which had been inspired by an excessive reaction against all liberty. Complaints and petitions to this effect were presented to the ministers of Louis Philippe; but they were thrown aside. If the popular origin of the government were a means, it was also an obstacle. The new power, conscious of its weakness and want of solidity, would not increase the difficulties of its position by meddling with the ecclesiastical questions, and it adopted as a rule of conduct in these matters, to make no change unless under absolute necessity.

Perhaps it would have been [a matter] of more easy settlement, had the question been one of mere Protestantism. To grant better laws to a small minority, ought to have given little umbrage. But behind the Protestant community were the (Roman) Catholics, with a discontented clergy, secretly hostile, and hating the organic articles even more than the consistories. If anything were granted to the former, nothing could be refused to the latter; and expediency forbade the aggravation of the troubles of the State by those of the Church.

The government, therefore, refused to make the least change in the law. Whereupon another question presented itself. Leaving the organic articles intact, was it not possible to have deduced more liberal applications from them, and to have given a less dependent position to Protestantism? The intervention of the legislative bodies was not necessary in this case; the discussion might be carried on with closed doors; the consistories and the minister of public worship might arrange everything, and a simple royal ordinance would suffice. Several

consistories insisted upon this point; pastoral conferences drew up programmes for the administration of the Reformed churches; the government itself nominated a commission to prepare the draft of the ordinance, and there was finally a prospect of something favourable to the Reformed.

Expectation was again deceived. The new regulation drawn up by this commission, instead of extending liberty, seemed to restrict it to still narrower limits than before; and the minister of public worship encountered the most energetic opposition from the consistories, when he consulted them upon it. The government ceased to do any more, and the *régime* of 1802 remained in its entirety.

In other respects, according to the genius of the middle classes, who directed public affairs at this time, the material, or pecuniary side of the situation of the Reformed churches, not only suffered no attack, but was sensibly ameliorated. The majority of the pastors received augmented allowances, new places were created, and funds for building places of worship and opening schools were granted with liberality. All this is mentioned with gratitude. Nothing was refused that money can accomplish for the development of a religious communion.

It must also be said in honour of Louis Philippe's government, that it never sought to mix itself up with the internal questions of the churches, when its intervention was not sought by the churches themselves. If it decreed the removal of some pastors, and did other acts which ought not to depend upon the decision of the civil power, it was unwillingly, and after long delays [that it did so].

Protestantism might have been much more free under this reign, if it had seriously striven to become so.

But beyond the official region, barriers and fetters of all kinds soon reappeared, as in the reign of Charles X.; sometimes, indeed, there seemed to be a stronger desire to offer obstruction, and scarcely was one cause of litigation on account of religion settled, before another sprung up.

After the Revolution, the most zealous of the Protestants judged that the moment had arrived for multiplying their labours of proselytism. Considered from the point of view of liberty and the equality of creeds, this was their right; and considered from that of their personal convictions, it was their duty. When proselytism employs such means only as are peaceful and authorized by universal morality, no human power can legitimately interdict it.

Circumstances appeared favourable. Public opinion was deeply hostile to the clerical party; it accused them of having deceived the conscience of an aged king to make him violate his oath, and overthrow the liberties of the nation. The external signs of (Roman) Catholicism fell in every direction before the popular cry; the churches were deserted, and the priests felt so well the discredit in which they stood, that for several years they kept themselves aloof, never showing themselves except when absolutely obliged, never raising a dispute, uttering a word, or asking anything but to be forgotten at the foot of their altars.

This was not all. Philosophical systems and social theories were boldly propounded to the country under the sacred name of religion, and were preached with great applause. Saint Simonism,

among others, had its journals, its public meetings, its worship, its hierarchy, its missionaries, its committees of propagandism: we mention the fact without contesting the right: the Saint Simonians were entitled to liberty, to as much liberty as the Reformed and the (Roman) Catholics, of gaining proselytes by the channel of persuasion.

It may be easily imagined that the fervent members of the Protestant faith would not consent to be shut up in their places of worship, while antichristian and vicious doctrines, in their eyes, were openly propagated. Conscience imposed upon them the imperious and holy obligation of addressing themselves immediately both to the deserters from the (Roman) Catholic church—an immense multitude, wandering hither and thither without spiritual guides—and to the disciples of the schools, who had, as it appeared to them, but the empty appearance of a religion. It was not so much an idea of aggression against (Roman) Catholicism as a testimony of sympathy for the souls which had no longer religious belief of any kind.

They had also another object in view, of secondary consequence to the religious conscience, but still important,—this was to strengthen order, threatened by the political revolutions. These Protestants believed that a vague spiritualism could not imbue a free people with those morals which must sustain the noble burthen of the laws, and that this required a strong and positive faith, the faith, which they themselves possessed.

Hence the origin, for a part of French Protestantism, of a whole series of publications, associations, and Christian institutions, in the general sense of this word. A journal, rearing alone the

standard of the Gospel, the *Sower*, appeared in the month of September, 1831. Chapels, unsalaried by the State, were opened about the same time at Paris and elsewhere. In 1833 an *evangelical society* was established, with the intention of announcing to all indifferently, what they held to be the essential truths of Christianity. We might mention some other institutions conceived in the same spirit.

These labours were not trammelled in the beginning. But the (Roman) Catholic clergy having gradually recovered their strength, the government thought it expedient to make approaches to them, and endeavoured to conciliate them by favours of a nature alien to the establishment of 1830. It is not our duty to examine whether the government of Louis Philippe did not lose more than it gained by this policy. What it is important for us to say is, that it impeded the work of proselytism according to the measure of its relations with the sacerdotal body.

Considering certain acts and prosecutions, it might even have been supposed, that there was something passing analogous to what had been seen in former times. All the historians have remarked that Henry IV., on his advent to the throne, and Louis XIV., when he had disputed with the Holy See, redoubled their severity against the Protestants, because they felt it incumbent upon them to wipe away the suspicion of heresy. The same cause, in its due proportion, and allowing for the great difference of the periods, produced similar effects under the reign of Louis Philippe. This prince had to dissipate the distrust of the priests, to win their sympathies; and in one sense, he dreaded more than ever Charles X. had done, giving Protestants a free field, because the clergy would have been more prompt in accusing

him of connivance with them. The marriage of the heir to the crown with a Protestant prince (a descendant, it is said, of Admiral Coligny), instead of improving matters, made them worse.

Things were now carried farther than instituting suits against those, who opened new places of worship, than invoking the restrictive articles of the penal code against them, as under the Restoration, and applying the dispositions of the law of 1834 respecting associations, although the minister of justice and public worship had solemnly promised the Chambers not to turn them against religious societies; but even the right of controversy, that was exercised under the *régime* of the Edict of Nantes, was called in question, and a certain prefectorial order actually assumed to fix—as in the time of Charles IX. and Catherine de Medicis—the number of persons authorized to participate in the Protestant religion. Even more, legally constituted Protestantism had to maintain contests to preserve the right of visiting its own members in the hospitals, prisons, and other public establishments; and the authorities proceeded sometimes so far as to impose arbitrary bounds to preaching among the scattered Protestants.

These iniquitous proceedings, which it would be just to attribute more particularly to subordinate and ignorant functionaries, provoked energetic remonstrances. A society was formed, under the name of the general interests of French Protestantism, to protect the freedom and equality of creeds. All the pastors of Paris, without exception, complained of the conduct of the civil power. The national tribunal resounded with these grievances. Some eminent men of the Protestant communion,

MM. Pelet de la Lozère, François Delessert, and Agénor de Gasparin, were the medium of communication; the Opposition supported them, and the minister promised that the Reformed should be more justly treated.

He kept his word in some respects. Legal Protestantism might accomplish its mission among its people, without as well as within; but evangelical proselytism met with never-ceasing obstacles until the end of the royalty of 1830. It is sad to say, that not a single government in France, whatever may have been its origin, has yet known how to sanction the practical exercise of religious liberty in its full extent. We may be unbelievers, but we are not yet free to proclaim our faith, or to celebrate our worship according to our consciences.

Notwithstanding the resistance of the government, the Reformed doctrine gained ground in many places. A certain number of (Roman) Catholics, and even some priests, embraced Protestantism. New churches were added to the old ones, some attaching themselves to the established organization, others preserving an independent position. Yet the importance of these successes must not be exaggerated. In our times the vital forces of the people seem to be absorbed by political pre-occupations and material interests, and it must be confessed that the great majority of Frenchmen have too little faith to change their religion.

The attempt at proselytism on either side would, as a natural consequence, increase the ardour of controversy. This argumentative warfare was in effect carried on without cessation; and we might cite a long list of writings upon matters disputed between the two communions, from 1830 to 1848.

Some of these publications are dressed in a popular form that has gained them numerous readers.

The same epoch affords examples, from time to time, of an odious intolerance; but they were only private and isolated acts. These were the abduction of young girls, refusal of burial in the communal cemetery, profanation of tombs, sequestration of the sick, accusations against several agents of the evangelical societies. The hand of the priests and the nuns was often suspected, and in certain cases was detected with incontrovertible evidence. The responsibility of these acts must fall only upon some fanatical and ignorant individuals. The respectable people of the (Roman) Catholic communion were indignant at them, and the judiciary or administrative authority protected the rights of the minority, although it deserves the reproach of pursuing and punishing the true criminals too leniently.

The last years of the reign of Louis Philippe were disturbed by an affair which deeply moved the Protestants of France, although it was connected in a very indirect manner with their relations to the State. The armed invasion of the island of Tahiti revealed to the world the extreme complaisance of the government for the clerical party, and at the same time the danger of subordinating the temporal power to the maxims of the Romish church. This attack upon the rights of nations narrowly escaped rupturing the alliance with England, compromised the name of France before all civilized nations, sensibly augmented the strength of the opposition, and threw the ministry into difficulties of embarrassment, from which it was never able to recover itself A lesson so severe and so grave ought

not to be lost!

VIII.

The internal situation of the Protestants under the royalty of July, will one day furnish the historian with abundant subjects of research and reflection.

Two questions in which, if we consider them attentively, all the others concentred, were particularly debated—the question of the confessions of faith, and that of the separation of Church and State.

Ought the churches of the Reformation to have a written and obligatory confession upon the fundamental articles of faith? Or ought they to propound the Bible alone as the rule of faith and teaching? Historically considered, the question would soon be decided, since French Protestantism has existed under the *régime* of a dogmatic formulary from the year 1559 until 1802. But this fact, however important, could resolve nothing; for the Reformation does not declare itself immutable, and has constantly retained the right of altering its mode of organization, upon the sole condition of respecting the sovereign authority of the Scriptures.

The vehement and often resumed polemical controversy that resulted from this discussion had already begun before 1830; it was renewed under Louis Philippe, and has not yet terminated. Partisans and adversaries of the confessions of faith alike invoke the testimony of the Bible; but the former are above all things anxious for the interest of unity of doctrine, the latter for the right of examination and freedom. The first do not understand how there can be a church in the true acceptation of the term, when the pulpit is open to contradictory teachings; the

second are equally ignorant how Protestantism can be subjected to a rule that no longer allows every one to form his belief for himself, Bible in hand.

Perhaps, if we were to probe this debate somewhat more deeply, we should find that these differences of opinion depend still more upon the manner of understanding the Gospel than of confessing it. The defenders of written creeds see essential points where their adversaries distinguish only simple shades, and that which is the whole of Christianity for the one, is for the others nothing more than a particular and fallible interpretation.

Two men, who have wielded a legitimate influence, MM. Stapfer and Samuel Vincent, maintained opposite theses in this controversy.

M. Philippe Albert Stapfer, a native of Berne, had become a Frenchman by long residence in the country, and by his constant sympathies for the Protestants of France. He brought them what they had long wanted since the seventeenth century,—theological learning, drawn from the best sources of Christian antiquity and the Reformation.

A part of his career was employed in important political and diplomatic affairs. Appointed minister of public instruction and worship in his own country, at the period when the Directory had erected Switzerland into a Unitarian republic, M. Stapfer displayed great zeal for the intellectual development of the people, and a generous courage against the pretensions of the foreigner. Afterwards called to fill the post of ambassador to Buonaparte, he defended as long as possible, and with noble firmness, the independence of the Swiss cantons against the growing exactions of the conqueror of Marengo.

These laborious negotiations did not prevent him from devoting long hours to study. He followed with attentive eye the learned theology and the philosophy of Germany in all their scientific evolutions, and he prescribed it to himself as a duty even in his waning years, to keep pace with modern ideas.

Eminent by his learning, M. Stapfer was not less distinguished for his faith. These two great forces of human existence afforded mutual assistance to this elevated person. Unfortunately he has written but little; his weak health did not permit him to remain long at the desk. Some sketches and a few discourses constitute the greater part of his works. They have been collected in two volumes, with a biographical notice by M. Vinet, in the form of an apology, which has been given to the world with the affection of respect, and with an unusual discernment.

M. Stapfer devoted himself most earnestly to the labours of the principal associations of Protestantism. He had great moral influence in these societies. His clear mind, elevated views, benevolent character, firmness on important occasions, nobility of sentiment and intention, all endued his words with an authority to which it was honourable to submit. This faithful servant of the Gospel died on the 27th of March, 1840.

M. Samuel Vincent was born at Nismes in 1787; he was the son and grandson of pastors of the desert, and had derived from his paternal traditions, a profound attachment to the Reformed communion, cemented with the blood of martyrs, and which has withstood so many storms. One may differ from the ideas, which this learned pastor entertained upon some articles of dogma and discipline; but no one

can dispute his firm and invariable desire to bring the scattered members of the great body of the French Reformation together, and to instil into it, with the divine blessing, new seeds of life. M. Vincent faithfully reproduced the expression, the tendencies, and the character of the Protestants of the south, who have shown so much steadfastness and heroism in the days of persecution, and who had already, towards the end of the sixteenth century, distinguished themselves from the Protestants of the north.

After completing his studies at Geneva, he was appointed to the ministry of the Reformed church at Nismes, like his father and grandfather. He won distinction by the variety of his acquirements, the urbanity of his private life, and his zeal in exciting a useful activity around him. He was a man of meditation and impulse, ever ready most freely to dispense the valuable thoughts which he had gathered, and willingly surrendered to others the honour of the initiative, which he had given them.

From 1820 to 1824 he published, in the form of a periodical collection, *Mélanges de Religion, de Morale, et de Critique*, with the particular object of initiating the French pastors in the movement of German theology during the last eighty years. The task was ungrateful. It was in a manner necessary to create his auditory before he could instruct them, and M. Vincent had occasion to convince himself that it is sometimes more difficult to inspire the taste for science, than to communicate science itself.

When M. de Lamennais attacked Protestantism with all the vehemence of his genius, the pastor of Nismes answered him by his *Observations sur la Voie d'Autorité appliquée à la Religion*. Less skilful as a

writer than his illustrious adversary, he maintained a better cause and defended it by more solid arguments. It is to be regretted that M. de Lamennais should have assumed a disdainful superiority in his reply, forgetting that in such a debate, victory is not won by haughtiness of language, but by soundness of reasoning.

We have already had occasion to cite the *Views upon Protestantism in France*, a work in which M. Vincent has embodied his reflections upon the principal questions of doctrine and ecclesiastical organization. This book bears evidence of a strong and independent mind, and yet the author does not appear to have displayed all the powers which he possesses; it is the first effort of a great intellect and a generous heart.

M. Vincent died on the 10th of July, 1837; (Roman) Catholics and Protestants joined in following to his last resting-place [the remains of] a man, who had reflected honour at once upon Protestantism and his country.

The second question, agitated among the Protestants after 1830, concerned, as we have said, the separation of Church and State. The Revolution of 1789 made a distinction between the temporal and the spiritual [powers]. It confined the priest to his proper domain, the magistrate to his, and it separated the citizen from the believer. But is it right to go to this extent? Ought the State to regard the Church or the churches, as no more than private societies, free institutions, which exist under the common right of protection by conforming to the general laws, and without receiving any salary for their ministers? Or ought the State to treat with these institutions, to confer upon them an official

character by its alliance, and to place them, with reference to other associations, in a privileged position? The question is one of vast importance; it involves the entire notions of Church and State, and the manner of resolving it affects the gravest problems of religion and politics. It is not difficult to understand that men of equal enlightenment, sincerity, and piety, may adopt entirely different opinions in this controversy. It has engaged (Roman) Catholicism as well as Protestantism. MM. de Lamennais and de Lamartine have both pronounced for the complete separation of the two powers. The same thesis has been maintained in the Protestant communion by a thinker of the highest order, whose name deserves a place among the greatest—M. Vinet, who, although not belonging to the French Reformation either by birth, or by way of naturalization or domicile, has written for it, and influenced it, and therefore a few lines concerning him will not be out of place.

M. Alexandre Vinet was born in a village of the canton of Vaud. He was educated at Lausanne, and while still young filled the chair of literature in the University of Basle. This was a happy position for a mind like his; for, placed upon the frontier of the two principal civilizations of the continent, he could take from either what was most excellent, stamping it at the same time with the seal of that manly independence which is instinctively acquired in the most ancient republic of Europe. He received learning from Germany, precision of judgment and language from France, the sentiment of liberty from his own country, the faith that purifies and corrects everything from the Gospel; and out of these different elements his eminently original genius composed an harmonious whole, which it is more

easy to name than to describe.

As a critic, few writers of the present day have equalled, and none have surpassed him, at least in the essential conditions of the art. He loved to discover and vindicate the beauties of literary works rather than to point out their defects, and one might occasionally wonder at the praises, with which he sometimes dignified mediocre writings, were it not that he naturally delighted in the good and the beautiful, and that wherever he encountered the palest image of these [features], he made it lustrous by the contact of his own intellect. M. Vinet lauded in others, without knowing it, the merits that he had imparted to them.

His style has been appreciated in these terms by M. Sainte Beuve, one of the most competent judges that could be named on such a subject: “He possesses” [says M. Sainte Beuve] “an originality which reproduces and condenses the qualities of French Switzerland in the most happy manner, and at the same time his language is generally excellent, of Attic turn, and redolent with choicest flowers.... If I might venture to express my actual thought, I should say that, after M. Daunou for the ancient school, after M. Villemain for the modern, he is, in my judgment, of all French writers, the one who has best analyzed the models, sifted and deciphered the language, fathomed its limits and its centre, and noted its various and veritable acceptations.”[146]

As a preacher, he broke through the old forms of the sermon, and identified himself with the auditor of the nineteenth century, without quitting by one step the territory of Christianity, or rather by shielding so much the more efficaciously the principle of unity in the Gospel that he made just

concessions to that of diversity. “There was in his oratory,” says an author, “something characteristically innate and powerful.... At first he sought to restrain himself, but the tone soon rose; his speech became more rapid; his sonorous voice elicited in every accent the emotion of which it was full, and the care he took to keep himself out of consideration, to disappear behind the truths he announced, only served to render talents so pure, so true, and so original, more prominent.”[147] As a Christian, he belonged to the family of Pascal by the penetration and the profundity of his thought, and to the family of Fénélon by the mild and simple candour of his faith. One thing surpassed even his piety and genius—humility. How could a man be so completely ignorant of the qualities of his own heart, who discerned those of others so well? It is that he judged others by his heart, and himself with his conscience. He had all the complaisance of charity for them, and all the severity of the ideal for himself.

M. Alexandre Vinet rendered his soul to God on the 4th of May, 1847. He left many disciples, but he has not up to the present time had a successor.

The Protestant press was enriched with several works of real merit during the reign of Louis Philippe. The history of the Reformation has been treated with remarkable talent. The pulpit reckoned many excellent models. Periodical literature was not without worth; and if France has given little heed to these labours, it is perhaps less the fault of the Protestant preachers and writers than of hereditary prejudices, that still weigh upon Protestantism itself in France.

Many benevolent institutions were established during this period, and supported by voluntary

contributions. Orphans, the aged, the sick, children destitute of instruction, those whom justice has condemned, and other unfortunates besides, became the object of an active and liberal solicitude, and afforded their testimony in behalf of that Protestantism, which is depreciated only by those, who do not understand it.

The religious societies, properly speaking, continued their labours, and received considerable additions to their funds. The Bible, disseminated by the hand of *colporteurs*, as in the beginning of the French Reformation, spread light and life in every direction. The scattered Protestants were appealed to, gathered together, and instructed. The Evangelical Society increased every year the number of its agents. The Missionary Society sent zealous servants of the Gospel to the south of Africa, who carried to the wild tribes who peopled it, the most useful arts of civilized nations, together with the promises of the Christian faith.

Among those, who exhibited the greatest zeal and devotion for the conversion of the heathen, the name of Admiral Ver-Huell must not be forgotten.

A native of Holland, he had become a Frenchman by his great military services, and by the letters of naturalization which rewarded them. At the camp of Boulogne he was intrusted with the organization of the Batavian fleet, and gave striking proofs of cool intrepidity, intelligence, and bravery, in several encounters. He led a *corps-d'armée* through the English fleet, that poured upon his squadron the projectiles of nine hundred guns. This heroic act gave entire confidence to the hundred and sixty thousand men collected upon the borders of the ocean.

Napoleon entertained the highest esteem for

Admiral Ver-Huell, and it was to his keeping that he desired to intrust his person and his fortunes after the disaster of Waterloo, so that he might escape to America. This was refused to the Admiral for some frivolous reason. “If this charge had been confided to Ver-Huell, as I had been promised,” said the prisoner of St. Helena, “I believe we should have succeeded.”

Admiral Ver-Huell was made a minister of state, an ambassador, and a peer of France; but we will pass over his political career: his religious life alone belongs to this work. The celebrated sailor was one of the most active members of all the religious societies, which he aided with his purse, his example, and the authority of his name. He particularly took a paternal interest in the children of the Missionary House, and watched them with affectionate eye in their distant and perilous apostolate.

He was president of the Missionary Society, and the anniversary of the general meetings was always welcomed by him with pleasure. “What pure and simple joy beamed in his countenance,” says a writer well acquainted with him, “when the deputations from the auxiliary societies, or some friend of missions, assured the committee of their sympathy for the work, and congratulated him with Christian thankfulness. How truly and deeply felt was the speech that he was accustomed to deliver at the opening of the session. Eighteen times in twenty-three years did he fill the chair at the general meeting, and on every occasion he delivered an address, which bore the impress of his pious heart and energetic soul....

“When a friend entered his house, his face, that we had never once seen clouded, suddenly lighted up. His look brightened, his voice assumed a peculiar

accent of mildness; in every demonstration of his friendship one felt at the same time the frank heartiness of the sailor, the dignity of the general, the polish of the man of the world, the simplicity and truth of the Christian.... Goodness pervaded all his sentiments, his character, his whole life; it was part and parcel of himself; it was himself; a goodness simple, candid, affectionate, cordial; a goodness inexhaustible in its source and effects; a goodness disinterested in its principle and persevering in its fruits; a goodness that never suspected evil, and would not believe it either in men or things."[148]

Admiral Ver-Huell was snatched from his friends and the Church the 25th of October, 1845, at the age of sixty-nine.

Some further facts in the internal movement of the Reformed communion might be mentioned, such as the establishment of separate flocks, the Wesleyans, Baptists, and dissenters of several denominations. But they were only local manifestations of no great extent, which, although offering examples of living faith and pious devotion among themselves, did not influence the general condition of French Protestantism.

IX.

We have now reached the end of our task. The Revolution of 1848 has as yet exercised no considerable action upon the Reformed communion, taken as a whole. If during the past three years the Protestants of France have held assemblies whereat new projects of ecclesiastical organization have been framed, nothing has as yet been actually accomplished.

The provisional government, pre-engaged with so many other matters, did not touch religious affairs. It only passed a decree declaring that all citizens detained in prison for acts relating to the free exercise of their religion, should be immediately set at liberty, and that all fines which they had been condemned to pay, should be remitted. This was a homage rendered, as the preamble expressed, to the most precious and the most sacred of all liberties.

The only question at the same time religious and political, which was discussed after the Revolution by the press and in the popular assemblies, respected the separation of Church and State. A placard posted on the walls of Paris, on the 24th of February, demanded as the wish of the people, absolute liberty of conscience, and complete independence of the two powers. It was known that M. de Lamartine, then at the summit of popularity, approved of this system, and M. de Lamennais maintained it with the utmost energy in his new journal, *Le Peuple Constituant*.

Those of the Protestants who were in favour of the principle of independence, formed a *society for the application of Christianity to social questions*, and published a placard declaring that—"It is unjust to

compel a citizen to contribute to the expense of a worship, which he does not follow. That the support of religious creeds should no longer be borne by the public exchequer, but that every one should be left to provide for the form of worship he shall have freely chosen.... Thus, religious creeds would be propagated by those who accepted them, and there would be no more privileged religions. Thus, the State would no longer have its attention engaged by questions full of embarrassment or danger. Thus, the budget would be relieved to the extent of more than forty millions of francs. Thus, in short, the whole French people would be as free and equal in religious matters, as they are [were] in political matters."

Nothing was impossible in the midst of the universal confusion of minds and institutions. The defenders of the communions officially recognised were kept in a state of anxious expectation, ready to submit to separation if it were pronounced by the Constituent Assembly, but showing their preference for the maintenance of the union of Church and State.

Some delegates of the Reformed churches assembled spontaneously at Paris, in the month of May, 1848. They had been in a manner convoked by the common necessities and apprehensions. There was no regularity in the origin of their mandates; some had been appointed by universal suffrage, others by the consistories, or even by the presidents of the consistories. Nor was there any proportion in the representation: certain churches, in the neighbourhood of Paris, reckoned five or six delegates for a single consistorial circuit; while on the other hand, some churches had only sent one deputy for three or four consistories. There, lastly,

was no uniformity in the powers of the delegates: some were authorized to enter fully into a discussion of ecclesiastical questions, and others were not. Such an assembly could only prepare the way for a body more regularly chosen by the members of legal Protestantism.

The meeting first debated the question of the relations between Church and State, and the great majority were in favour of preserving the alliance, reserving expressly the dignity and liberty of the Church. An electoral regulation was then framed for the formation of an assembly, which might consider the affairs of the communion, with an established title.

This new assembly commenced its session on the 11th of September, 1848. The members were elected by suffrage of two degrees, the body of the flocks having chosen the electors intrusted with the appointment of the delegates. Each of the ninety-two consistorial churches was invited to nominate an ecclesiastical or a lay deputy. Only three consistories abstained, beside the two theological facilities of Montauban and Strasbourg, which sent no representatives. The number of members present at the assembly was not more than from seventy to eighty. It was, for the rest, an entirely non-official assembly. It received no authority from any legal text; the government did not recognise it, and the churches were quite free to accept its resolutions or to reject them.

Long and serious questions were agitated regarding the confessions of faith. Finally, the assembly decided, almost unanimously, that in accordance with the wish of the generality of the churches, it would not touch upon dogmatical

subjects, and that the question should be deferred until a more opportune time. An address was drawn up, in which the majority expressed its common belief, without resolving the controverted points of doctrine in one sense or another.

Some of the members protested against this decision, and withdrew. They have since formed, with the independent congregations already in being, a new religious society, under the name of the *Union of the Evangelical Churches of France*. Their particular synod was opened on the 20th of August, 1849, and drew up a profession of faith, and an ecclesiastical constitution for the flocks it represented.

Having avoided the questions of dogma, the general assembly of September discussed a scheme of organization for a legal establishment. Universal suffrage, under certain restrictions, lay at the base of the plan; the individual church was reconstituted as an essential element of the Presbyterian system; the institution of the general consistories was preserved, but made subordinate to the particular synods; finally, as the centre and crown of the ecclesiastical edifice, there was to be a general synod, which should meet at regular intervals.

The minister of public worship, to whom this project was communicated, applied to the churches for their opinions upon it. The consistories, while they were unanimous in asking for important modifications in the law of the 18th Germinal, did not agree upon the articles of the new plan of organization, and it is uncertain whether it will become the object of a legislative measure.

While Protestantism endeavoured to modify its internal government and its relations to the civil authority, the national assembly discussed the

constitution. It adopted the two following articles: “Every one professes his religion freely, and receives from the State an equal protection for the exercise of his creed. The ministers of creeds actually recognised by the law, and of those which shall be recognised in future, have a right to receive support from the State.”

It will be remarked that the (Roman) Catholic religion is no longer named in the fundamental law. Not only has it ceased to be the State religion, but it has not even preserved the distinction given to it in the *Concordat* of Napoleon, and the Charter of 1830, namely, that of being the religion of the majority of the French people. There is no privilege, then, for (Roman) Catholicism; but a full, perfect, and absolute equality among all the recognised creeds, in such a manner that the constitution would be violated if the government granted to the Romish church any pre-eminence whatsoever. It has exhausted three centuries of efforts and struggles to gain the inscription of this great rule of justice upon the laws, and perhaps it has to be still better learned and applied by the manners of the people. A nation educated in (Roman) Catholicism practises with greater difficulty than any other, the complete equality of religious communions.

It is to be further observed, that this equality exists only for the creeds which are, or shall be recognised by the State. The advocates of the system of separation have not been satisfied with it, and the question of the suppression of the budget for the creeds continues to be mooted by some organs of the religious and political press. It is a problem for the future to resolve.

The conduct of the different governments that

have presided over the destinies of France since the Revolution of 1848, has given rise to more than one dispute, whether on the part of the independent societies and churches, or whether on the part of official Protestantism. But we will not dwell upon facts that date only from yesterday. The country is in a period of crisis and transition; nothing is settled; and this fluctuating position explains many things, without, however, justifying them. Let us hope that the freedom and equality of creeds will eventually succeed in establishing themselves in the minds of the nation, as they have in the laws, and that they will become a sovereign maxim of conduct for the governing and the governed.[149]

French Protestantism has written nearly nothing within the last three years. It collects itself in the presence of the great political events that are passing; it observes, it waits. New ideas are commencing there as elsewhere. What will be the issue? God alone knows; for us, it is sufficient to know that God reigns. He has given to the Reformed churches of France days of faith and of triumph; He has protected them during long generations, against the blows of the persecutor; and His hand, that hath guarded the fathers, will not forsake the children.

THE END.

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FOOTNOTES:

[1] Bellarm. Op. vol. vi. p. 296.

[2] Hist. des Variations, book v. p. 1.

[3] Ephes. ii. 8.

[4] Bossuet, Hist. des Var. book ii. p. 13.

[5] Œcol. et Zw. Op. p. 9.

[6] Les Vrais Portraits, &c. translated from the Latin of Th. de Bèze, p. 85.

[7] Fontaine, Hist. Cathol. de notre Temps, p. 53.

[8] Hist. des Martyrs, p. 93.

[9] Erasm. Epp. vol. ii. p. 1206.

[10] It should be observed that the name of *Protestant* was not generally given in France to the followers of the Reformation, until the end of the seventeenth century, and that it would not be more exact to call them so in the former half of our history, than to designate by the name of Frenchmen the contemporaries of Clovis. They were called in the beginning, *Lutherans*, *Sacramentarians*, then *Calvinists*, *Huguenots*, *Religionaries*, or *Those of the Religion*. They called themselves *Gospellers*, the *Faithful*, the *Reformers*. The name of *Protestant* was at that time applied only to the disciples of the Lutheran Reformation in Germany.

[11] 1 Tim. iv. 1-3.

[12] See the narration of Lambert in Gerdes, Hist. Réform. vol. iv. Doc. pp. 21-28.

[13] Les Vrais Portraits, &c.

[14] We can only sketch here the chief features. Those, who are desirous of knowing what the *mystic school* of the first periods of the French Reformation was, should read the

monograph of Gérard Roussel, by Professor C. Schmidt, &c.

[15] Hist. des Egl. réf. p. 6.

[16] Recherches sur la France, book vii. p. 911.

[17] There are some remarkable pages of M. Guizot's on this subject in the *Musée des Protestants célèbres*, art. *Calvin*. The execution of Michel Servet has furnished the subject of a never-ending discussion. A skilful historian of our time, M. Mignet, has devoted to it a long and learned dissertation. It would be wholly departing from our plan, to enter into these details. We will confine ourselves to the indication of the following points:—1. Servet was not an ordinary heretic; he was a daring pantheist, and outraged the dogma of all the great Christian communities, by saying that the God in three persons was a Cerberus, a monster with three heads. 2. He had been already condemned to death by the Catholic doctors at Vienne, in Dauphiny. 3. The affair was tried, not by Calvin, but by the magistrates of Geneva; and if it be objected, that his advice must have influenced their decision, it must be remembered that the counsels of the other reformed Swiss cantons approved the sentence unanimously. 4. It was of infinite importance to the Reformation, that it should separate its cause clearly from that of an unbeliever like Servet. The (Roman) Catholic church, which this day accuses Calvin of having participated in his condemnation, would have accused him still more, in the sixteenth century, had he solicited for his acquittal.

[18] Vie de Calvin, pp. 44, 128, and *passim*.

[19] Florim. de Rémond, Hist. de la Naissance,

&c., de l'Hérésie de ce Siècle, book vii. p. 931.

[20] Book vii. p. 874.

[21] Book vii. p. 910.

[22] Book vii. p. 864.

[23] John de Serres, Recueil de Choses mémorables, &c. p. 64.

[24] Page 189.

[25] Vol. i. pp. 108, 109.

[26] Abrégé Chron. vol. v. p. 14.

[27] It must be remembered here, and in other parts of this book, that we are speaking of the Italians of the sixteenth century, nobles and priests, who, eternally witnessing at Rome, Florence, Naples, scenes of assassination, poisoning, and the utmost turpitude, had sunk into the very lowest degree of depravity. It is they, history attests it, who planned, advised, prepared, and finally executed in France the most monstrous crimes of the epoch. But we are far from seeking to load the Italian nation of to-day with this terrible responsibility: a generous and intellectual nation, which has raised itself by its very misfortunes, and which adversity renders doubly entitled to our respect.

[28] Vol. iv. p. 204.

[29] Mémoires de Coligny, p. 18. It is thought that these memoirs were the work of Cornaton, one of the most faithful servants of the admiral. What follows is an abridged extract from the edition printed at Grenoble in 1669.

[30] Page 20.

[31] Page 22.

[32] Pages 94-97.

[33] Vol. i. p. 147.

[34] La Planche, Histoire de France sous François II. p. 214.

[35] See upon this point, Regnier de la Planche, Jean de Serres, D'Aubigné, De Thou, and among the more modern historians, Anquetil, Sismondi, M. Lacretelle, and others.

[36] Page 128.

[37] Hist. du Calvinisme, pp. 192, 193.

[38] Vol. iii. p. 278.

[39] Vie de Theodore de Bèze, pp. 207, 208.

[40] Etudes, Hist. vol. ii. p. 198. This remark is applicable to all great ideas, political as well as religious. In the days of the Revolution, the people overturned the monuments of the old *régime*. Symbols bear before the masses the penalty of their origin and of their destination. One example, which we may select from a thousand, will illustrate the ardent passion of the iconoclasts of the sixteenth century. The great church of Sainte Croix, at Orleans, had been entered in the night, and pillaged during the first religious war. Condé and Coligny hastened to put a stop to these disorders. The prince even pointed an arquebuse at a soldier, who stood upon a ladder ready to break an image. "My lord," said the Huguenot to him, "have patience till I have broken this image, and then let me die, if you will."

[41] Hist. des Guerres civiles de France, tome i. p. 115.

[42] Agrippa d'Aubigné, Hist. Universelle.

[43] Tome i. p. 141.

[44] Tome ii. p. 162.

[45] Histoire de M. G. Bosquet, sur les troubles

advenus en la ville de Toulouse, p. 25.

[46] Page 50.

[47] Tome ii. p. 223.

[48] Page 696.

[49] Tome v. p. 104.

[50] Esprit de la Ligue, tome i. p. 249.

[51] Page 700.

[52] Tome v. p. 117.

[53] Tome v. c. 18.

[54] Tome i. p. 383.

[55] Sismondi, Hist. des Français, tome xix. p. 2.

[56] Recueil des Choses mémorables, p. 417.

[57] A writer of the present day, M. Capefigue, carrying the ideas and the passions of the nineteenth into the sixteenth century, insists that Charles IX. and his court were coerced by the people of the markets, and that the masses were moved by hatred against the *gentry*, or the Huguenot aristocracy. Then applying to these allegations the system of revolutionary fatality, he concludes that *no one* is to be blamed. (La Réforme et la Ligue, pp. 341, 346, 361, 373, *et passim*.) Such dreams are pointed out to the reader; they are unworthy of refutation!

[58] Read again the note upon the Italians of the sixteenth century, p. 89.

[59] Journal de Henri III. tome i. p. 45.

[60] This *Besme* received the reward of his crime from the Cardinal de Lorraine, who permitted him to marry one of his natural daughters: a double disgrace for a priest to recompense such a man, and to have such a

reward to bestow.

[61] Maimbourg, Hist. du Calvinisme, p. 486.

[62] Aignan, Biblioth. étrangère, tome i. p. 229.

[63] Le Stratagème de Charles IX. p. 178.

[64] Hist. d'Angleterre, vol. vii. p. 201.

[65] M. Lacretelle has collected the proofs in his Hist. de Guerres de Religion.

[66] Etudes hist. tome iv. p. 296.

[67] Page 462.

[68] Journal of Henry III. vol. i. pp. 71, 72.

[69] Recueil de Choses mémor. p. 546.

[70] Book iv. c. 5.

[71] Book iv. c. 3.

[72] For the history of this period, consult the Règne de Henri III., by Mézeray, 3 vols. 8vo. The new editor, M. Scipion Combet, has added to it a summary of the history of the French Protestants from the commencement of the Reformation to the law of the 18th Germinal, year 10.—This is a solid work, and may be read with profit.

[73] See De Thou, l. xcvi. vol. vii. p. 495, and the memoirs of the sixteenth century. Among the moderns, see the Etudes Histor. of M. de Châteaubriand, vol. iv. p. 371. "It was the policy of this pope," says he, in speaking of his sacrilegious comparisons, "to encourage fanatics, who were ready to kill kings, in the name of the papal power."

[74] Elie Benoit, Hist. de l'Edit de Nantes, vol. i. p. 121.

[75] Vol. ii. p. 295.

[76] Elie Benoît, vol. ii. p. 377.

[77] Le Mercure Français, vol. viii. p. 637.

[78] Arcère, Hist. de la Rochelle, vol. i. p. 288.

[79] Vol. i. p. 88.

[80] Eclaircissements histor. vol. i. pp. 46, 47.

[81] Those who are desirous of acquainting themselves minutely with the situation of the Reformed at this period, must read the Histoire de l'Edit de Nantes, by Elie Benoit. The author has filled five 4to. volumes with the recital of the vexations, injustice, violence, and persecutions, which his co-religionists suffered from the reign of Henry IV. to the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes.

[82] Staeudlin, Geschichte der Theol. Wissenschaften, vol. ii. pp. 58, 59. See also Schroeck, Christl. K. Geschichte, vol. v. pp. 297-309.

[83] *I.e.* an arbitrary warrant of imprisonment, without accusation or trial.—TRANS.

[84] "The Right Use of the Fathers," a work which cannot be too widely circulated or studied in the present times.—TRANS.

[85] Vol. iv. p. 99.

[86] Vol. iii. p. 139.

[87] Vol. i. p. 175.

[88] Vol. xxv. p. 481.

[89] Vol. i. p. 97.

[90] Vol. iv. pp. 479, 480. The author, who was a contemporary of these events, relates the facts with precision, indicates the localities, and cites names; so that his narrative bears the impress of perfect veracity, which is, besides, confirmed by the memoirs of the times. We suppress the details, as almost too painful for perusal.

[91] Vol. iv. p. 502.

[92] Pages 124-126.

[93] Vol. v. p. 681.

[94] Vol. v. pp. 832, 833.

[95] Page 52.

[96] A more disgraceful peace to England than that of Utrecht was probably never made; and if its terms are considered to have been "hard" to France, most assuredly it must ever be acknowledged,—to use the words of Lord Mahon, in his admirable History of England (vol. i. p. 6, ed. 1853),—to have been "a sin against light; not the ignorance which is deluded, but the falsehood which deludes."—TRANS.

[97] See above, p. 176.

[98] Vol. v. pp. 953, 554.

[99] Essai sur l'Etablissement Monarchique de Louis XIV. p. 413.

[100] Insurgents in the reign of Louis XIV., who were so called.—TRANS.

[101] Capefigue, Louis XIV. vol. ii. chap. 24, p. 258. The author is in error as to the number of pastors, or he has included in his list professors, students of theology, and other persons indirectly connected with ecclesiastical functions. Rulhières also speaks of two thousand ministers. Elie Bénoit, who was much better informed on the subject, since he was himself one of the refugee pastors, makes the number only seven hundred.

[102] See l'Histoire abrégé des souffrances du Sieur Elie Neau sur les galères et dans les cachots de Marseille: Rotterdam, 1701.

[103] Edition Lefevre, p. 33. Some of the

verses have a very striking allusion:

> On peut des plus grands rois surprendre la justice.
> [Great kings can suppress justice.]
>
> Et le roi trop crédule a signé cet édit.
> [And a king too credulous has signed that edict.]

[104] Hist. des Camisards, book i. p. 25.

[105] Vol. ii. p. 278.

[106] Lettres Pastor. vol. iii. p. 60.

[107] Théâtre Sacré des Cevennes.

[108] Page 80 and *seq.*

[109] M. N. Peyrat. Hist. des Pasteurs du Désert, vol. ii. pp. 513, 514. The author has carefully collected and related, in a lively and interesting manner, the principal circumstances of the war of the Cévenoles.

[110] Vol. vii. p. 18 et seq.

[111] Page 413.

[112] The reader, if desirous of more ample information concerning this period, may peruse with advantage the work of M. Charles Coquerel, entitled: Histoire des Eglises du Désert, in two vols. 8vo. M. Coquerel had access to important documents, and has used them most judiciously. We shall have frequent occasion to refer to his work in the course of this history. The Histoire de l'Eglise Chrétienne Réformée de Nismes, by M. le pasteur Borrel, may also be consulted: the work is exact, and under a particular or local title, contains many things of general interest.

[113] Mélanges de relig. et de morale, vol. v. p. 181.

[114] Vol. xxvii. p. 514.

[115] Hist. de France pendant le dix-huitième siècle, vol. ii. p. 7.

[116] After reading the correspondence of the intendants, M. Lemontey, in his Essays upon the Monarchical Establishment of Louis XIV., asserts that certain curates required of the heretics, before they would bless their marriages, "that they should curse their deceased parents, and swear that they believed in their everlasting damnation!"—Vol. ii. p. 157.

[117] Pages 35, 103.

[118] Bibliothèque Française, vol. xxii. pp. 288, 289.

[119] Armand de la Chapelle, La Nécessité du Culte public, &c.

[120] Pages 9, 45, 46.

[121] Pages 48, 49.

[122] Mémoire Hist. pp. 65, 66.

[123] M. C. Coquerel, Histoire des Eglises du Désert, vol. ii. pp. 168-170.

[124] The edition from which this translation is made, was revised by the author in 1851. Since that time, the voice of France is silenced by tyranny and oppression; the Roman Catholic priesthood is gaining strength, and commencing its work of persecution; and two prisoners, for the political offence of liberty of thought and speech, have been sentenced to transportation at Cayenne, *by the mere order of a minister of police*, without the form of a trial! —TRANS.

[125] A word of explanation is necessary in respect of the restriction with regard to *other ecclesiastics than the proper curates*; there were, even then, priests, either complaisant or venal

enough, to bless the marriages of the Reformed for a certain price, and without any examination. As public opinion gradually grew satisfied with the laws against the Calvinists, the number of these priests also increased to such an extent, that the bargains became an open kind of traffic, of which, however, the rich alone could avail themselves. Many of the Protestants, besides, declined, from conscientious motives, to incur even the appearance of hypocrisy by inscribing their marriages upon the registers of the priests.

[126] J. Pons, Notice Biographique, &c.

[127] Archives du Christianisme, vol. xx. p. 293.

[128] In many respects, the celebrated George Whitfield seems to have resembled Rabaut; his voice could also be heard at an immense distance, and from his published discourses, no one would suppose that their effect upon his hearers could have been so startling.—TRANS.

[129] Vol. ii. p. 347.

[130] Les Toulousaines, Lettre xxii.

[131] They were *gentilshommes verriers*. The trade of a glass manufacturer did not disparage their nobility.—TRANS.

[132] Book xxv. c. 10.

[133] Répertoire Ecclésiast. pp. 7, 8.

[134] A work has been published in the German language, entitled: “The Protestant Church of France from 1787 to 1846” (*Die Protestantische Kirche Frankreichs*, &c.), 2 vols. 8vo: Leipsig, 1848. The author is not named; but his work is edited by M. Gieseler, a professor of theology, well known for his excellent ecclesiastical history and other

writings. The book we also refer to above is full of valuable materials and documents.

[135] Lauze de Peret, Eclaircissements histor., &c. 2nd book, p. 163.

[136] Lauze de Peret, 3rd book, p. 35.

[137] J. Pons, Notice biographique.

[138] M. Artaud gives the details of this curious and generally unknown negotiation, in his History of Pope Pius VII. vol. i. p. 265, *et seq.*

[139] Vues sur le Protestantisme en France, vol. ii. p. 265.

[140] Vol. ii. p. 266.

[141] Page 192

[142] M. Lauze de Peret, book iii. p. 10.

[143] It is said that certain advisers of Louis XVIII. had endeavoured to persuade him to put the sixth article before the fifth. The king answered with much wisdom, that it was not right to put the exception before the rule.

[144] Archives du Christianisme, vol. iii. p. 406, *et seq.*

[145] Arch. du Christ. vol. xi. p. 241, *et seq.* See another notice upon the life of M. de Staël, at the head of his Œuvres Diverses, published in 1829.

[146] Critiques et Portraits littéraires, vol. v. pp. 144, 147.

[147] Le Semeur, vol. xvii. p. 141.

[148] M. Grandpierre, Notices sur le Vice-Amiral Ver-Huell, p. 38, *et passim*.

[149] The hopes of the author, raised by the enlightened political views of the amiable and upright Lamartine, have not been realized. The

coup-d'état of December, 1851, by which Louis Napoleon rejected the opportunity of displaying to the world that he could sacrifice personal ambition to the patriotic observance of the oath he had sworn, to maintain the Constitution inviolably, has induced a policy of intimate alliance with the Romish priesthood. Passing events daily show that whatever advantage the sacerdotal order of the (Roman) Catholics may be supposed to derive from a State connection, that union deeply injures the vitality of Protestantism. As stated in Louis Napoleon's proclamation promulgating his constitution, "It is still the *Concordat* that regulates the relations of the State with the Church." The 20th article of the Constitution makes the cardinals *ex officio* members of the senate.—TRANSL.

TRANSCRIBER'S NOTE

Obvious typographical errors and punctuation errors have been corrected after careful comparison with other occurrences within the text and consultation of external sources.

Some hyphens in words have been silently removed, some added, when a predominant preference was found in the original book.

Except for those changes noted below, all misspellings in the text, and inconsistent or archaic usage, have been retained.

Pg iv: 'monk of Wittemberg' replaced by 'monk of Wittenberg'.
Pg 10: 'the ninety-nine theses' replaced by 'the ninety-five theses'.
Pg 58: 'was haunte by' replaced by 'was haunted by'.
Pg 59: 'such a courtezan' replaced by 'such a courtesan'.
Pg 103: 'of the doctines' replaced by 'of the doctrines'.
Pg 134: 'Jean Poltot de Méré' replaced by 'Jean Poltrot de Méré'.
Pg 143: 'whom Philp II. had' replaced by 'whom Philip II. had'.
Pg 148: 'Montclar, Bruniquel' replaced by 'Monclar, Bruniquel'.
Pg 151: 'instant Montesquiou' replaced by 'instant Montesquieu'.
Pg 154: 'of Cevannes, of' replaced by 'of Cevennes, of'.
Pg 158: 'Admiral de Colingy' replaced by 'Admiral de Coligny'.
Pg 185: 'one at Strasburg' replaced by 'one at Strasbourg'.
Pg 186: 'and Heny III. only' replaced by 'and Henry III. only'.
Pg 226: 'justify inghimself' replaced by 'justifying himself'.
Pg 239: '*dragonades*' replaced by '*dragonnades*'.
Pg 248: '*dênoument*' replaced by '*dénouement*'.
Pg 285: 'Auberton awakened' replaced by 'Aubertin awakened'.
Pg 332: 'and polical unity' replaced by 'and political unity'.
Pg 355: 'of the Cévenols' replaced by 'of the Cévenoles'.
Pg 365: 'parents, hxxe made' replaced by 'parents, have made'.
Pg 386: 'acadamies of Sédan' replaced by 'academies of Sédan'.

Pg 392: ‘Cévenols had looked’ replaced by ‘Cévenoles had looked’.
Pg 401: ‘they combated it’ replaced by ‘they combatted it’.
Pg 451: ‘at Nismes in 1742.’ replaced by ‘at Nismes in 1743.’.
Pg 477 Footnote 141: ‘Page ’ replaced by ‘Page 192’.
Pg 488: ‘de Lamenais’ replaced by ‘de Lamennais’.

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